

# THE WITTENBERG DOOR

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ELCBREMERTON.ORG

EMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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**In case of an Emergency**

Please call  
Pastor Tim  
on his cell  
phone

360-286-1090

## Vicar's Message

*Now What???*

I'd like to introduce you to one of the most dangerous questions for a Christian that the English language can construct: "Now what?" I don't mean that it is sinful to ask it, or somehow *evil* in it's construction; I don't imagine some cult trying to summon wicked spirits by chanting it repeatedly or shudder when I hear it spoken. But it is nonetheless a risky thing to ask, and can have consequences for our daily walk with the Lord.

Let's break it down word by word. By "now" we mean "right now." Not in the near future, not in the far future, no - time now let's get it done there's no room for waiting. By "what" we mean one of two things, "what do I do?" and "what is happening?" It can make us feel either a dreadful sense of unease over what we must now do, or make us feel a great deal of contempt for whatever - or whoever - might be going on in our lives. If we ask "now what?" as a way of asking what to *do*, we are saying that we are eager to continue or progress or get things done, and at this very instant - time now. If we ask "now what?" as a way of asking what is *going on*, we are saying that we wish something *wasn't* going on; I've never heard someone ask "now what?" in excitement, only in derision.

In my early life as a Christian, I was always asking "now what?" in the first sense. So I believed in Jesus for the first time, and I would ask my pastor "now what?" So then I joined a small group at his direction, and after settling into the weekly Bible study, I would ask my pastor "now what?" So then I got baptized, and found myself with new life in the Lord, but I still came up to my beleaguered pastor and asked...you guessed it... "now what?"

It never ended so long as I was a Baptist. There was always something more to do, some greater work I could accomplish or sin that I could conquer. By the end of my time at an Evangelical church, I was delving head first into the mysticism of the Desert Fathers (early Christian monks) and A.W. Tozer, all so that I could finally answer that question "now what?" with "now this."

*continued on page 2*

**Pastor Tim is currently on vacation and will have a message next month.**

## Vicar's Message continued

Over time, I started asking “now what?” in the second sense, of anger or exhaustion. Paul says never to grow weary in doing good (Galatians 6:9), but I wearied myself with a simple question. It never ended, and there was always some new sin I was dealing with or a new task at school. The more we do while trying to earn God’s favor or do right in His eyes, the more we ask “now what?” to merit more of His favor, the more we will begin to hate our own works. I know that nothing good dwells in me (Romans 7:18), and no amount of my efforts can truly please God enough to *earn* something from Him, but I didn’t know it back then. I just worked, working off guilt from my sins and trying to work toward rewards from God. So instead I despaired of righteousness, I got burned out on burning bright, and in the face of a seemingly unpleasable God, I was ready to throw in the towel and give up on my walk for Him. I was almost convinced that the Christian life was either too hard for a sinner like myself, or impossible to begin with.

Then, by the grace of God, I met Luther, started reading the Confessions, and they pointed me to what the Scriptures truly say about our lives and answer the “now what?” once and for all. The believer’s works *flow* from faith naturally, they will come readily without our anxiety to do them (Ephesians 2:10). God knows my weaknesses, but is pleased to take care of me at Confession, in my Baptism, at the Lord’s Table, and in hearing the Gospel preached – week in and week out. I was shocked to find out, as I read through the Book of Concord that, instead of being a God of pure *requirement*, our Lord *loves* us and takes care of us. God does not merely tell us to measure up; He gives us the Law and says “now let’s walk Hand in hand through this.” I can be at ease, and trust that God will, on account of His Son who died for me, make sure that the works are taken care of. *Then* I can answer the “now what?” with the simple, pure words of Micah for a daily walk:

*He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? – Mic.6:8*

Pastor Blake Kilbourne



Last month we were fortunate to be able to include \$250 in perishable food for our local food bank, thanks to Thrivent and to Larry and Sally Farner that made this happen.

***Our next First Fruits Sunday is February 2nd***



Last month Carl and Melody appeared on Channel 13 news. Their generosity extends beyond their giving at church. This was a sock drive that happened in Port Orchard. I am sure you can recognize their smiling faces.

Thank You, Miki, for capturing this moment and sending in on to the rest of us..

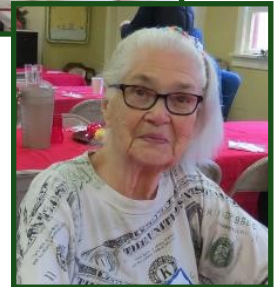
## Our Annual Advent/Christmas Potluck



Sharon and Rhonda blest us  
with their special music!



We always celebrate by singing some of the traditional carols.



Carol and Miki always plan such a special potluck for us. Just right way to begin the Advent Season. Thank you , you two.

The story from Isaiah was shared about the shoot of Jesse coming up out of the stump of a tree. Nathan helped to re-inact this inspirational Biblical story.





The Annual Christmas Pageant

The miracle of Jesus birth told through the children's voices.





Special Thanks to all that purchased Christmas Poinsettias



Our Christmas Eve Worship Service is always a special time!



Special thanks to Mary Moen for her wonderful pictures!



**January Birthdays**

18 .....Dolly Williams

26 .....Gladyce Castagnola

29 .....Larry Ficca

29 .....Miki Turowski

**January Anniversaries**

14 .....Mike & Carverlyne Prothero

**February Birthdays**

2 .....Tiffany Johnson

5 .....Pat Alcantra

11 .....Patrick Gehring

14 .....Ward Erickson IV

15 .....Bob Klempan

12 .....Gail Campbell

17 .....Brandee Haynes  
Childcare Instructor

23 .....Jim Turowski

27 .....James Tewksbury

I am sure that there are many members that I don't have your birthdates or anniversary dates. Any additions or corrections please contact the newsletter editor, Sharie Adrig at [gadrig@comcast.net](mailto:gadrig@comcast.net).

Our Church Annual Meeting is January 26th following our worship service. Please plan on attending this very important meeting.

**Members Serving in January**

Altar Guild .....Jo Ellen Klempan

Reader .....Glen Adrig

**Members Serving in February**

Altar Guild ..... TBA

Reader .....Carol Henning

**Sunday School for all ages!**

Sunday School for all ages will resume next Sunday at 9:00.

**Men's breakfast meets the first Saturday at 8:00 am. The location is Der Blokken in Manette. Questions? Talk to Larry Farner or Pastor Tim.**

**Your help during coffee hour?**

Thanks to all who are signing up to host coffee hour! If you are interested, the sign up sheet is on the counter in the fellowship hall! Thank you to Carol R. for being our coordinator for coffee hour. Thanks to Rose L. for all your help in the kitchen during coffee hour.

If you are not able to host a coffee hour some of us are giving monetary contributions to help cover the cost. Contributions can be given to Carol Reece.

Just a reminder! If we have snow and church is cancelled Glen will send out an email notice. Make sure Glen has your email.

