

# The Acolyte

# August 2022



## Emanuel Lutheran Church

366 Cohansey-Friesburg Road  
P. O. Box 363  
Elmer, NJ 08318  
Phone: 856-451-5669

## Sunday Opportunities:

Lakeside Worship through September  
Worship at 9:00 a.m.  
in-person and via *Facebook live*  
The Rev. Mark A. Werner, Pastor

*Emanuel Lutheran Church is a community of faith, leading people to Christ.*

## What's Important to Emanuel?

What are our values? Values answers the questions, "What is most important to me, to us? What defines us? What is our culture? What are we about?"

*Values come in all shapes and sizes. They are present in our families, our workplaces, and our churches. We never live without values. We have a set of values that define and govern who we are and what we do. We pick up what is important by what is emphasized, talked about, or acted upon. \**

So, take a moment and think about what you see as Emanuel's values. Make a list here.

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Now that you have thought about it, take some time to complete the Shared Values Bible Study on the back of this newsletter. Then compare your answers above to the list you come up with after completing the Values Bible Study. Then, hang on to your thoughts, ideas and answers to the Bible study so that we can discuss our shared values later as a congregation.

\*reprinted from Navigator Church Ministries

## AUGUST LECTORS

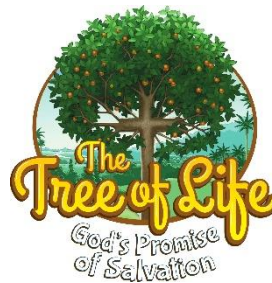
August 7, Dianne Hermanson  
August 14, Allan Hermanson  
August 21, Wayne Knerr  
August 28, Mike Clarke



## AUGUST ACTIVITIES AT EMANUEL

August 1-4 – Vacation Bible School  
August 25 – Evangelism Committee meeting  
August 28 – Return to school blessing during worship

## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL



VBS starts tomorrow with the theme: "The Tree of Life: God's Promise of Salvation." We will start with a light supper at 5:30 p.m. Following that will be stories, music, crafts, games and snacks, wrapping up at 8:00 p.m. It is not too late! Let Pastor

Mark know if you want to join us in four fun-filled evenings of fun, food and fellowship with God and our community of faith.

## AUGUST CELEBRATIONS

August is one of our biggest "special days" months. Here are the birthday folks:

- |                     |                   |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| 2 Faye Brooks       | 24 Dustin Wilson  |
| 6 Ashley Huff       | Nathaniel Pilling |
| 10 Terry McAllister | 25 Nancy Wilson   |
| 12 Allan Hermanson  | 26 Evan Cox       |
| 13 Audra Rinnier    | 29 Dan Pilling    |
| Brian Bradley       | 30 Lauren Knerr   |
| 14 Heather Knerr    | Taylor Knerr      |
| 18 Ken Hinkle       |                   |

Celebrating an anniversary are David and Nancy Wilson on the 1<sup>st</sup>.

## AUGUST ALTAR GUILD

Dianne Hermanson

## AUGUST USHERS

Donald Bell / Jordan Werner

## STUFF THE TRUCK



Once again, we will be gathering donations to “stuff the truck” for NALC Disaster Response at the AMR convocation in October.

The Lutheran Church Women will be collecting items to complete 12 school kits. The Men’s Group will gather items for 6 flood buckets. These kits will then be transported to the convocation in October and then taken to the warehouse in Ohio for use in disaster relief circumstances.

Sign-up sheets for donations to both kits are available at worship.

## CEMETERY UPKEEP

It is that time of year again when the cemetery lawn needs regular mowing. Thank you to Donald Bell for taking such good care of our cemetery, keeping it mowed, trimmed and picked up all summer long. It sure makes for a beautiful Sunday setting.

If anyone would like to make a donation towards the cost of maintaining our cemetery, use your church offering envelope and mark “cemetery” with your dollar amount, or use an envelope in your pew and mark it for “cemetery,” and put it into the collection plate.

*Thanks! Wayne May*

## STEWARDSHIP

Financials as of June 2022:

YTD Income: \$76,837.00

YTD Expense: \$65,620.89

YTD Net Income: \$11,216.56

Total yearly budgeted income/expense: \$165,009.00

*friesburg filosophy*

Don’t count your years...  
make your years count!

## HEADS UP! LOOK WHAT’S COMING!

Check out the following opportunities to help, to serve or simply to participate.

### **Gospel Music Festival – Sunday, August 28**

Join the Seventh Day Baptist Church in Shiloh for their 13<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their Gospel Music Festival. There will be tents to keep you out of the sun and free food and beverages. Festivities are scheduled from 2:30 to 6:00 p.m.

If you are interested in sharing your musical talent, please contact Charlotte Chroniger. A stage, keyboard and sound system will be available for anyone who wants to participate. Our own Wayne Knerr will be performing early on during the event.

### **Theological Conference**

– **Thursday, September 15**

The Atlantic Mission Region presents the 4<sup>th</sup> annual theological conference with the Rev. Dr. Paul R. Hinlicky, Lutheran theologian and author, as the keynote speaker.

This conference will be held at Mt. Union Lutheran Church, 5000 Middleburg Road, Taneytown, MD from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Registration and fellowship begin at 8:30 a.m. There is a registration fee of \$25, which includes lunch and a book signing. Registration deadline is September 6. Visit [www.Atlantic-NALC.org](http://www.Atlantic-NALC.org) for more information.

### **Tractor Sunday – September 25**

Help is needed! It may seem that the end of September is a long way off, but when you are planning a large event, that time flies! Patsy Madden is the co-chair of the committee that puts it all together. This year, she is looking for a co-chair to help plan and organize the activities for the youth. You may be the very person she needs. Please speak with Pastor Mark or Patsy if you are interested or know of someone who may be interested.

### **Atlantic Mission Region Convocation**

– **Friday, October 21 and Saturday, October 22**

This year’s convocation will be held at Annapolis Evangelical Lutheran Church in Edgewater, MD with a theme of *Trust in the Lord in Anxious Times*. The convocation begins at 10:30 a.m. on Friday with registration and lunch and continues through 2:30 p.m. on Saturday. This location is close enough that several people could participate.

## WHO'S ON COUNCIL?

Who are they? What do they do? How do I contact them? Here is a little information about each member of council and which ministries they are involved with. Feel free to contact any of them if you have questions or concerns or want to join them on a committee.

**Mike Clarke** has been a member of Emanuel for over 22 years. He is married to Dawn and has two daughters, Jenna and Maddie. Mike shares that he came to Emanuel through his softball experiences with Pastor Ed Wiker who taught him to appreciate the small things that happen each day so the big things are more noticeable. Mike serves because he wants to give back to his church community. He currently holds the position of Council President and is part of both the Finance and Stewardship Committees.

**Steven Kennedy** has been a member of Emanuel since 1997. He and Holly have been married for 40 years and have been blessed with two sons, Jeffrey who is with the Lord, Andrew and his wife Colleen, and daughter Barbara with her husband Lucas. They are also blessed with two grandchildren, Theodore and Samuel. Steve shares, "God has been part of my entire life. I have been blessed to have the Lord by my side through joy and tragedy. When asked what is the greatest gift you can give your children? It is faith in the Lord." Steve serves to support the church and my community of faith and is part of the Mutual Ministry Committee.

**Kyle Knerr** joined Emanuel over 33 years ago shortly after his family moved to the area. His wife, Heather, and daughters, Taylor and Lauren, are also members. Kyle shares that he is here to serve the Lord and this community of believers. You have probably seen him serving as usher and helping set up and tear down for the summer outside service. Kyle was chair of the Call Committee, which successfully brought us Pastor Mark, and currently chairs the Anniversary Committee, preparing for our 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year.

**Wayne Knerr** also joined Emanuel over 33 years ago a few years after he moved his family to the area. He is married to Mary Ellen. They have two sons, Kyle and Klay. Wayne has been a Lutheran all his life, although his uncle baptized him at another denomination. Wayne feels blessed to have a Savior who asks all of us to serve, and he has answered the call. He has been President of Council several times and is currently Vice President. He is also part of the Stewardship, Christian Education, Worship & Music and Anniversary Committees.

**Brenda Mace** has been a part of the community of Emanuel for 58 years. Her grandfather, William Joyce, was affiliated with the men's group and was superintendent of Sunday School, while her grandmother, Laura Joyce, was active with the women's group. Her sisters, Kathy Willis and Cindy Cairone, and mother, Elnora Mace, all sang in the choir. Brenda currently serves as Chair of the Fellowship Committee and with the Mutual Ministry Committee.

**Chrissy Smith** says Emanuel is her home church and has been for 51 years. She is married to Scott and they have two children, Parker and Paige. Chrissy feels blessed to have God in her life since birth, giving her life to him at a Billy Graham crusade when she was very young. She is a former Sunday School teacher and was part of the Pioneer Club. Chrissy currently chairs the Witness/Outreach/Evangelism Committee. This is her first year on council.

**Sarah Wilson** became a member of Emanuel 17 years ago. She is married to Dustin. Sarah says, "Watching the world go crazy and drifting farther from God over the past few years has made me reflect on my faith and given me the desire to grow my faith. I have joined a discipleship group and made a personal goal to build and strengthen my relationship with God in a time when I feel sharing His Word is more important than ever," This is her first year as a member of council; however, she has served as Treasurer and hold that position now.

## KEEPING FIRST THINGS FIRST

By Pr. Brian Triller

“Do not be anxious.” Jesus gives this command to His Jewish audience three times during His Sermon on the Mount. (See Matthew 6:25-33.) He tells His hearers not to worry about food, drink, or clothing, explaining how the God who provides for the flowers of the fields and the birds of the air will certainly provide for His chosen people.

During this sermon, Jesus talks about how unbelievers (the Gentiles) anxiously seek food, drink, and clothing, making it clear that focusing on the material needs of life as a top priority is opposed to God's will.

Jesus tells His Jewish audience that God already knows in advance what their physical needs are. Then He goes on to give them a command which, when followed, removes the need to be anxious about material needs.

*“But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”* Matthew 6:33 (ESV)

Jesus wanted the top priority of His Jewish audience to be seeking God's kingdom and His righteousness. Jesus told them that they were wasting energy by worrying needlessly about their physical needs, because God provides these things as His people seek first His kingdom and His righteousness.

Matthew 6:33 is a command not only for the Jews who first heard it during the Sermon on the Mount. It is also a command for every member of Jesus' Church since its birth on Pentecost about 2,000 years ago.

Jesus commands all of us who are baptized believers to seek God's kingly rule over us every day, allowing Him to be in control of our lives as our Lord. And Jesus commands us to live in God's righteousness every day, our having been put right with our heavenly Father through Spirit-given faith in Jesus Christ as our Savior.

**Prayer:** *Dear Father, as Your baptized children, we are commanded by Your Son Jesus to seek first Your kingdom and Your righteousness. Having received Your Holy Spirit in Baptism, may we employ the Spirit's gift of faith daily to obey this command given by Your Son. We trust You to provide for all of our bodily needs until that day when we join You in the fullness of Your kingdom. Dear Father, we give You thanks as we pray all this in the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ! Amen!*

## COMMITTEES OF EMANUEL

### *Anniversary Committee*

Chairs are Cindy Cairone and Kyle Knerr. Members include Brenda Mace, Patsy Madden, Susah Shields, Chrissy Smith, Wayne Knerr, and Pastor Mark.

### *Christian Education*

This committee includes Helen Cobb and Wayne Knerr, who share chair responsibilities, and Pastor Mark.

### *Fellowship*

Brenda Mace chairs this committee and serves with Chrissy Smith and Sarah Wilson.

### *Finance*

Sarah Wilson chairs this committee with Elizabeth Brooks, Mike Clarke, and Wayne May as fellow members.

### *Mutual Ministry*

Pastor Mark heads up this committee with Steve Kennedy, Brenda Mace and Chrissy Smith.

### *Property*

Jason Cobb and Wayne May have taken on the responsibilities of this committee.

### *Safety & Security*

Mike Clarke and Brenda Mace make sure we are both safe and secure.

### *Stewardship*

Mike Clarke is chair. Also serving as stewards are Allan Hermanson, Wayne Knerr and Pastor Mark.

### *Witness/Outreach/Evangelism*

Chrissy Smith, as chair, meets with Patsy Madden and Pastor Mark on this committee.

### *Worship & Music*

Chaired by Patsy Madden, this committee also includes Nancy Cobb, Dianne Hermanson, Wayne May, Susan Shields, Lora Sweeney and Pastor Mark.

As you can see, some individuals serve on multiple committees. Additional members are always welcome. New and fresh ideas and input help with enthusiasm. Which committee could you help with? Speak with Pastor Mark or any committee chair to see how you can join one of these ministries.

# Pastor's Perspective

August 2022

*"But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you have learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 2 Timothy 3:14-15*

In the coming weeks, many parents will be doing back to school shopping. The last weeks of summer are precious moments to get in some last vacation, but also to get ready for the coming school year. It is in the getting ready for the coming school year that I am writing about.

While this is geared toward parents, it is important for all of us to know what is happening in our schools and the important work ahead of the whole Christian Church. While this may come across to some as being a bit on the political side, I am writing to share this information and focus on the spiritual aspect what I'm writing.

In 2019, The Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey passed a new law, signed by Governor Murphy. The law requires all public schools to include in their instruction "...on the political, economic, and social contributions of persons with disabilities and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people, in an appropriate place in the curriculum of middle school and high school students as part of the district's implementation of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards."<sup>i</sup> This was to be implemented in school districts for the 2020-2021 school year but was delayed for implementation as a result of COVID until the 2022-2023 school year.

Now, this may seem rather innocent, especially when this is yoked with individuals with disabilities. However, the door has been opened for a much wider teaching than what the law adopted, particularly with regards to those identifying as lgbtqia+. What do I mean? Garden state Equality has provided an LGBTQ Inclusive Curriculum Program for schools to use which engages all grade levels (Yes, Kindergarten through 12 Grade) across all classes on pro-lgbtqia+. Lessons can be as simple as a kindergarten class practicing which pronouns they like to go by at school. Furthermore, because such lessons can be incorporated in all school subjects there is little ability to opt out of lessons regarding lgbtqia+. Parents should check their school's policies.

More disturbing is the guidance the New Jersey Department of Education is providing schools. "A school district shall accept a student's asserted gender identity; *parental consent is not required*. Further, a student need not meet any threshold diagnosis or treatment requirements to have his or her gender identity recognized and respected by the district, school or school personnel. Nor is a legal or court-ordered name change required. There is *no affirmative duty for any school district personnel to notify a student's parent or guardian of the student's gender identity or expression*. There may be instances where a parent or guardian of a minor student disagrees with the student regarding the name and pronoun to be used at school and in the student's education records. A parent or guardian may object to the minor student's name change request. School districts should consult their board attorney regarding the minor student's civil rights and protections under the NJLAD."<sup>ii</sup> This guidance allows school districts to keep you from knowing this important detail of our children's lives.

Some of you may wonder what this has to do with our congregation. The answer to that is simple. Children from our congregation will know classmates from school who are identifying as another gender, and they may be asked and/or demanded to use whatever pronoun their classmate chooses. It is also deeply concerning that school districts in our area may abide by this guidance from NJDOE and be keeping important information from parents. With all this said, there are things to keep before us.

1. The truth does not change. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply...'" (Genesis 1:27-28a.) While there are rare instances where some are born with atypical genitalia<sup>iii</sup>, the overwhelming majority of babies are born boys or girls.
2. Read the scriptures. The Bible is our authority in matters of faith and life, particularly how we live out our faith in daily life. Furthermore, be assured that at Emanuel we will teach what is found in the Bible as to how we live a life of faith.
3. Parents need to have open communication with their children. Be involved. Know what is going on in their lives. Reinforce the teachings of God's Word. "Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old, he will not depart from it." (Proverbs 22:6)

4. Pray. What we are seeing in this law and guidance from the NJDOE is an example of spiritual warfare. The devil is the master of deception and half-truths who desires to lead us away from God. Pray first of all for our children to be able to withstand the attacks of the evil one with the full armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-20). Pray also for those who have bought into the lies and are identifying as lgbtqia+. Pray for our school officials and teachers who are in the crosshairs of having to abide with state guidelines and those with the courage to stand against these guidelines.
5. Be kind. Kindness is a fruit of the Spirit. (Galatians 5:22-23). We can and should be kind to those with whom we disagree. Being kind doesn't mean we condone falsehood. It is also important that we demonstrate kindness and the love of God when that is not reciprocated.
6. Be aware of the policies of your school district and don't be afraid to speak out against those policies that undermine parental authority.
7. For those who wish to be further involved, I can provide you information about Team Protect Your Children. This group of New Jersey residents are Christians who not only pray for change but also lobby for changes in the law.

We are living in a world that is very different from the world God intended. As Christians, we are in the world, but we are not to be of the world. We do not follow the world's values, but the values that are the Kingdom of God. "But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself." (Philippians 3:20)

At the bottom of this article are footnotes where you can verify what I have stated in this article. Should you have any questions, please let me know.

*God bless,  
Pastor Mark*

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<sup>1</sup> C.18A:35-4:35

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nj.gov/education/students/safety/sandp/transgender/Guidance.pdf>. I've italicized some of the guidance for emphasis.

<sup>1</sup> [https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/22470-atypical-genitalia-formerly-known-as-ambiguous-genitalia#:~:text=atypical%20genitalia\)%3F-,Atypical%20genitalia%2C%20formerly%20known%20as%20ambiguous%20genitalia%2C%20is%20a%20rare,have%20features%20of%20both%20sexes.](https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/22470-atypical-genitalia-formerly-known-as-ambiguous-genitalia#:~:text=atypical%20genitalia)%3F-,Atypical%20genitalia%2C%20formerly%20known%20as%20ambiguous%20genitalia%2C%20is%20a%20rare,have%20features%20of%20both%20sexes.)

Keep the questions coming. A few weeks ago I sent out an email asking people to give me questions that you'd like me to address in coming newsletter articles, sermons, Bible Studies, etc. The questions I have received so far deal with the broad topic of what happens when we die. I'll be addressing those in the fall as we approach church festivals that address these questions.

## VALUES BIBLE STUDY

**Please spend some time studying the suggested Bible verses. Pray and ask the Lord for fresh insights on the values He desires to plant in our community of faith. Then keep the study for further discussion with the congregation later this year.**

Part One: What does the Bible say about values? The Bible is a book of values. We learn about what is important to our Lord through the example of His people and His explicit instructions to us. The following passages are a sample of some of God's values, the essentials that are most important to Him. In the right-hand column, write out in your own words what value or values the passage addresses.

Passage	God's Values
<p><b>Jeremiah 9:23-24</b> — <sup>23</sup>"Thus says the LORD: 'Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, <sup>24</sup>but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight,' declares the LORD."</p> <p><b>Matthew 28:18-20</b> — <sup>18</sup> "And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'"</p> <p><b>John 13:34-35</b> — <sup>34</sup>"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. <sup>35</sup>By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."</p> <p><b>Romans 1:16-17</b> — <sup>16</sup>"For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. <sup>17</sup>For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, 'The righteous shall live by faith.'"</p>	<p>(Continued on next page...)</p>

Passage	God's Values
<p><b>Ephesians 4:10-16</b> — <sup>10</sup>He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things. <sup>11</sup>And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, <sup>12</sup>to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, <sup>13</sup>until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, <sup>14</sup>so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. <sup>15</sup>Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, <sup>16</sup>from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love."</p>	

1. Summarize the values you identified from the preceding verses.

2. Are there any additional biblical values you would add?

(Continued on next page...)



3. From the values listed, pick your top six-ten.

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.
- f.
- g.
- h.
- i.
- j.

Note: The contents of this three-page Bible study are taken from a longer Navigators Bible study titled *Church Culture—Purposeful Leaders: Cultures Are Built Through Shared Values* © Navigator Church Ministries. Navigatorchurchministries.org Version 2.0. All Scripture, unless otherwise noted, is from the English Standard Version of the Bible.

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