

THE WITTENBERG DOOR

FEBRUARY 2025 EMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH ELCBREMERTON.ORG
 2509 PERRY AVE. BREMERTON WA 98310



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Pastor's Message

On February 1st, 2025 our new Council President Larry Farner and members of Council along with leadership group team leaders and key leaders in Church ministry came together to discern and then plan key goals and hoped for ministries in the Life of Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Bremerton. Each person was asked to pray and consider key goals and hoped for results that we have been appreciating, look forward to continuing and would like to suggest beginning in the life and ministry of Emmanuel Lutheran Church. Each person was able to write down and then share their input, and discuss why they felt those items were important and would be a blessed addition to the planning and doing life of our Church as members of the Body of Christ here at our church. For the opening devotion, I referred to Jesus' calling of His disciples by saying, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; and teaching them all that which I have commanded you. And Lo, I am with you always, unto the end of the age!" (Matthew 28:18-20).

Along with this reminder of the Lord's calling upon our lives and His Great Commission to Emmanuel Lutheran and the Church of every age, I reminded the group that to ask guidance from the Lord for all that is to come, we do well to plan our plans and hope our hopes, in prayer and in submission to our Lord and his Holy Word (Christ Jesus and Scripture). In essence, we likewise pray that His will and His plan be done, as it is done in heaven (Lord's Prayer; Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4).

As Martin Luther is credited to have said regarding the Small Catechism and the Lord's Prayer (2nd Petition "Thy Will be done on earth as it is in heaven") "Praise God, because God's Will is always done".

After considering these things and opening with prayer, our group went on to list out what each believes to be a faithful sketch of what is possible in obeying, serving, and pleasing our Lord Jesus, who calls, enlightens and sanctifies us in one true faith. Some of the gathered priorities that were listed during that meeting were:

OUTREACH (Evangelism); ALTAR GUILD; IN TOUCH; CHILD CHOIR; CHILD OUTREACH; INVOLVEMENT; SUPPORT TEAMS; INVITING; ALTAR CALL FOR THOSE CALLED TO COME TO CHRIST; CHILD CARE FOR FAMILIES DURING WORSHIP; SPIRITUAL REVIVAL; CHRISTIAN GROWTH; LUTHERHAVEN; GREETERS TO WELCOME VISITORS AND MAKE CONTACT WITH MEMBERS AT THE DOOR DURING WORSHIP AND KEY EVENTS. POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

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Pastor's Report continued.....

These were listed numerically and then each person present re-wrote the list in the order of their own priority and hoped for "first and descending order of priorities". It blessed my heart to see that so many of those gathered there had the spiritual concerns of "outreach, support, welcoming, and coming to Jesus", at the top of their lists and at the core of the actual ministry and groups for which they had hoped. This, along with concerted prayer, a continued and received gifting of God's Holy Spirit, and continued confidence in the Word of God and the Sacraments as the truest gifts that are given by grace. It will always be God's coming to us by grace through faith in Jesus Christ our Lord (and according to Scripture), that the oft mentioned, "SPIRITUAL REVIVAL" and coming to Jesus, will come about at every phase of our Church life.

Will you as a congregational member or visitor, consider your walk with God in Christ Jesus of Nazareth? Will you come to worship regularly, listen intently to the spoken Word of God, preached and taught regularly concerning the Word? Will you also repent of your sins and all the entrapments of worldly life that leads you away from Jesus as the Way and the Truth and the Life? Will you come to the sacraments and, receive them by faith as the Lord has called and empowered you to do so by the Holy Spirit? Will you invite your friends, neighbors and all whom the Lord puts on your heart to reach out to and invited them to consider Jesus? This is by God's will, the very life-blood of what it means to receive Christ by grace and live in Him through faith.

Thank all of you who came to that planning meeting, and all of you that are serving and loving the people and ministries of our Church. God bless you and keep you by God's grace,

Your fellow servant and follower of Jesus our Lord, Pastor Gary Koutsopoulos

Some of the categories listed above and mentioned by those sharing their thoughts and hopes for our Church, are not as clearly correlated or signified as to their importance, by their numbering". We praise the Lord that we have this time to follow our Lord Jesus, work together and love one another in His Name.

Lord, Help Me Jesus

Questions of cultivated Greeks and Romans in ancient times were often centered on a cause. What is the cause of thunder, earthquakes, eclipses, strong winds or wild waves? Answers varied: they were signs from the Gods or, it is just nature. If we agree it is just nature, are we discounting God? No, anymore than we blame God when erosion is caused by industrial excavations or people are victims of crime or poor health caused by drugs or poor health standards. God, in fact, since ancient times, offered to help us to help ourselves. In modern times, we seem intent on destroying ourselves and our world. Is this God's will? Is it just nature? No, this is the will of the devil (the evil one), who will destroy us and our way in life, unless we turn (or return) to the Lord.

-Larry



What's Happening at Emmanuel

Howdy Partner!

Housing costs, fuel costs and run-away inflation, has moved many people into poverty. But the food bank offers help. Not just for food but also hygiene items and products for small children. Clothing, toys, books and baby clothes, blankets and diapers. The food bank also offers pet food. Distributed via the local humane society. Another very important service provided by the local food bank is to provide the homeless with a mailing address, to make sure their



mail is safely delivered. Our local Foodbank began 45 years ago in the basement of a Church. Now, it has moved into a much larger facility and is one of the leading non-profits in the area. It is needed, because , in 2024 the patron load increased by 157 percent. To help meet this need in 2025, our local foodbank will partner with Peninsula Health Services which will provide on-site medical and dental services. In 2025 and beyond, the local Foodbank will be depending on partners to help the needy in our community and, one of those partners is Emmanuel Lutheran Churchyou!
- Sally, coordinator

A Recent Baptism



Recently we welcomed Eric Smith into the body of Christ. Even though Eric and his grandchildren have been regular attendees for a while, it was a special occasion to witness Eric's baptism. Welcome Eric!!!

A Blessing During my Trip to Finland

There were a few hours before we were to meet with a couple of my cousins on my great-grandmother's side. We were in the area near where my Asikainen family made their home called "Akula". We had an ancient map that showed "Akula", which literally means "Aku's house". My friend, Marja, programmed in some directions into her father's car and we set off on an adventure. We passed some mailboxes with familiar surnames and we passed street and other signs that had familiar names. It all seemed so small and close together to be the places we had heard about that seemed so far away from each other in those days—probably because they used wagons drawn by horses, bicycles or walked from place to place at the time my relatives lived there. But then we ran out of road as we followed the directions. We were at someone's farm. A man was standing there right by his home. We didn't know what to do. Marja spoke to the man in Finnish. She said, "Sorry for coming onto your property. We were trying to find "Akula".

The owner of the farm, Yrio (George), said you missed it by a few yards back. Marja explained who we were and why we were looking for Akula. He explained where the house had been and he told us that the family barley fields were across the road beyond beautiful white-bark trees with gray lines. He also told us stories about family members who had lived there and about one of my cousins that used to bring a trailer there but now mostly stayed in his apartment, now. He also asked if we wanted to know about something tragic that he witnessed there. We would never have known these things unless we had missed the turn and met Yrio. Yrio also said he could contact my cousin, Aku, and maybe we could try to arrange to meet him before I left.

When I met Aku at his apartment door I knew he looked a little like my grandfather. But when I saw a picture of the two of us together, I could definitely see a family resemblance.

What a blessing it was to meet Aku Asikainen, his wife Liisa, and his nephew, Tero a few hours before I had to leave Finland. We exchanged photos and stories and had a wonderful meal with them. I've continued sending cards to Aku and his wife, and kept in contact by letters and E-mail with Tero, who speaks and writes English well.



Melody with her cousin, Aku Asikainen. They share a great -grandfather, Aku Asikainen

Sadly, when I met Aku's wife, Liisa, I didn't know that she was in the beginning stages of dementia. When Aku fell and broke his jaw last year they were looking into why he fell and discovered that he had a brain tumor. He decided to have home care instead of going to a hospital because he thought Liisa would not understand and he wanted to take care of her as long as he could. Sadly, he lost his battle with brain cancer last year, in November and Liisa had to be moved to a care facility. But I was so blessed by meeting this very devoted husband and witness his great love for his wife. I consider it one of my many gifts from God. Melody Knight

Thank You, Melody, for sharing part of your interesting family history with us.

Let's Hear From You

What you think and how you feel is important and of interest to all of your friends. So, Sharie and I, are asking you to pick 1-2 of these questions and send "your" answer(s) to Sharie Adrig to include in the next Newsletter, Your Newsletter.

1. What is your most cherished childhood memory?
 2. What is your personal motto?
 3. What's the best part of your day-to-day life?
- Larry



Trillium Center Needs!!

The Trillium (Pregnancy) Center are so thankful for our donations. They currently have needs for the following items:

Diapers (sizes 4-7)	Baby Wipes
Stroller	Car Seat
High Chair	Changing table

In the past we have donated the following: diapers, sleepers, wipes. So thankful to Emmanuel for helping Teresa and I meet the needs of the Trillium Center.

God Bless all our efforts,
Rose Link, coordinator



A Personal God



When we pray for a friend who is ill or facing a critical challenge, we are acknowledging and relating to an all powerful God, father and friend. When we ourselves are dealing with challenges, we turn to our God in the same way a small child relies on a parent. We Christians have a resource that others could have but reject. That resource for a true believer, is the blessing of, "a personal God." Sometimes, we need to remind ourselves that we are never alone in our troubles -that God, is with us, always. Isn't it nice to have a personal friend we can "always" count on? "What a friend we have in Jesus, all our griefs and sins to bear." -Larry

God, Time & History

Can the text be trusted? No classical scholar would agree to an argument concerning the authenticity of early Greek or Roman manuscripts that were written 900 years "after" the event of that any of the original manuscripts still exist. Yet, when questions are asked about the authenticity of old or new testament texts of which, "many" original papyrus copies exists as well as original texts of the four gospels and the Acts of the Apostles from the third century, actually written within thirty years after the death of Christ, while some of the "eye witnesses" still survived, critics aboundGo figure!

-Larry

Did You Know This?

Holofernes. The General Holofernes led an army of 120,000 infantry and 12,000 cavalry against the people of God. Judith, a beautiful and pious widow visited the enemy camp and offered to guide the general's army past her people's defenses. But instead, Holofernes invites her to his tent to drink and to be merry. After Holofernes passes out, Judith takes his sword and cuts off his head. When the general's soldiers discover his body, they (the Assyrian army,) flee and Judith's country men reposed their land.

-Larry

February Birthdays

2-----Tiffany Johnson
 5-----Pat Alcantra
 11-----Patrick Gehring
 14-----Ward Erickson IV
 15-----Bob Klempan
 23-----Jim Turowski
 29-----Annabell Williams

March Birthdays

5-----Chelette Williams
 18-----Henry Simons
 19-----Melody Knight
 25-----Kneeda Williams, Childcare Supv.
 27-----Josh Armstrong

March Anniversaries

13-----Cole & Maurine Simons
 18-----Steve & Judy Armstrong

If you have any additions or corrections to our birthday or anniversary list please let our editor, Sharie Adrig, know at gadrig@comcast.net



Members Serving in February

Altar Guild-----Sally Farner
 Reader-----Bob Klempan

Members Serving in March

Altar Guild-----Chelette Williams
 Sharie Adrig
 Reader-----Elli Anderson

What's Coming Up?

February

9-----9-----Adult's & Children's
 Sunday School
 10-----Worship Service
 10-----6 pm-----Peninsula Knitting Guild
 13-----10-----Midweek Bible Study
 16-----9-----Adult & Children's
 Sunday School
 10-----Worship Service
 20-----10-----Midweek Bible Study
 23-----9-----Adult's & Children's
 Sunday School
 27-----10-----Midweek Bible Study

March

2-----9-----Adult's & Children's
 Sunday School
 10-----Worship Service
 6-----10-----Midweek Bible Study
 9-----9-----Adult's & Children's
 Sunday School
 10-----Worship Service
 10-----6 pm-----Peninsula Knitting Guild
 13-----10-----Midweek Bible Study

Helping with Coffee Hour



I am sure many of you enjoy coffee hour and would like to help in some way. Please talk to Rose Link or Teresa Prange about ways you can help. Thank you two ladies for all you do.

Men's Fellowship Breakfast

Second Saturday of the month!

8:30 AM at All Star Lanes

Questions? Ask Glen or Pastor Gary



Check out our new updated Website at ELCBremerton.ORG

Special thanks our Webmaster:
 Aaron Maruska

Just For Fun

"As is a tale, so is life, not how long it is, but how good it is, is what matters".

-J.K. Rowling, author of the Harry Potter book series

-Larry