

The Echo

June 2020



Good Soil

I love gardening. There is something special about working with seeds and ground and—after a lot of hard work—watching food grow! There is something unique about the process: all of that plowing, planting, watering, pruning, and fertilizer somehow magically creates food. And food enough for a whole community!

Growing food is not easy. But neither is growing faith. In Mark 4:3-8, Jesus talks about letting our hearts be “good soil.” He describes a farmer planting on various types of soil: some seeds fall on the path and are eaten by the birds, some seeds fall on rocky ground, some seeds are choked by weeds, and some land on good soil. It is the good soil, of course, that is looked for. Good soil produces an abundant crop. Good soil in our hearts produces the fruit of the Spirit.

But the truth is, we will never have perfect soil here on earth. Think about your own garden or fields. No matter what you do, there will always be weeds, rocks, pests, wet spells, dry spells and more that will keep you from the perfect crop.

The same is true in our own lives. Sometimes a particular sinful behavior creeps into our lives and threatens control. Sometimes other people hurl their hurt onto us. Sometimes our broken world throws trials at us that bring us down. All too often, we are so busy fighting to grow that we forget to stop and listen for the voice of God.

And yet, while we may never have “perfect soil” for our faith, this doesn’t mean our faith cannot produce fruit. The spirit of God encourages us towards love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22) no matter our circumstances! And then God’s grace picks us up when we fail.

So, what does the soil of your heart look like?

Does it need nurturing—water, rest, and fertilizer—so faith can to grow?

Does it need tilling? You’ve heard the Word, but it has not sunk in?

Is it choked by sin: the wrongful actions you have done or the hurtful actions imposed on you?

Wherever you are today, God reaches out and offers a chance at a new beginning. *Lord, may our hearts be good soil.* Peace, Intern Pr. Meggie

“But if we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).



“Lord, let my heart be good soil, open to the seed of your word. Lord, let my heart be good soil, where love can grow and peace is understood.” ~1985 Hymn by Handt Hanson



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ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENTS!

Greetings to you all-

I hope this message finds you as well as can be. Our church leadership has continued to wrestle with guidance from the CDC, our government, and the Holy Spirit as to how and when to safely reopen our doors for Sunday services. **At this time, we have not set a reopening date.** We will continue to meet and discuss in the month of June.

Please know that we dearly long to meet together. However, just because the doors of the building are closed, does not mean that *church* is closed. Church always has been the *people of God* living out their lives in service to others. Intern Pr. Meggie continues making care calls from her home, we continue publishing devotions online, and we are committed to providing meaningful worship services each week. Please continue using these mediums to nourish your spiritual life as you live out your call to serve one another humbly in love.

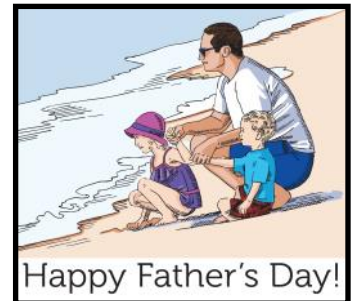
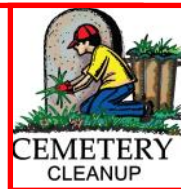
May the Lord bless you and keep you. Remember Jesus' promise from John 16:33, "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

Peace, Intern Pr. Meggie

In order to assist those who mow and maintain our cemeteries:

- ◇ All artificial flowers or vases that are not on the cement surrounding the tombstones need to be removed from Emmanuel Cemetery by **June 15th**.
- ◇ All flowers are to be removed from the St. John's cemetery by **June 20th**.

Items left after these dates may be disposed of without



ECHO SPONSORSHIP FORM

Thank you for all the support we have had for the Echo. If you are interested in sponsoring an issue, please fill out the below form. Sponsorships for September 2020 and forward are available.

Checks can be sent to *Galchutt Church, c/o Kendra Dockter, 16860 70th St SE, Colfax, ND 58018.*

Name: _____

_____ \$50 (half month sponsor) _____ \$100 (full month sponsor)

This Echo is sponsored by:

_____ (in loving memory) **OR** (in honor of)

_____.

If you have an announcement for an event or photos from a baptism, wedding, or some other special event regarding a member or former member of our parish, we would love to include the information in an upcoming issue. Please email them to lalee@rrt.net.



Spring, my favorite time of year, has finally arrived! I could wander around the yard all day planting and relocating things. It is amazing to see how nature comes to life once the ground warms and God gives everything a good watering. It seems that we can water all we want but there is nothing better than a good rain to give new life to nature. Green grass, perennials popping up, and budding trees. In my opinion, day three of God's creation must have been quite a sight. In Genesis 1:9-13, the Bible says, "Then God said, 'Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it.'" So it was and so it is. Even some of the smallest seeds become the most beautiful flora once watered and nurtured. Similar to how, when nurtured by God's word and teachings, humans also grow into beautiful beings.

Creation day five yielded another favorite of mine – the birds. Anyone who knows me knows how excited I get when the first orioles and hummingbirds arrive at my feeders. Have you ever noticed how birds seem to sing loudest in the morning before they start their work day of building nests and hunting for food? Do you ever sit outside and just listen to the birds sing? What do you suppose they are singing about? Could they be singing praises to God for the beautiful day? Maybe the birds could remind us to praise God, thank God, and not worry about tomorrow - even during these crazy times.

In 1905, a woman named Civilla Martin and her husband were visiting friends in New York. The woman they were visiting had been bedridden for 20 years and her husband was crippled and in a wheelchair. Even so, they were true saints of God. The bedridden friend commented to Mrs. Martin that when she got discouraged, she remembered that her Heavenly Father watched over each little sparrow and would also certainly watch over her. Mrs. Martin, a poet, began to jot down her ideas from that conversation and the text of the song "His Eye is on the Sparrow" was completed that same day. The familiar chorus goes as follows:

"I sing because I'm happy. I sing because I'm free.

His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me."

Likewise, in Matthew 6:26 (NIV) Jesus told his followers: "Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your Heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?" Jesus seems to be telling his followers not to be anxious about food, but to rely on God as do the birds. In these trying times, hopefully we can all worry less and rely on God's promise that we are just as important as the sparrows - and he is watching over us through it all. Happy spring!

Lou Ann Lee, Editor

Look at the BIRDS of the air;
they neither SOW nor REAP
... your heavenly FATHER
feeds them. Are YOU not of
more value than they!



Matthew 6:26. NRSV

We keep the following in our prayers:

- ◆ Steve and Shelly Fixen, due to the recent death of Shelly's brother David;
- ◆ Dylan Johnson, due to the recent death of his father Albert;
- ◆ Those who have struggled with the COVID-19 illness in their family or any other illness or disease;
- ◆ Those who have suffered financial hardships due to not being able to work during this time;
- ◆ Our church family, as we await a decision to re-open has been made;
- ◆ Our students and graduates as they enter summer vacation; and
- ◆ Our members, our councils, and Intern Pastor Meggie as decisions are made for the two congregations.



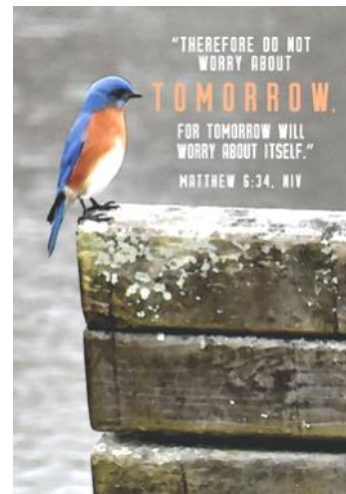
Live in the Trust that God Provides.....

Here we are another month into feeling overwhelmed, fearful or worried while caring for our families, communities, region and world. I have friends who tell me they are worried about the future well-being of their children and grandchildren. Having lived through many changes in my lifetime I do not recall a time that presented so many opportunities for change in such a short time. Some parts of the world, that as a child I considered very backward, seem to be embracing and moving forward rapidly while others seem to be looking backward for inspiration or answers to current problems.

In the last century my family lived through WWI, the depression and poverty that led children to move away from home, to earn a living and return later. My grandmother developed Type 2 diabetes and trusted her doctor to guide her to live many more years. The children and grandchildren learned to trust that their needs would be met even when their “wants” were unrequited. For example, I was an adult before I knew that I grew up in poverty. How did this happen you may ask. I have only one explanation. God was ever present in our lives.

If we look to the Bible for inspiration, I suggest we look at the lessons Jesus shared with his disciples. In Chapter 6 of the book of Mark, we are asked to consider the birds who don't toil and the flowers who aren't concerned about their beauty. In each example God's creation doesn't worry but rather lives in the trust that God provides. I recently read a quote that seemed to summarize it well. “Fear does not stop death. It stops life. And worrying does not take away tomorrow's troubles. It takes away today's peace.” For me I choose life and peace!

Ellen Rittenhouse



Thank you to the following for their recent donations:

Emmanuel Cemetery Fund:

- Leone Hagen, In memory of Morna Syvertsen
- Naomi Vonhollen, In memory of Leona Nypen Synstegard

Helping Hands / Food Pantry:

- Susan Rothwell, In memory of Rolf BJORKE

Emmanuel Furnace Fund:

- Susan Rothwell, In memory of Rolf BJORKE
- Phillip Everitt, In memory of Marlyne Hestdalen

Emmanuel General Fund:

- Barbara Johnson
- Melanie Jensen (Thrivent Choice dollars)
- Robert Skamfer (Thrivent Choice dollars)

Emmanuel Landscaping Fund:

- Viola Merchant

Emmanuel Quilting Fund:

- Rosemarie Adair (Thrivent Choice dollars)



Emmanuel Lutheran Council Highlights— May 4, 2020



The Emmanuel Lutheran Church Council had a virtual meeting on May 4, 2020. In attendance were Sharon Tschakert, Craig Syvertsen, Kevin Paczkowski, Fred Tol, Jessica Kappes, Lesley Hulne and Pastor Meggie.

Sharon read a thank-you note from Sheryl Ask for the Easter lilies bought in memory of Curt. The Secretary's report was given by Lesley and stood as read. The Treasurer's report submitted by Lou Ann was reviewed. Lou Ann suggested the auto withdrawal information be put in the Echo and the council agreed. Emmanuel received a small business loan for \$5,300.00 from the bank as part of the SBA Payroll Protection Program. This loan will cover payroll for Sara and Jolene for both churches, Emmanuel's share of Meggie's salary, and some utilities at Emmanuel. The funds need to be used within 60 days and is forgiven if used for the allowed expenses.

The Pastor's report was given. The "no in-person" gathering policy has been in place and the Sunday services have been available through You-Tube, Facebook, and Channel 3 of Red River Communication. Meggie has been keeping in touch with parishioners through phone calls. She would like Emmanuel to discuss when and how to resume church services. The music copyright issue is still being resolved. Kari Kleingartner has developed some logos for our use, and we thought they were great and will use them on Emmanuel letterheads, etc.

A discussion was held on funeral homes' activity in the cemetery during less than ideal ground conditions. There should be communication between the funeral home and the cemetery committee concerning the conditions before using equipment in the cemetery. There was no old business. We discussed the guidelines for Phase 1 openings as part of the ND Smart Restart Protocol. The Council does not think it is sensible to consider reopening at this time. We will revisit our plan for reopening at our June meeting. We will continue to offer services electronically. Pastor Meggie will have Communion packets available for the May 10th worship service. The new "Stitching Hearts Quilts of Valor" group asked to use the parsonage for their monthly meeting and the council agreed. Emmanuel members Deb Syvertsen and Lou Ann Lee are part of this new group. (Red River Quilters are in the space behind the balcony.)

We closed with the Lord's Prayer. The next meeting is June 1st at 6:30 PM.

Lesley Hulne, Secretary

Galchutt Lutheran Council Highlights—May 5, 2020



Galchutt Lutheran Church Council met on May 5th via Zoom Conference Call. Members present were Pamela Krump, Alex Paczkowski, Doug Johnson, Jeff Miller, Marissa Moxness, Daniel Dockter, and Intern Pastor Meggie. Pastor Meggie started the meeting with a devotion. Alex read last meetings minutes, Doug motioned, Jeff seconded the minutes. There was no treasurer's report, Daniel reported that the Wells Fargo small business loan was approved and Kendra signed the documents. Doug and Johnnie Kuruc are mowing this summer, Easter services went great online. Pastor Meggie is still investigating copyright rules. The plan is to reopen the church with the first service tentatively May 31 with guidelines. Summer VBS is cancelled. Meeting adjourned, ending with the Lords Prayer. Next meeting scheduled for June 9th at 6 PM.

Alex Paczkowski, Secretary



Fathers and Sons of the Bible

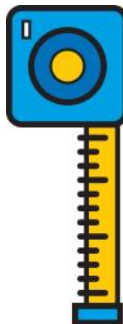
Proverbs 13:1 says,
"A wise son heeds his father's instruction."

In the puzzle below, find and circle the names of these fathers and their sons from the Old Testament. Names may be forward, backward, diagonal, → ← ↓ ↑ ↘ ↙ ↗ ↖. Circle them.

- | | | | | |
|------|---------|---------|----------|----------|
| ADAM | JAPHETH | ISHMAEL | JUDAH | JOSEPH |
| CAIN | ELKANAH | ISAAC | LEVI | MANASSEH |
| ABEL | SAMUEL | ESAU | GAD | EPHRAIM |
| SETH | AARON | JACOB | NAPHTALI | SAUL |
| NOAH | NADAB | REUBEN | SIMEON | JONATHAN |
| HAM | HUR | DAN | ISSACHAR | DAVID |
| SHEM | CALEB | ASHER | ZEBULUN | SOLOMON |
| | ABRAHAM | | BENJAMIN | |

M A N A S S E H E S A U A W
 I B I D O H S I S S A U L R
 A E A A L A E O N H E E E D
 R L C V O O T M I S U H V I
 H A M I M N H S L M S F I T
 P H R D O I M S A A R O N T
 E L K A N A H S T U U D A N
 C G A D H I O N H J U J D A
 I S S A C H A R P A H A A H
 T M R M C C K E A P A C B T
 O B E N J A M I N H D O E A
 A I S H M A E L R E U B E N
 N O E M I S S N O T J L S O
 C A L E B I T E O H E U K J
 J O S E P H E N U L U B E Z

While hanging out with her father in his workshop, a preschooler tried to imitate him by using a tape measure. When she couldn't quite reach the distance she wanted to measure between herself and an object, she moved the object closer to her!



No matter how much we try to finagle God's rules, his standard of holiness won't be moved. As sinful beings, we can't reach that standard on our own. We're stuck without Jesus' grace. Thank God that he helps us measure up!

Bible Quiz

Which follower of Jesus preached to the crowds after receiving the Holy Spirit on Pentecost?



- A. John
- B. Peter
- C. Mary Magdalene
- D. Paul

Answer: B (See Acts 2:14ff.)



The ants go marching...

God created amazing insects and says we can learn lessons from their hard work.

Directions: Use the word bank below to fill in the tablecloth grid for ant-based wisdom from Proverbs 30:25, NIV.

- | | | | | | |
|---------|--------------|------------|----------|-----------|---------|
| 4. of | 6. strength | 15. summer | 12. food | 9. store | 2. are |
| 8. they | 3. creatures | 5. little | 7. yet | 10. up | 14. the |
| 1. Ants | 16. Proverbs | 17. 30:25 | 13. in | 11. their | |

	1		2		3	
4		5		6		7
	8		9		10	
11		12		13		14
	15		16		17	

Answer: "Ants are creatures of little strength, yet they store up their food in the summer." Proverbs 30:25, NIV



June 2020



Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

	1 Emmanuel Council Meeting 6:30PM	2	3	4	5	6
7	8 Stitching Hearts QOV meets	9 Galchutt Council Meeting 6PM	10	11	12	13
14	15 RRQ QOV group meets 1-7 PM	16 Quilting at Emmanuel 9-4 PM	17	18 Echo articles due today 	19	20
21 Father's Day	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

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The Echo

This month's issue of **The Echo**
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Ellen Rittenhouse
In honor of all mothers

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Just for Laughs.....

