

VOICE OF EMMANUEL

SEEDS OF HOPE!



A Seed from that Fateful Apple

First of all, I know very little about Artificial Intelligence, or AI. I do know that I have bishop colleagues in other synods who have picked a random selection of lectionary assigned texts—let's say the 10th Sunday after Pentecost, year A—and asked the AI program to write a sermon to a Lutheran congregation for that day. These bishops say they have to admit that on a content level, the AI-generated sermon was theologically and exegetically probably better than they might hear in at least half of their congregations on a given Sunday. And to think, back in the 60s we thought the Dick Tracy telephone watch and the Jetsons' robo vacuum were technological impossibilities!

One problem with Artificial Intelligence, in general, is that the gathering, storing, and sharing of information becomes a sort of object of worship in itself. Where, for instance, and by whose compass, is the moral aspect of such intelligence inserted to temper the pure information? Ultra-intelligence or intellectual advantage without a conscience is a frightening prospect that could be and certainly has been easily weaponized. Think mad scientist, totalitarian demagogue, etc.

Interestingly, this is not a new dilemma, this "rule the world with intelligence but with no conscience and with no humility" pursuit. Theology and ethics, those disciplines that help inform and guide our moral deliberation, have always seriously lagged behind technology and trends. It seems in my short 63 years on this planet, the technological possibilities are racing forward at light speed while ethical and theological core principles for centuries are being replaced with the subjectivity of "my truth."

What that diminishes, of course, is "our truth," that by which we live together in community with common expectations. Granted, often the "our truth" veiled as moral conscience in our past was merely a smokescreen to preserve privilege and advantage, but certain core assumptions of any hopeful culture seem to resonate across the centuries, across the globe, and across religion and philosophy. Things like truth, protecting the vulnerable, not stealing, etc. The 10 Commandments, for instance.

While knowledge is a blessed and necessary pursuit, theology and ethics remind us that it is not ultimate. The Hebrew Scriptures

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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!

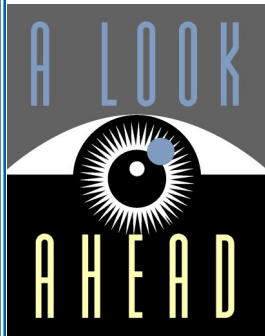
**Information
submitted for
publication must
be received by
Tuesday of Each
week.**

**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!*



August 20

In Isaiah we hear that God's house shall be a house of prayer for all people and that God will gather the outcasts of Israel. The Canaanite woman in today's gospel is a Gentile, an outsider, who is unflinching in her request that Jesus heal her daughter. As Jesus commends her bold faith, how might our church extend its mission to those on the margins of society? In our gathering around word and meal we receive strength to be signs of comfort, healing, and justice for those in need.

underline this early on in Genesis. Remember the garden? And the forbidden tree? That tree had a name: the tree of knowledge of all good and evil. Which is, I believe, the ancient scripture's way of warning us not to make knowledge our God without the clear safeguard of moral deliberation, a pivotal component of our "image of God"-ness. The serpent knew that would be an enticing temptation. "Did God say you would die? No! You won't die if you eat of that tree. God knows if you eat that fruit you'll be just like God because you'll know everything!" It was the serpent's lie that planted the seed of unchecked knowledge as the ultimate essence of God and thus our own pursuit.

How do we know that the people who control Artificial Intelligence have our best interests at heart? Does our being able to do something mean we ought to do that something? Who will ask who will care about questions like "Is it kind? Is it true? Is it helpful?" But let's not forget the very first commandment of the God revealed not in the accumulation or dissemination of knowledge and control so much as in deliverance for the captive and oppressed: "I am the Lord your God who led you out of the land of Egypt. You shall have no other gods before me." Not self, not knowledge. Nothing. So let's rejoice in the good AI will do. But let's not allow it to go unchallenged and unchecked. Even though the disagreements and deliberations of conscience and faith lag way behind, we must never surrender them, lest we lose what we understand to be the essence of humanity created by God and redeemed in Christ.

Walking with you,

Handwritten signature of Tim.

NC Synod Bishop

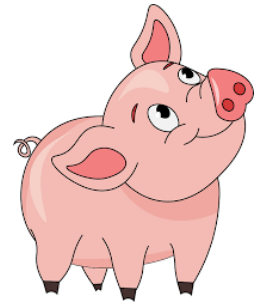


A church secretary answered the phone and heard the caller say, "I want to talk to the chief hog of the trough."

"Sir," she replied, "that is no way to talk about the Reverend. He is the pastor of this church."

"Sorry, Lady," he said. "I just wanted to donate \$100,000 to the church."

Quickly she said, "Just a minute. Here comes the fat pig now!"



?? ? Bible Quiz ? ??

What is Ephesus?

- a. An ancient city where Paul preached to Hellenized Jews
- b. A UNESCO World Heritage Site
- c. An ancient city whose first bishop was St. Timothy
- d. A pizza restaurant in Pittsburgh, PA
- e. The location of the famous, ancient Temple of Artemis



Answer: All of the above



Dear Church Family,

Thank you for the cards, phone calls, food and especially your prayers during my recent medical procedure. The love and support I have felt has been inspiring and uplifting.

*Peace,
Jim Sain*

Ministry in Action - August - September

	August 20	August 27	September 3	September 10
Greeters	David Bynum Johnnie Bynum	James Gantt Margaret Christopher	Phyllis Scronce Susan Boyd	Todd Lanier Vera Lanier
Lector	Randy Zimbaum	Ruth Murphy	John Cromer	Chuck Yoder
Crucifer	Jennifer Little	Matthew Heavner	Jennifer Little	Mary Ellen Bridges
Acolyte	Mary Ellen Bridges	Julie Leonhardt	Jennifer Huskey	Quinlyn Cornwell
Communion Asst	Steve Lounsbury	Vera Lanier	Cathy Lounsbury	David Bynum
Altar Flowers	Available	Available	Available	Available

Monthly Duties August 2023

Councilperson	Ben Robinson			
Altar Guild	Betty King	Vera Lanier	Rhonda Thompson	
Ushers	Rudy Rudisill (Captain)	James Gantt Guy Rudisill	David Bynum Steve Lounsbury	

Matthew 15:10-28

[¹⁰]Jesus called the crowd to him and said to them, "Listen and understand:¹¹it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but it is what comes out of the mouth that defiles." ¹²Then the disciples approached and said to him, "Do you know that the Pharisees took offense when they heard what you said?" ¹³He answered, "Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. ¹⁴Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if one blind person guides another, both will fall into a pit." ¹⁵But Peter said to him, "Explain this parable to us." ¹⁶Then he said, "Are you also still without understanding? ¹⁷Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth enters the stomach, and goes out into the sewer? ¹⁸But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this is what defiles. ¹⁹For out of the heart come evil intentions, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander. ²⁰These are what defile a person, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile."]

²¹Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. ²²Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon." ²³But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, "Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us." ²⁴He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." ²⁵But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." ²⁶He answered, "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." ²⁷She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." ²⁸Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed instantly.

Faith5 Corner by Bob Lake

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

Share: Share your highs and lows

Read: Matthew 15:10-28

Talk: Slowly reflect on the reading. Have you ever asked yourself ‘what really matters?’ These teachings occurred early in Jesus’ ministry when he was still concentrating on the Jewish community. What type of “push-back” do you think Jesus was getting from the leadership of that community? Do you believe that what comes out of the heart is what really matters? Can the heart have good intentions as well as bad intentions? What were the intentions of the Canaanite woman? Were her intentions rooted in faith in Jesus?

Pray: Thank you Jesus for teaching us that what is in our heart is more important than ritual actions. Help us strive for the faith of the Canaanite woman who sought your help. Amen

Bless: “_____, may you always strive for a pure and faithful heart.”



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, Susan Boyd, Polly Bryant, Kathy Cromer, Laura Cromer, Max Edwards, James Gantt, Suzette James, Betty King, Nancy McCoy, Gary and Susan McConnell, Trudy Perkins, Jim Sain, Paula Turner, Joan Warren, Pat Wilburn, Rick Norine and family (cousin of Barbara O'Neill), Evelyn Cochrane (neighbor of Susan McConnell), Barbara Stillwell (sister-in-law of Rusty Rhyne), Tommy London (father of Tonya Lawson), Sherri Beam (friend of Julie Leonhardt), Drew Milholland (Pastor Mike), Jane Smith (mother of Kathy Cromer), Larry Clark (John Lawson), Wayne Dodson (Rusty Rhyne's son David's father-in-law), Anna Lineberger (John Lineberger), Judy Bullard (John Lineberger's grandmother) April Wellman (Susan Boyd), Rosa Guerra (Susan Boyd), Rob Gregor (Susan Boyd), Anita Cable (Ashley Peaslee), Charles Ferguson (son-in-law Judy Blanc), Doug Norwood (Dara Jarrett), Bill Gibbs Jr. (Amy Brown), Bobbie Robinson (Kirk Herbertson)



Dear Emmanuel Lutheran Church Family,

From the bottom of our hearts, we are so thankful to each one of you for your continuous support, love and constant prayer for our family during this very difficult time. Each of you has given us the gift of encouragement and hope and we have been so touched. Each day you came to visit, every detail of the service and sermon, the luncheon, reception, and the music was carefully crafted, well thought out, and impeccably executed. Gary was honored with grace and love, and it was just perfect.

It's hard to put into words the role that you have all played, but we are eternally grateful and continue to be thankful for this church family.

We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers. We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Thessalonians 1:2-3

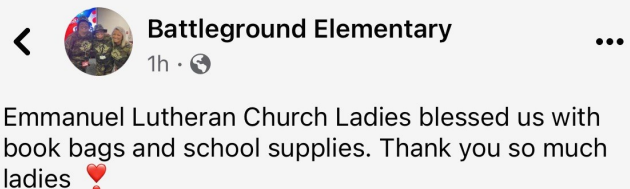
*With love and many blessings,
The McConnell Family*



Outreach took the Book Bags and supplies to Battleground Elementary School Monday morning.

They were able to collect 17 full book bags and received \$1,050. for the donations toward the supplies.

As usual this congregation stepped up to meet the need. You are wonderful!



QUILTING

We will restart quilting on **Tuesday, September 12th** at 9 am in the fellowship hall. **Join us** for fellowship and to help make quilts. **Even if you can't sew** – help to tack, pin, cut, pack, ... Our goal is to ship more than 200 quilts to Lutheran World Relief in early November for distribution worldwide.



If you are unable to join us, you can also help by letting us know when you hear that someone has fabric they would like to donate – especially cotton. We have been most fortunate in the past to receive fabric remnants from a variety of sources that we cut up, sew, and tack into hundreds of quilts. Remnants should at least be 12" square. Thank you.

Contact Carole Lake or Phyllis Scronce for more information or if you can't join us Tuesday mornings but might like to do some work remotely or at another time.



EMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
216 S Aspen St Lincoln, NC 28092

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Adam Long	8/01
Tonya Lawson	8/11
David Wise	8/13
Heather Lackey	8/15
Colleen Lounsbury	8/15
Betty King	8/18
Jim Williams	8/18
Emerie Stinson	8/19
Larry Blanc	8/20
Allison Brown	8/25
Mindy Denton	8/25
Jennifer Little	8/26
Hayden Doehling	8/28
Wayne Little	8/29
Michael Hance	8/31



Seeds of Hope

A PUBLICATION OF
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PHONE: 704-735-9033



*Newsletter Content
Contributors
Bob Lake
Ben Robinson
WELCA
North Carolina Synod*

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.