

VOICE OF EMMANUEL

SEEDS OF HOPE!



Several weeks ago I told the story of the pastor who preached the same sermon to his congregation week after week. Finally, the Council Chair, after hearing numerous complaints, addressed the pastor following worship. He told the pastor that the congregation was tired of hearing the same thing week after week. The pastor nodded with understanding and said, “yeah, I get it. But... when you start doing what I’m preaching about, then I’ll move on to something else.”

When I think about the last several weeks of lessons, it is as if Jesus has been preaching the same sermon over and over, week after week: Love God, Love your neighbor. He used different stories to tell it, but the message was the same, right? We are called to Love God with all that we are, and we are called to love our neighbor as ourselves. In worship we come to express our love for God. The very word “worship” from the Old English means the condition of being worthy. But we also love God by showing love to our neighbor. And our neighbor, as we found out from the parable of the Good Samaritan, is anyone in need.

This past Sunday, while I was away, a visitor came late into worship. After receiving communion, he went back to his seat, stood up, and made an impassioned speech to the whole congregation about his financial need. Some of you were understandably uncomfortable with this. Some of you may have felt anxious or fearful by the outburst. It is certainly not the norm in worship. But while that is the case, you listened and you responded to the stranger in your midst. You were the neighbor to the man, offering financial support, gas, and prayers. You moved beyond your comfort zones, and put the needs of your neighbor first. Thank you for your generosity. You did as Jesus commanded, “Go and do likewise.”

Unfortunately, not everything is as it appears to be. Our guest at worship was not honest about who he was or about his situation. He took advantage of the spontaneity of the moment, a quick statement of need that could not be verified, appealing to our sympathy and our generosity. And we responded with love and compassion. Our guest, as I have since found out, has done this in at least two other Lutheran congregations in Conover and Mooresville, and who knows how many others.

Our initial reaction might be anger, hurt, or even embarrassment for not seeing through his scam. Yet, it is important to understand that we were just doing what we believed Jesus was calling us to do: love our neighbor as

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Voice of Emmanuel Seeds of Hope!

ELC Seeds of Hope

is published weekly to
keep members and
friends together during
there time of physical
distancing!

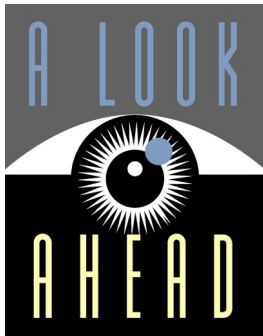
**Information
submitted for
publication must
be received by
Tuesday of Each
week.**

**e-mail to
lifewithemmanuel
@gmail.com**

Mission Statement:

As the body of Christ,
fed and nourished
through worship, we
are called to serve all
people, through the use
of our gifts to proclaim
God’s justice, mercy
and love.

*Our Vision: Striving to
Thrive with Vitality!*



July 24

Persistence in prayer is encouraged by Jesus and wins the attention of God when Abraham intercedes for Sodom. The life of the baptized—to be rooted and built up in Christ Jesus—is to be nurtured with prayer. God hears and answers prayer and so strengthens God’s own. “When I called, you answered me; you increased my strength within me.”

ourselves. And that is never the wrong answer. Being faithful in love and compassion is the right way, even when we are taken advantage of. It is important to not let our frustration keep us from being the body of Christ in the world, keep us from loving our neighbor in real concrete ways. There will always be people who try to scam us; the question is will we let them move us away from the path of Jesus. Will we let those few interrupt lives of mercy and love offering others hope? I certainly pray that is not the case.

Your compassion and generosity should be applauded. You did well. I’m proud that when a need presented itself you stood up and met it. So how can you continue to be generous and kind, while doing your best to not be taken advantage of?

Emmanuel has a rich tradition of helping in our community. We are one of the few congregations in Lincolnton who actually offer assistance beyond Christian Ministries. The Pastor’s Discretionary Fund is our chief tool for offering support to those in legitimate need. We work in partnership with Christian Ministries to meet the needs of those who are hurting. Christian Ministries has the necessary resources to be able to verify the legitimacy of the needs. They have a staff who are trained to investigate claims of hardship. They protect our valuable resources for those who need them most. What happened on Sunday circumvented our safeguards. The church was manipulated by the immediacy of the situation presented.

There are so many legitimate needs in our community, people whose lives have been turned upside down by true hardship. Let us continue to be the church that loves our neighbor in concrete ways, but let us do it with wisdom and intentionality. Your gifts will always be used responsibly through the Pastor’s Discretionary Fund and will help those who need it most. Supporting this fund will have a tremendous impact in our community. Thank you for caring for your neighbor. Thank you for your generosity. Thank you for your loving spirit. You do make a difference. You make the world a better place.

✝ *Pastor Mike*



A middle-aged woman has a heart attack and is taken to the hospital. While on the operating table she has a near death experience. During that experience she sees God and asks if this is it. God says no and explains that she has another 30 years to live.

Upon her recovery she decides to just stay in the hospital and have a face lift, liposuction, breast augmentation, tummy tuck, etc. She even has someone come in and change her hair color. She figures since she's got another 30 years she might as well make the most of it.

She walks out of the hospital after the last operation and is killed by an ambulance speeding by. She arrives in front of God and complains, "I thought you said I had another 30 years."

God replies, "I didn't recognize you."



The Outreach Committee has schedule a tea with members of Emmanuel and other congregations in our area to plan how to best minister and coordinate with Battleground Elementary School.

The tea is scheduled for Wednesday, July 27th in the Fellowship Hall at 3 PM.

?? ? Bible Quiz ? ??

Jesus instructed one of his disciples to "tend my sheep". Who did Jesus address this instruction to?

1. Nathanael of Cana
2. James, son of Zebedee
3. Thomas, the twin
4. Simon, son of John
5. John, son of Zebedee



Answer: 4. Simon, son of John. Aka Peter. John 21:15-17

Ministry in Action - July / August

	July 24	July 31	August 7	August 14
Greeters	Kenneth Pales Nancy Pales	Mary Rhodes Dara Jarrett	Edward Little Doris Little	Buzz Cherry Pat Cherry
Lector	Jennifer Huskey	David Bynum	Jennifer Little	Steve Lounsbury
Crucifer	John Cromer	Matthew Heavner	Mary Ellen Bridges	Nayshaun Holiday
Acolyte	Quinlyn Cornwell	Hannah Brooks	Quinlyn Cornwell	Jennifer Little
Communion Asst	Beth Collins	Jennifer Huskey	Randy Zimtbaum	Cathy Lounsbury
Videographer	Shelly Caffey	Shelly Caffey	Shelly Caffey	Shelly Caffey
Altar Flowers	Available	Available	Available	Available

Monthly Duties July 2022

Councilperson	Cathy Lounsbury			
Altar Guild	Sue Zimtbaum	Alison Zimtbaum	Cathy Lounsbury	Doris Little
Ushers	Steve Lounsbury (Captain)	Ben Robinson Jody Rhyne	Randy Zimtbaum Keith Saine	

Gospel: Luke 11:1-13

¹[Jesus] was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.” ²He said to them, “When you pray, say:

Father, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come.

³Give us each day our daily bread.

⁴And forgive us our sins,

for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us.

And do not bring us to the time of trial.”

⁵And he said to them, “Suppose one of you has a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; ⁶for a friend of mine has arrived, and I have nothing to set before him.’ ⁷And he answers from within, ‘Do not bother me; the door has already been locked, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.’ ⁸I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, at least because of his persistence he will get up and give him whatever he needs.

⁹“So I say to you, Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. ¹⁰For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. ¹¹Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for a fish, will give a snake instead of a fish? ¹²Or if the child asks for an egg, will give a scorpion? ¹³If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

Faith5 Corner: by Pastor Mike

Seventh Sunday after Pentecost



Share: Share your highs and lows

Read: Luke 11:1-13

Talk: Slowly reflect on the reading. Did anything grab your attention as you read the passage? Does this text sound familiar? It is Luke's version of the Lord's Prayer. How is it different from the version you pray each week? What do you hear at the heart of this prayer?

What is prayer? How does it work? How do you use it? Is it to connect us to a kind of "Jeanie in the bottle" God, where we pray and magically get what we want? Jesus gives one image of prayer as persistence. Do we bother God with prayer? Why do we pray?

Jesus says, "Ask and it will be given you. Seek and you will find. Knock and the door will be opened for you." Is that your experience? Does God always answer prayer? Does God always answer prayer the way we want our prayers answered? Do prayers of a community cancel one another out – say, a farmer prays for rain and vacationing family prays for clear, dry day?

Is the true nature of prayer about getting our needs and wishes fulfilled, or about a relationship with God? What does that mean for our prayer life?

Pray: Father God, you have called us into a relationship with you. You care for and nurture us as a gracious parent. You watch over us and keep us from the evil one. Help us live into the covenant of grace through which we grow in faith Amen

Bless: "_____, ask, seek, and knock; God is always near."



"Lord,
teach us to
pray..."

Luke 11:1



Every night in every home



highs and lows



a Bible verse or story



about how the Bible
reading might relate to
your highs and lows



for one another's highs
and lows



one another

www.faith5.org





Shirley Barnes, George Boyd, Noah Denton, Hannah Brooks, Polly Bryant, Kathy Cromer, Laura Cromer, Marianne Doehling, Page Doehling, Cecelia Driscoll, Paul Driscoll, Martha Duncan, Max Edwards, James Gantt, Betty King, Nancy McCoy, Nancy Pales, Trudy Perkins, Mary Rhodes, Jim Sain, Michael Wright, Pat Wilhelm, Rick Norine and family (cousin of Barbara O'Neill), Phil McIlveen (Marianne Doehling's father) James McIlveen (Marianne Doehling's brother), Evelyn Cochrane (neighbor of Susan McConnell), Randy Cherry (Brother of Buzz Cherry), Nancy Skeeters (in-law of Jenny Watson), Nan Muddle, Taylor Lawson (son of John and Tonya Lawson), Barbara Stillwell (sister-in-law of Rusty Rhyne), Tommy London (father of Tonya Lawson), Mickey Adair (aunt of Tonya Lawson), Sherri Beam (friend of Julie Leonhardt), Drew Milholland (Pastor Mike), Breanna Tapp (Jennifer Huskey), Tomi Pendleton (Dara Jarrett), Judith Dew (Marianne and Page Doehling), Dottie Vandenburg (Tonya Lawson), Glenn Mosteller Jr. (Glenn Mosteller), Van Davis (brother of Amy Brown), Dinah Barkley (friend of Susan Boyd)

The Good Samaritan

I have been thinking a lot about the parable of the good Samaritan lately (Luke 10:25-37). Parts of it are so familiar—the unfortunate victim, the robbers, the priest, the Levite, the Samaritan—that I miss points of deeper meaning. We all know the compassion and generosity of the Samaritan has become the standard by which we measure our response to suffering. Hospitals are named Good Samaritan. All 50 states have a Good Samaritan law on the books. I always imagined (or hoped) that I would act like the good Samaritan were I ever in a similar situation.

There are two other characters connected to this story that I don't always think about: the lawyer and Jesus. Theirs was not a casual conversation. The lawyer was looking to test Jesus. "Teacher, he said, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

Jesus answers with a question: "What is written in the law?"

Being a good lawyer the man answered from Deuteronomy and Leviticus: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." Case closed. Conversation over.

But the lawyer couldn't let it go: "Wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, 'And who is my neighbor?'"

We know the man wanted to test Jesus and justify himself so his question was not an earnest inquiry about the Torah. Are some people my neighbor and some people not? How far does hospitality have to extend? Can there be limits to compassion? What is reasonable: Family? People on my block? My congregation? Fellow citizens? And, conversely, whom can I exclude? People across town or around the world? Who is my neighbor?

It's in answer to this question that Jesus tells the parable—a parable designed to be as provocative as possible.

We call the Samaritan "good" but that word is not found in Scripture. No Jew would call a Samaritan "good" nor would any Samaritan call a Jew "good." Samaritans and Jews regarded each other as ceremonially unclean, socially outcast and heretical. They would not have come up



This Sunday, July 24th, we will be having a reception after the services in honor of our High School Graduates.

Please come and celebrate Jadon and Zach.

We will have refreshments and cupcakes in the North Wing after the service.

automatically in the neighbor category.

It's not clear that the beaten Jewish man would have been entirely thrilled that he had been helped and touched by the Samaritan. (Think of the *All in the Family* episode where Archie Bunker realizes he has received a blood transfusion from a Black doctor.)

Now it's Jesus' turn to ask a question: "Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?"

This becomes the question for us and for these times. When we ask, "Who is my neighbor?" we sort people into categories. Is the refugee my neighbor? Is the Muslim my neighbor? Is the Jew my neighbor? Is the Latina my neighbor? And on and on. This makes for increasingly smaller neighborhoods. And this question can be driven by fear and suspicion. Left to ourselves we turn in and away.

Thank God that God has not left us to ourselves. Our new life in Christ leads us to ask and answer a different question. Not, "Who is my neighbor?" but "How are we neighbor?"

The world is a dangerous place—just check any news source or social media. There are people who mean to do harm to our country. Fear and the threat of danger divide us and constrict us. But we live in the hope of the resurrection and in the certainty of the redemption of the world through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We no longer ask, "Who is my neighbor?" The question is now, "How are we neighbor?"

The lawyer answered Jesus' question about who was neighbor to the man beaten by robbers with: "The one who showed him mercy." Jesus said to him, and to us, "Go and do likewise."

Presiding Bishop

Elizabeth Eaton



EMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
216 S Aspen St Lincoln, NC 28092

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Randy Zimbaum	7/06
Donnie Robinson	7/08
Todd Heavner	7/14
Jim Sain	7/14
Johnnie Gonzalez	7/16
Susan McConnell	7/16
Chris Hoffman	7/18
Mary Rhodes	7/18
Zach Zagorski	7/18
Andy Deal	7/19
Nayshaun Holiday	7/20
Joe Scronce	7/21
Rhonda Harrill	7/22
Robert Doehling	7/23
Denise Yoder	7/23
William O'Dell	7/25
Ashlyn Rhyme	7/25
Ashley Peaslee	7/27
Martin Eaddy	7/29
John Lineberger	7/29
Elizabeth Stone	7/31



Seeds of Hope

A PUBLICATION OF
EMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
PHONE: 704-735-9033

Lincoln County Covid-19 Case numbers

As of March 23 the State and County are no longer reporting numbers

Lincoln County Positivity Rate as of July 11 - 30.26%

Lincoln County Positivity Rate as of June 18 - 29.73%

Lincoln County current cases as of July 11 - 176

Lincoln County current cases as of July 18 - 206



Newsletter Content
Contributors

Bob Lake
Ben Robinson
Pastor Mike
WELCA

Sunday worship, study and
fellowship opportunities

Traditional Worship Service
10:00 am in the Sanctuary

Service is live streamed on
Facebook at 10 am each Sunday
and will be posted to YouTube.