

# The Royal Messenger

From the desk of Pastor Olsen:

## That Which Endures Forever....

One wonders what the people gathered for the very first time in worship in the newly formed Emmaus Lutheran Church 125 years ago were thinking. They had no idea what was to come in the life of their new church nor what would happen in the community and world around them. In less than 20 years this German speaking congregation would face a world war where the language of the enemy was their own. Then this congregation would face the great depression as those across the land. Then would come another war to end all wars. As the congregation grew, as most churches did following the second world war, **Emmaus would face their own set of challenges** as GE closed and many members left to find jobs.

These people would endure the "civil war" within the LCMS during the 1970's over Holy Scripture. There would be other troubles within this congregation as they had to vote to move the school and build a new one and then actually sell the current facilities for the overall cost of the upkeep and repairs needed on the old campus was too great. Many members left Emmaus as they moved out to the Southwest, leaving a small group of people to face the burden of a large debt for this new school. Then from 2006 to the present, Emmaus has worshipped in a gym, looking forward to the day when they could once again worship in a dedicated building to the glory of God.



*Verbum Domini Manet in Aeternum*  
The Word of the Lord endures forever.

Through the good times and the bad, through the ups and downs, this has always remained at Emmaus, the words of Isaiah 40:9, "*The Word of the Lord endures forever.*" This truth lasts through all time, through famine and plenty, through good and evil, through times of joy and times of sorrow.

Some would say that Emmaus is just a shadow of what it once was. I would say that they are looking at the wrong marker. If you are talking about defining success as numbers, members, dollars etc. then they would be correct. We have less people, both in the church and school and financially less money. But is that the metric that the Church is measured? Has the church growth movement won the day, and the numbers game is what is most important? I would contend that Emmaus is as strong as it ever was. **The Word of the Lord endures, and Christ is the central focus of all we do at the church, school, and preschool.** The Church is the body of Christ, His Holy Bride, and it cannot fail, no matter how many devils the world should fill all eager to devour us.

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**This is His Church, and we are His people, the sheep of His hand.** When we look upon His Bride, we do not gauge its success for the business world or any such movement from the left-hand kingdom seeking to lay down a metric for success. Success is measured according to Isaiah 55, *"<sup>10</sup>For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, <sup>11</sup>so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it."*

The sheep of the Good Shepherd come to receive His gifts in Word and Sacrament regularly and these sheep are hungry for the Living Word as they come to study together under their pastor who loves to teach the Word and preach and administer the Sacraments. The people of Emmaus desire to grow in the grace and knowledge of their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and to faithfully receive His gifts, serve their neighbor in love and courageously confess Christ, not only on Sunday morning, but in their daily lives.

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As Jesus said, *"Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth."* (Joh 17:17 ESV)  
Or as He said in Matthew 24:35, *"Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away."* Or even as St. Paul wrote to the church in Colossi, *"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly"* (Col 3:16 ESV).

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It is on this Holy Scripture, the inspired, inerrant, and infallible Word of God, that Emmaus is grounded and confesses that Christ is our cornerstone on Him alone we build. **We confess Christ crucified and risen for poor miserable sinners such as us. This message has not changed, and I pray that it will not change as the years go by.** For as John declares at the end of His Gospel, *"...these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."* (John 20:31 ESV)

It is that very Word of God, the source and norm of faith and life, that God gives the treasures of Christ, the Means of Grace, and receiving His gifts, we go to live each day in our vocations to thank, praise, serve and obey Him. In this gift of Christ, in the pouring out of His very blood for the forgiveness of our sins, in the very atoning work of Christ, taking upon Himself the full wrath of God, reconciling us to our heavenly Father by His blood, justifying us, that we would be made righteous and given His holiness, do we go forth and joyfully live our vocations all the while gladly hearing and learning His Word. **It has been this at Emmaus for 125 years and by God's grace may it be for each day following for "The Word of the Lord Endures Forever," — Verbum Domini Manet in Aeternum.**

**Blessings in Christ,**

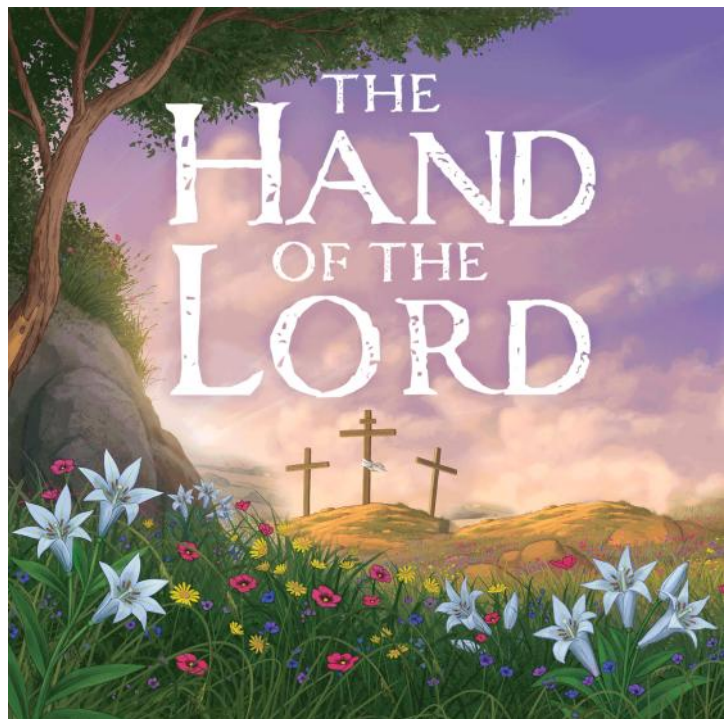


## Lenten Series—The Hand of the Lord

Whether tightening a bolt, crocheting, or typing on a computer, there is so much that we do with our hands. The Greek physician Galen called them the instrument of instruments. **Indeed, hands are instruments that can do a great deal of things.** Hands can be used to heal or hurt, work or wreck, build or break, seize or surrender, and on and on. Hands are so often central to the ways we interact with the world that they have also become figurative symbols of power, control, craftsmanship, and possession. We daily speak of hands in many phrases, such as “Lend a hand,” “Things are out of hand,” “Working together hand in glove,” and “Close at hand.” Moreover, in our modern era of robotic, machine, and computer processing, adding “hand” as a prefix to many words can often communicate something that is personal and intentional. Labeling something as handpicked, handwritten, or hand-made adds a personal touch and significance. **Our Creator has bestowed on us these amazing instruments.**

It is no surprise that mentions of hands appear all over the Bible as God’s Word speaks to us in ways that we can understand. All things are the work of the hand of the Lord (Psalm 102:25). The Lord’s hand is referred to over two hundred times in the Old Testament. The Lord’s hand is active in creation, power, control over happenings of the world, judgment, and salvation. The hand of the Lord was upon Ezekiel when He gave him a vision (Ezekiel 3:22), and the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines in the days of Samuel (1 Samuel 7:13). **The hand of the Lord is both Law and Gospel.**

Perhaps surprisingly, specific references to the “hand of the Lord” are not all that frequent in the New Testament. **However, it is precisely in the New Testament where the hand of the Lord takes on literal meaning.** The One through whom all things were created took on real, literal hands in His incarnation (John 1:1–14). We have several examples throughout Scripture that speak of the way that Christ used His hands alongside His life-giving words to bring forgiveness, life, and salvation. The work of Christ’s hands helps us to see the merciful and personal way that He has con-

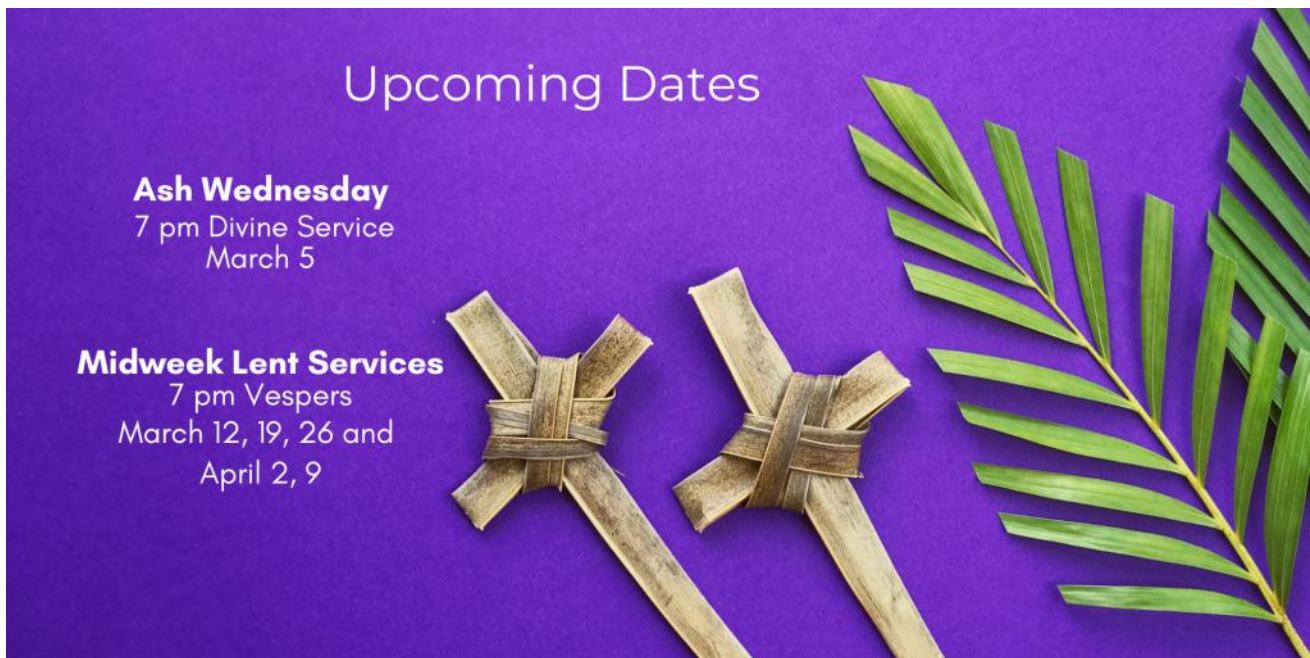


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## ***Lenten Series continued***

descended to us. He has given us something to grasp, even as He holds us. Jesus used His hands to save drowning Peter, to feed the multitudes, to touch those who were unclean, to stop a funeral procession in its tracks, to lift up Jairus's daughter, and to bless the children. **The hand of the Lord has come to us in Jesus.**

On the other hand, the literal and figurative actions of mere human hands in the Bible are often the means of our own sin. After all, our own Lord was "delivered into the hands of men" (Luke 9:44). However, on a greater level, we know that it was the hand of the Lord at work all along, most especially in His crucifixion. Christ laid down His life of His own authority as He allowed Himself to be delivered into the hands of sinful men (John 10:18). His hands were pierced for the sins of the world. His hands rested on Holy Saturday. Yet, on the third day, He rose again. He now holds us in His hands, and no one can snatch us from His hand (John 10:28). **Our Lord has hands, real hands. Jesus has accomplished all that we need. Amazingly, He takes our manipulative, distorted, self-serving hands and restores them into useful hands for His purposes, both to literally use them in service and to make our whole lives into His instruments of witness, service, and praise.**





## **Board of Finance Update**

As of our fiscal mid-year, we are on track with the total Emmaus Lutheran Church, School and Preschool budget! Keep in mind, we still have half the year to go, and we look forward to sharing more information at our next congregational meeting. As always, we greatly need your faithful support and prayers to carry out God's work here at Emmaus Lutheran Church, School and Preschool.

Thank you!  
Gregg Kiess, Treasurer

P.S. Watch announcements for our next Finance Town Hall!



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## **Thrivent Reminder**

Eligible clients with membership can recommend where Thrivent distributes some of its charitable grant funds. These recommendations are shared by directing Choice Dollars to enrolled nonprofit organizations, including churches.

### **Eligibility requirements**

To be eligible to direct Choice Dollars as part of Thrivent Choice®, you must be a client with benefit membership.\* Individual eligibility is also based on at least one of the following:

- ♦ Having \$750 or more in annual billed premiums of qualifying life and health insurance products.
- ♦ Having \$20,000 or more in contract value of qualifying life insurance and annuity products. Eligibility is determined monthly and reevaluated on an annual basis.

Every little bit helps when you own Thrivent products and are entitled to this benefit! Questions? Call me at: 432-5228.

Barb Kanning,  
Congregational Advocate

**thrivent**

## Letter from the Principal

**JUMP DAY** is an opportunity for the younger grade students to JUMP into the next grade level, for a chance to see what happens in that grade level. We are thankful for our fabulous teachers and aides that help to make this fun event happen.

### Enrollment for 2025-2026 School Year

Enrollment is currently open for returning students, new students may begin enrolling February 3rd. If you know of anyone who is looking for a school home, please encourage them to consider Emmaus. We are excited to share God's love; schedule a tour and learn more about us.

### Annual School Auction

The annual school auction "Adventure Awaits" will take place March 22nd in the gym. The auction provides additional funds to help and support our ministry of educating God's children. It is also a wonderful time for Christian Fellowship. Tickets are available online or in the office. We are looking for donations for the silent and live auctions. Please contact the office if you can help.

Thank you for all you do to support the ministry of Emmaus Lutheran School, the students, families and staff. **You are a blessing.**

### Growing up into Christ.

Blessings,  
Esther Spanos

#### JUMP DAY 2025



Principal Spanos leads the children in games.



Kindergartners learn about 1st grade from Mrs. Durlacher.



Mrs. Hardman, our Kindergarten teacher, with the Preschoolers.

## Women's Guild Update

There is lots to report to you on what is happening with the Guild!

First, we want to say a sincere thank you to every Emmaus member who baked and all those who bought goodies at our December **Cookie Fair**. Our profit from all the delicious cookies, Rada cutlery, Marian's super jams, and kitchen towels was **\$2,471.00**. We also had a good profit from our Kringle sale in November.

With these proceeds, we were able to fund many worthwhile projects and expenses at our January meeting. Our allocations include 2025 recurring costs that we cover each year, plus four other requests.

**Recurring payments** total approximately between \$2,500 and \$3,000, and include:

- ♦ Portals of Prayer subscription
- ♦ Fort Wayne Lutheran newspaper subscription
- ♦ Altar Guild supplies, including Communion, Baptism, and Confirmation needs;
- ♦ Bulletin print and clip art licensing
- ♦ Member Caller charges
- ♦ Pulpit Supplies
- ♦ Choir and bell choir needs

We also approved covering expenses for miscellaneous and one-off projects. Those **four projects** are:

1. Altar Guild - \$150.00 for some replacement fair linens.
2. Megan Rosswurm - \$500.00 to help with Colloquy class fees.
3. School - \$500.00 for a new rug in the Kindergarten classroom.
4. Preschool - \$200.00 for replacement toys/supplies.

We also will be helping with 125th Anniversary costs for special projects.

Our next meetings will be held at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, February 12 and Wednesday, March 12th. **Join us if you can!**

Once again, thank you for your support!

Barb Kanning, Secretary





## Preschool News

Tours have begun and registration to the community opens up on February 3 for Preschool. **Current families and church families may start to register right now!** If you are interested in registering for preschool please reach out to Mrs. Olsen for an information packet and a tour of the preschool as soon as possible as we expect that we will fill rather quickly based on the amount of interest we are receiving about registration.

Preschool is looking forward to **singing in worship on Sunday, February 9**. Please be on the lookout for our families and welcome them warmly. Many of our families do not have a church home and this is a great way for them to start to feel welcome here at Emmaus!

A huge thank you to everyone who brought in their yarn, buttons and old Christmas cards. **This month we are looking for paper towel tubes and the fronts and backs of cereal boxes.** Our children love making art projects out of things like this! It's an easy way to help our Preschool ministry!

In Christ,  
Joann Olsen  
Preschool Director

## From Father to Son

Monday, February 24  
7 PM

Join us for a  
FATHERS ONLY  
Bible Study

*Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.*  
Ephesians 6:4

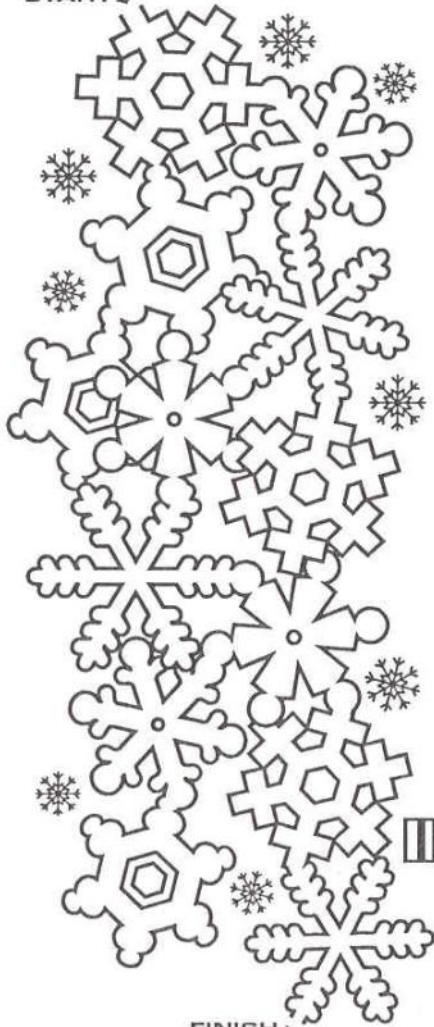




## A WINTER WONDERMAZE

Find your way through the snowy maze.

START



FINISH

## Just for KIDS

Look around and you will see lots of different colors.  
Many Bible verses have colors in them.

Find each verse. Write the color found there in the boxes.

From top-to-bottom the darker boxes will tell you what  
all of these colors together make!

Psalms 92:14

Psalms 52:8

Isaiah 1:18

Daniel 7:9

Luke 16:19

Isaiah 63:2

Isaiah 1:18

Exodus 28:31

Judges 8:26



### BIBLE TRIVIA

Q. Who fought a lion on a snowy day?

A. Benaiah (2 Samuel 23:20)

### Answers:

Psalms 92:14 green; Psalms 52:8 olive; Isaiah 63:2 red; Isaiah 1:18 scarlet; Daniel 7:9 white; Exodus 28:31 blue; Judges 8:26 gold. All these colors together make - God's World

# SUPPORT a STUDENT

## Invest in their Faith and Future



### YOUR DONATION WILL:

- ✓ SUPPORT TUITION COSTS
- ✓ HELP COVER CLASSROOM RESOURCES & MATERIALS
- ✓ SHARE THE LOVE OF JESUS

Emmaus Lutheran Church,  
School & Preschool  
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Fort Wayne, IN 46825  
[emmausfortwayne.org](http://emmausfortwayne.org)



## News from Handbell Choir

Do you love making music?  
No need to carry a tune! If you can count to four, you can join Handbells! We welcome beginners.

We are in need of a couple of Adult Handbell players this year. We would love to have you join us on Thursday nights from 6:00-7:00 p.m.

If you have any questions, see Joann Olsen.



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## Anniversary Committee

On January 1, 1900, 750 members of Emmanuel Lutheran Church formed a new congregation called Emmaus Lutheran Church. They called a Pastor, built a new church and the following year opened up a new school. That congregation was located at the corner of Broadway and Creighton Avenue in south central Fort Wayne.

As a congregation, we will be celebrating our 125th Anniversary of the formation of the congregation. Plans are underway to develop a series of events during 2025.



**Let's make this an important year that we focus on the past, the present, and the future of Emmaus congregation.** We have so much to be thankful to Almighty God for the numerous blessings He has given our congregation. Our history is rich, having made a significant contribution to the growth of Lutheranism in the greater Fort Wayne area.

Bill Bradley, Chairman  
125th Anniversary Committee

## 2024-2025 Officers, Board Chairmen & Head Elder of Emmaus Lutheran Church

**President:**

*Paul Stockinger*

**Vice President:**

*Members of Emmaus*

**Secretary:**

*Dr. David Reichwage*

**Treasurer:**

*Gregg Kiess*

**Business Manager:**

*Jamelyn Rigdon*

**Board of Outreach:**

*Vacant*

**Board of Christian Service:**

*Stacey Durlacher*

**Board of Christian Education:**

*Jessica Barkdull*

**Board of Finance:**

*Gregg Kiess*

**Board of Parish Publicity & Promotion:**

*Vacant*

**Board of Properties:**

*Chris Durlacher*

**Emmaus School Board:**

*Sam Rose*

**Board of Elders:**

*James Heeren, Chairman*

### Emmaus Lutheran Church

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[www.emmausfortwayne.org](http://www.emmausfortwayne.org)

PLEASE  
PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

