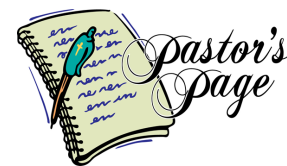


The Echo

January 2021



Understanding God's Will

Sometimes we wonder about God's will. We look at our lives and wonder if we got it right. Did we marry the right person? Did we take the right job? Did we live in the right place? Sometimes, people say, "Wait on God's timing and God's plan will be revealed." But how long do we wait? And how do we know when God has made his will clear? It's nerve-racking to think we might get it wrong. We think maybe God won't love me if I don't get it right or maybe I'm missing out on something. Or maybe I could have been something great! Maybe I was supposed to *do* something great for the world!?!

So, how do we *know*?

First, we look at scripture. God is constant and we can learn what God is like through careful study of the Bible. Second, we prayerfully consider what the Holy Spirit is doing and how we fit in. Third, we ask the church and people who know us and, together, we consider how our passions and gifts fit the mission already taking place in the world. Fourth, what does your heart say? God gives us good and righteous desires for the world and each of us has the ability to consider where we fit.

Then again, maybe we are asking the wrong question. God's will is not always specific. God's *plan* for your life might include specifics, but God has the same *will* for every person: that they would know and be loved by God and, in turn, they would know and love their neighbor. God desires goodness, grace, mercy, and compassion for all. Our purpose, then, becomes joining God's work and creating a better world alongside him.

Perhaps the question isn't, "What is God's will?" but "How am I looking for God?" God is not intentionally mysterious or confusing. The more we focus on who God is, the clearer we see God's will for the world and how God's plan for our lives fits in. If we do our best to look at God, we will follow God's will no matter who we marry, what our job is, or where we live.

By the way, God doesn't give report cards. We might get things wrong, but that doesn't mean we aren't loved or aren't saved. God just wants us to be faithful and do the most we can with the knowledge, skills, experience, and resources available to us at the time. And when we fail (and we all fail!), we ask God for another chance and keep on going.

Dear Lord, Your will is beautiful, but we're not always sure how to see it. Help us see the world through your eyes and teach us where and how we fit best. Thank you for loving us and making it so that your will is done, on earth like it is in heaven. Amen.

Interim Pr. Meggie



Galchutt-Emmanuel Ministry Office: (701) 553-8546

Interim Pastor Meggie Bjertness; cell (701) 205-6803

Admin. Asst. email: emmanuelgalchutt@gmail.com; Admin. Asst. cell (701) 640-7074

Website: <http://galchuttemmanuel.weebly.com/>

To members (and friends) of both congregations:



Due to having to cancel in-person worship services for several months this spring and now again this winter, this is a reminder that it is important to continue to either mail or electronically deposit your offerings. Monthly payroll, heating & electricity bills, insurance, and other bills still need to be paid and with the reduced offerings, finances are extremely tight right now. *We hope you will prayerfully consider one of the several options available by both congregations.*

Mail Options:

Emmanuel Church, c/o Lou Ann Lee, Treasurer, P.O. Box 119, Abercrombie, ND 58001.
Galchutt Church, c/o Kendra Dockter, Treasurer, 16860 70th St SE, Colfax, ND 58018.

Electronic Giving options can be found for both congregations on our website

<http://galchuttemmanuel.weebly.com/> at [GIVING - Galchutt-Emmanuel Ministry \(weebly.com\)](http://GIVING-Galchutt-EmmanuelMinistry.weebly.com)

There are dropdown areas for each church under the **GIVING** tab for each congregation where all the options available are shown.

- **Galchutt** has one electronic giving option as shown on the website.
- **Emmanuel** recently added several options for electronic giving as shown on the website:
 1. E-Giving where donors can designate any amount at any frequency to be sent directly to the church bank account. Vanco Faith offers a secure site, embedded within our website, and also found at <https://secure.myvanco.com/YH7S>
 2. E-Giving option 2 where smartphone users go to the Google Play Store and download the mobile app for "[Vanco Mobile](#)" and then search for Emmanuel Lutheran Church of Abercrombie. Vanco offers a secure site through Vanco Mobile where donations can be made.
 3. Donors can also set up a monthly recurring dollar amount that is withdrawn from donor's checking account on the 5th of each month and sent directly to the church bank account at Vantage Bank. You do not need to have an account at Vantage Bank to use this option. Download the form from the church website. Any questions, call the Treasurers for each church.



With the changing situation caused by the COVID pandemic, please check the church website, watch for the weekly emails, or contact your council members or Pastor Meggie to learn when in-person services will resume. We will make every effort to keep you informed. We appreciate your patience during this time.

ANNUAL MEETING NOTICES:

Both congregations are in the process of updating their Constitution. This is the tentative schedule, pending changes due to the pandemic.

Galchutt:

Sunday, January 17—Special Meeting after worship
Saturday, January 23—Annual Meeting @ 9AM

Emmanuel:

Sunday, January 31—Special Meeting after worship, followed by Annual Meeting.

Reflecting on 2020 and Welcoming 2021!



Undeniably, 2020 was a year unlike any other. When we look back on everything that transpired, COVID, its related deaths, rioting, and the election, we may at times lose sight of the good things that happened in 2020.

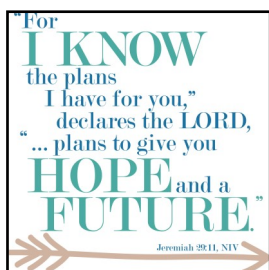
Even though schools closed due to the pandemic, causing an entirely new way of learning, many families found out how much teachers and students truly mean to each other and how kids really miss a normal routine. Many of you worked from home yet learned how to manage schooling your children, some with help from grandparents or friends. A number of workers who saw their jobs end due to decreased business have focused on using the time to grow and start a new chapter in life.

So maybe 2020 was not all bad. More family meals were spent together due to the cancellation of most extracurricular events. You and your family may have discovered new ways to have fun together as a replacement for a normally harried life. The local weather has been unusually warm allowing families to enjoy the outside more and farmers to complete harvest with few interruptions. My guess is that if we made a list of the good things of 2020 and the “not so good” things in 2020, we may be pleasantly surprised that 2020 wasn’t nearly as bad as we recollect.

It is easy to be overwhelmed by fear with everything happening in the world today. Nonetheless, God promises us that he has plans for us that are of a future with *hope*. “For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you *hope* and a future” (Jeremiah 29:11). As I re-read this verse, I am reminded of the hymn, “My *hope* is built on nothing less than Jesus’ blood and righteousness. . . . On Christ, the solid rock, I stand; all other ground is sinking sand . . .”

May 2021 bring healing and blessings to you and your family.

Lou Ann Lee



We keep the following in our prayers:



- ◆ The friends & family of Jerry Berg who recently passed away;
- ◆ Glenn Fixen, Darline Leland, Mary Krueger, Micah Moxness, Sylvia Myers & Matt —as they deal with medical and/or health issues;
- ◆ Our country as it deals with the continuing pandemic; and
- ◆ All those who deal with issues related to health, including depression or addiction.

The meaning of Epiphany



Epiphany, which comes from the Greek word *epiphaneia*, means “an appearance” or “a revealing.” Centuries ago, the church set aside January 6, the 12th day after Christmas, to mark the revealing of Jesus as Christ to the wise men, who were Gentiles. Jesus’ first followers were Jewish, so the revelation of the divine Christ to the non-Jewish magi reminds us that Jesus came to earth to save the whole world.

Symbols of Epiphany include light, a star, a crown (or three crowns) and a globe or stylized portrayal of the world. The color of Epiphany is green to symbolize life, growth, hope and eternity.

On the church calendar, the Epiphany season lasts until Ash Wednesday, which is determined by the date of Easter.

What is Faith?

Faith is the foundation of our Christian belief. According to Tyndale Bible Dictionary, it is belief which has no tangible proof; a trust in God. However, it's more powerfully defined in the Bible, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). It is not only our belief, but also our pathway to Jesus, God, and eternal life. Yet it can be so invisible in our lives.

We can feel faith within us but since God has granted us free choice, what we do with it is up to us. Some ignore it, forget it, but we can choose to grow it. Jesus wants us to use our faith to reach out to others and tell them how he died for our sins, how he is our only road to heaven and eternal life with God.

Faith promotes qualities such as belief, trust, love, hope and prayer. Once you take these qualities of faith and live them, you really see the power they possess. Truly, they can move mountains, touch people, and change lives as we have seen all over the world throughout history.

Test yourselves. Take a hard look at your own faith and own life. If we're honest, we may not like what we see—too little faith and a prideful heart that thinks way too much of ourselves. This most certainly will keep us from growing our faith in Jesus. But we can overcome this stumbling block with prayer and asking Jesus for help from the Holy Spirit to grow our faith and cover our prideful hearts with his sin-forgiving love and righteousness. O HOLY SPIRIT, DWELL WITHIN MY HEART AND STRENGTHEN MY FAITH.

Roger Miller

Galchutt Lutheran Council Highlights—December 8, 2020



Galchutt Church Council met on December 8, 2020, at Galchutt Lutheran Church.

Members present were Pamela Krump, Alex Paczkowski, Jeff Miller, Doug Johnson, Daniel Dockter, and Interim Pastor Meggie. Pastor Meggie started meeting with a devotion and prayer. Alex read secretaries report, Jeff accepted the report and Daniel seconded. Pamela presented the treasury report from Kendra. Alex accepted the report and Doug seconded.

PASTOR REPORT: Pastor Meggie has put on hold in person visitations but has been trying to make as many phone calls as she can. Mileage report for November was 227 miles. Confirmation is virtual as of December. Weekly services have been recorded with Pastor Jule.

OLD BUSINESS: Constitution meeting was tabled in November due to COVID. A special meeting on January 17th for the 1st vote of changes to constitution with the second vote at annual meeting January 23rd will be held. Christmas Eve will be online only with no in-person services. Pamela made a motion to pass a continuing resolution to allow our congregation to hold meetings virtually. The Continuing Resolution C10.01A20 is "This congregation may hold meetings by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference, as long as there is an opportunity for simultaneous aural communication. To the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically." Doug seconded the motion. Vote passed unanimously. This resolution will be in effect until we are able to amend our constitution at an upcoming annual meeting. The annual meeting will be in-person with the option for call-in.

NEW BUSINESS: The council reviewed the budget for 2021, Daniel accepted and Alex seconded the budget. The council decided due to lack of finances the ELCA payment will not be made in 2021. Meeting ended with Lord's Prayer. Next meeting is January 23rd at 9 AM.

Alex Paczkowski, Secretary

Emmanuel Lutheran Council Highlights— December 1, 2020



Present: Kevin Paczkowski, Craig Syvertsen, Jessica Kappes, Lesley Hulne, Fred Tol, Sharon Tschakert, Glenda Adams, Interim Pastor Meggie Bjertness, and Treasurer Lou Ann Lee.

Call to Order: President Kevin Paczkowski called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM. Meggie led the council in devotions and prayer.

Pastor’s Report: Pastor Meggie presented her visitation/mileage report. Craig made a motion to accept mileage report, seconded by Sharon, and motion carried. Pastor Meggie gifted our young children with advent kits to enjoy this Christmas season.

Secretary’s Report: Minutes from last meeting were read by Lesley. Jessica motioned to accept and Sharon seconded. Motion carried.

Treasurer’s Report: Lou Ann presented the treasurer’s report. Sharon motioned to accept the treasurer’s report as presented and Fred seconded. Motion carried.

Education, Worship & Stewardship Committees: No reports.

Property Committee: Fred repaired window pane on back door of church. Craig donated the filling of the new propane tank. Furnace upgrade is waiting on a start date from Aurora.

Old Business: Annual Meeting will be held January 31, 2021, after church. Constitution adjustments were completed and Lou Ann will present to Synod office. Raffle has been called off due to pandemic.

New Business: Craig motioned to use the memorials designated for the furnace fund and the Lewis Nelson Improvement Funds for the HVAC updates. Sharon seconded. Motion carried. The Upstad room needs carpet cleaning and spot cleaning in the dining area. Kevin and Lou Ann will contact the person who serviced it last. A donation in the amount of \$250 to each of the following programs - the Richland/Wilkin Food Pantry, CHI Riveredge Hospice, and Richland #44 Family Support, was motioned by Jessica and seconded by Fred. Motion carried on all. A monetary gift will also be given to Pastor Meggie for Christmas. An in-person Christmas Eve service is tentatively scheduled. Any members who would like to attend, please contact Pastor Meggie so we can keep a tally. Lou Ann presented the proposed 2021 budget and the amounts were discussed and agreed upon. The 2021 budget will be presented and voted on at the annual meeting.


Closing: Next council meeting will be after the annual meeting on January 31st. Craig motioned to adjourn, Sharon seconded. Motion carried. Closed with the Lord’s Prayer.

Jessica Kappes, Secretary Pro Tem

Bible Quiz

In the story of the Magi, what word is used to give a sense of Jesus’ age when the wise men visited? What does it tell us?

- A. “baby”; Jesus was still a newborn in a manger
- B. “child”; when the wise men visited, Jesus had grown past infancy
- C. “youth”; Jesus was probably between 10 and 14
- D. No word is used to suggest Jesus’ age at the time of the wise men’s visit.



Answer: B (See Matthew 2:1-12.)



KEEP SEEKING HIM

Galchutt Lutheran Church Building Fund

- In memory of Jan Gorder
⇒ Larry Wold
- In memory of Thea and Emil Paulson & John Johnson
⇒ Don Nelson

Galchutt Lutheran Church

- In memory of Jan Gorder
⇒ Steve and Shelly Fixen

Emmanuel Cemetery Fund

- In memory of Harriet & John Paul Johnson
⇒ Rhoda & Bob Trafas
- In memory of Jerry Berg
⇒ Allan & Gladys Amundson

Emmanuel Furnace Fund

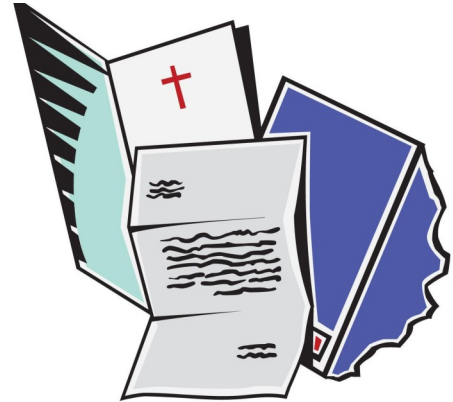
- In memory of Jeff Kuruc
⇒ Kevin Paczkowski

Emmanuel General Fund

- Robert Skamfer, c/o Timothy Skamfer (Thrivent Funds)
- In memory of Robert Skamfer
⇒ Dianne & Danny Dybwad
⇒ Lynn Tipton
⇒ Andrew & Melissa Marion
- In memory of Jerry Berg
⇒ Julie Berg
⇒ Paul, Kevin & Emma Huelsman
⇒ Dennis & Lesley Hulne
- In memory of Grandparents Karen & Ole Nelson & Uncle Knute Nelson
⇒ Donald Nelson (Window project)
- In memory of Rolfe BJORKE
⇒ Susan Rothwell (Helping Hands)

Emmanuel Quilting Fund

- Rosemarie Adair (Thrivent Funds)



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Memorials & Gifts



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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 August 2021 and forward are available. Checks can be sent to *Galchutt Church, c/o Kendra Dockter, 16860 70th St SE, Colfax, ND 58018.*

Name: _____

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



January 2021



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 New Years Day	2
3 See church website for announcements	4	5	6 Epiphany Confirmation	7	8	9
10 See church website for announcements	11	12	13 Confirmation	14	15	16
17 Galchutt Special Meeting (if services are resumed) Watch website for updates	18 Echo articles due today! QOV 5:30PM	19 Quilting at Emmanuel 9AM-4PM	20 Confirmation	21	22	23 Galchutt Annual Meeting 9AM
24 See church website for announcements	25	26	27 Confirmation	28	29	30
31 Emmanuel Annual Meeting Watch website for updates						

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In loving memory of Harold & Morna Syvertsen

CHURCH COUNCILS

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Marissa Moxness

EMMANUEL

* Kevin Paczkowski

Glenda Adam

Lesley Hulne

Jessica Kappes

Craig Syvertsen

Sharon Tschakert

Fred Tol

* Denotes Congregation President

Just for Laughs.....



"Because he works from home. That's why we never see God in person."