

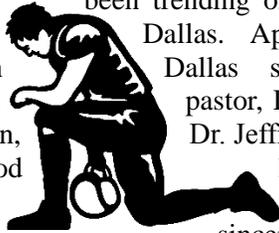


The Red Door

March 2013

Tim Tebow

You don't have to be a sports buff to know who Tim Tebow is. Even if you don't know the difference between a touchdown and a touchback you probably know that he plays football. His name is all over the news for some reason: His talents—or lack thereof—at the quarterback position, his latest girlfriend breakup, his prayerful position during games (now officially trademarked as “tebowing”), and even his virginity (really!?) are only but a partial selection of topics his name has been trending on. Well, the most recent issue getting him national coverage is actually centered in Dallas. Apparently Tebow canceled a previously scheduled speech at First Baptist Church in Dallas supposedly out of concern for some controversial statements that the church's pastor, Dr. Robert Jeffress, has made in the past. In his response to the quarterback cancellation, Dr. Jeffress said “There are some people who would say 'God's given me a different ministry. God has called me to go preach about the love of God. I'm not called to preach about sin and controversial things. I've been called to preach about the love of God.' And they're sincere when they say that. But they are sincerely wrong. The fact is you cannot talk about the love of God. The love of God has no meaning whatsoever unless you understand the judgment of God that all of us deserve.”



You know, I agree, at least in part, with Dr. Jeffress. Law and Gospel, judgment and grace, sin and forgiveness have to be maintained in a delicate balance. To preach only grace without considering the judgment that sin brings above our heads would be similar to the “cheap grace” that German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer talked about. Essentially, an abuse and a lack of understanding of the sacrifice of love that Christ made on the cross. And yet I can't avoid but to cringe at “the love of God has no meaning whatsoever unless....” The thing is that I just can't imagine a situation where the love of God would have no meaning. Even in the absence of repentance, it is precisely the constant, never-ending, obsessive love of God what provides hope that perhaps eventually the sinner will turn back and live (Ezekiel 33:11). It is precisely because God remains lovingly faithful with open arms on the cross that there is always opportunity for forgiveness and redemption. Otherwise, why would we have John 3:16 in the gospel? The Son of God has not come for the judgment of the world, but to save it! Yes, it is true that to even begin to consider the meaning of the love of God, we must also understand the consequences of sin. But it is also true that the love of God goes well beyond what we can explain or reason in our minds and that therefore its meaning is not dependent on our understanding. The love of God just is.

I don't have a quarrel with other Christian brothers and sisters that experience God's love, compassion, forgiveness and I guess even judgment in different ways. Certainly, I don't hold the truth in my hands. But if I'm going to err, I rather do it in favor of God's capacity to love which surpasses all human understanding. Especially in this season of Lent, as I meditate on the mystery of the cross I cannot help it but to realize that none of it would be possible without God's love coming first. Its meaning is not dependent on my effort to reason it, but on the fact that God simply loves me. Even children know that—Jesus loves me this I know... I will speak of the love of God; even if don't grasp it all just yet. I will speak of the love of God; even if I know I don't deserve it. I will speak of the love of God, because in it there is the only chance I got of not receiving forgiveness instead of judgment. And that's a touchdown. Amen.

The light of the eyes rejoices the heart, and good news refreshes the body. Proverbs 15:30

Emanuel Community Center Treasurer's Report

February, 2013

INCOME-EXPENSE STATEMENT

Beginning Balance	\$16,252.54
Income	10,294.00
Expense	\$1,693.37
Ending Balance	\$24,853.17

Notes

This was clearly the best financial month in ECC history as we received a \$10,00.00 grant from the Dallas Foundation Safety Net Fund for use in our food pantry program. Our challenge now goes from having enough money to stay afloat from month to month to making sure that we are good stewards of this grant and use it for the purposes intended by the Dallas Foundation when they gave it to us. We will be submitting a report on the use of the grant later in the year.

Other friends also generously remembered us. The Preston Meadow Lutheran Church, Plano, Boy and Cub Scouts provided us with \$942.00 worth of canned food and a \$10.00 cash gift. Feather Crest Farms(Dallas), Cal-Maine Foods(Flatonia, TX), and Centrum Valley Farms(Iowa Falls, IA) gave us eggs, some of which were organic, worth \$2,588.00. We are really blessed by the variety of support we receive from supporters both here in Dallas and from far away.

We are still working with Attorney David White to determine the appropriate amount and kind of liability insurance that we should carry.

Finally, I filed our 2012 Federal Income Tax return and Texas Non-Profit Corporation filing statement this month.

Sunday School News

Easter Sunday promises to be a special day as our young Sunday School students will be offering a gift of song during Easter service. Emanuel is developing a new and exciting children's choir! You may have recently noticed the flurry of activity on Sunday mornings following fellowship. Donna Miller, our choir director has begun a children's choir and the children are *singing their hearts out!* Carol Duncan, our pre-K and elementary school teacher, has also been teaching songs during her class. It's been amazing to hear the songs that the children have already learned. Thank You, Donna and Carol!

I'd like to give a special thanks to Martin and Iris Arredondo, our newest Sunday School teachers. They have been teaching and assisting with the Upper Elementary class. Their laughter is contagious, and our students are enjoying them immensely.

Emanuel will be having its annual Easter Egg hunt on Easter morning following the Easter Sunday service. Supervised by the Youth Group, we will be dividing the young children into age-appropriate groups. Children ages 2,3, and 4 will hunt for eggs inside the fellowship hall and classrooms. Children ages 5 and 6 will hunt for eggs on the patio and grass. Children ages 7 – 5th grade will hunt for eggs in the back yard of the church house.

Please leave your plastic eggs filled with wrapped candy in the secretary's office, as you are able.

As always, we welcome parents to sit in on our Sunday School classes. You may see our doors closed, but we do so, only to keep out the fellowship noise. You are always welcome and appreciated. And who knows, you may even decide to lead a Sunday School class next year!

Peace, Barb



The Empty Bowls Project

It was such fun running into the *ladies of Emanuel* at the Meyerson Symphony Hall on March 1st for the annual Empty Bowls Project. Linda Moody is a dedicated supporter of this event, and every year she brings it to the attention of our congregation. This annual fundraising event benefits the North Texas Food Bank. Years ago, Mary Tomas initiated an Empty Bowls fundraising event here at Emanuel. It was the first time that I had heard of the *Empty Bowls Project*. I threw the bowls, the Confirmation students glazed them,

and Mary did the rest. We raised \$400.00 and the money went to World Hunger.

What is the Empty Bowls Project?

The Empty Bowls Project started in Michigan, and is now an international grassroots movement dedicated to help end hunger. In 1990, John Hartom, a Detroit, MI high school teacher asked his ceramic students to throw 120 bowls. The students and John then invited the school's faculty to a soup luncheon. For a \$5.00 donation, each faculty member selected and kept a handmade bowl. As the guests took their bowls home, John asked that they would remember the many empty bowls in the world. The class then donated the money to a local food bank organization. Shortly after, John and his wife Lisa Blackburn realized that this could be a wonderful way of giving back to the community and a way to involve ceramists in community service. The Empty Bowls Project was born. Anyone can hold an "Empty Bowls Project" in any community. But in doing so, 100% of the profits will have to go towards an organization that fights hunger. Usually, artists hold this event within their own community to raise hunger awareness.

March 1, 2013 marked the 15th anniversary of The Empty Bowls Project in Dallas. Professional ceramists, elementary and high school students, teachers, university students and professors throughout North Texas have been busy throwing and donating bowls to this worthy cause.

The Meyerson Symphony Hall donates the space, local restaurants donate the soup, bread, and pastries. Potters and wood turners donate the bowls. One hundred percent of the money raised goes to the North Texas Food Bank. This fundraising event is held every year from 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Last year, over \$140,000.00 was raised in two hours, benefiting the North Texas Food Bank.

Peace, Barb



Barb Brault-Jordan's pottery students – Matt Ornstein, Katie Kerrigan, Matthew Wheeler, Jonathon Stern

There is a story about a man who left this earth and was taken on a tour of the inner realms. He was shown a room where he saw a large group of hungry people trying to eat dinner, but because the spoons that they were trying to eat with were longer than their arms, they remained frustrated. "This," his guide told him, "is hell." "That's terrible!" exclaimed the man; "Please show me heaven!" "Very well," agreed the guide, and on they went. When they opened Heaven's door, the man was perplexed to see what looked very much like the same scene: there was a group of people with spoons longer than their arms. As he looked more closely, however, he saw happy faces and full tummies, for there was one important difference: the people in Heaven had learned to feed each other.

Dragon Doesn't Live Here Anymore, by Cohen

Emanuel Youth Group

February 2013

February was a month full of activities for the youth group. On February 7, 8 and 9, Cecilia, Samier, Sonia and Alma attended to the meeting of Ignite Network: Encendiendo la Chispa at the church of Santa Maria. In this meeting the youth met several other youth of others congregations and learned the importance of being a good leader. The next meeting will be here at Emmanuel Church on April 12 and 13.

On February 16th the youth had a garage sale in which it was raised \$315.10. After it, they went to the neighborhood to pass out flyers that invited people to the Movie Night.

February 23rd was the first time where the youth made an activity where they invited the congregation, neighborhood, family and friends to a movie night. The movie that was watched is, "Here Comes the Boom" in which about 50 people attended.

Emanuel Lutheran Church Council

February 4, 2013

Members Present: Pastor Julio, Steve Johnson, Barry McDonald, Gaynell Schultze, Steve Zwernemann, Maria Torrez, Julia Hernandez, Bob Moody also attended.

Pastor opened with prayer.

Pastor orally presented the agenda items for the evening.

Selection of the Council: The council elected the following as officers: Karen Roberts, President, Cindy Seamans, Vice-president and Linda Soto Secretary.

Bob presented the Treasurer's Report: He reminded the council that new signature cards will need to be turned into the bank. Bob reviewed the budget for 2013 as approved by the congregation in the annual meeting. The deficit for the year is \$10,829. The building fund was receiving about \$1,000 a month. The council agreed to announce to the congregation plans to repair the stained glass windows and ask members to continue to give to the building fund. Bob presented the income and expense budget for January. The expenses were lower than budgeted, but the church spent \$3,682 dollars more than was taken in. Bob reviewed the income and accounts of the church with the council. The council expressed appreciation for Bob's excellent work and help.

Youth group report: Julia reported that she learned from the class for youth coordinator that the youth group should be self-directed. The group is excited and has selected their officers. The group is bi-lingual and will have 2 students who are not bi-lingual. Two members will be taking classes to be youth coordinators. The group wants to do more with the congregation. The first event will be Feb. 23, a movie night. February 16 the group will have a garage sale from 8:00-1:00. Steve Johnson asked about the youth group helping with the childcare for the ESL classes as most of the children only speak Spanish and the youth are bi-lingual. The concern is transporting the youth to the church. Julia and Steve will work on this.

The council discussed the concerns about the members of the gym across the street parking in out parking lot. The council discussed the problems and possible solutions. Pastor Julio and Barry agreed to meet with the manager of the gym to address concerns and resolve problems.

Report from the ECC. The Dallas Foundation gave a \$10,000 grant to the Food Pantry. Connie McLouth and Miles Schultze made the presentation to the Foundation. Pastor also acknowledged the classes Pat McDonald has brought to the church, which significantly influenced the grant request. The council expressed appreciation for the youth group.

The role of the custodian and cleaning of the buildings was discussed by the council. Pat McDonald and Karen agreed to meet with Pastor and Consuelo about the cleaning of the church. The council also agreed to schedule a day for the members to clean. Council members will email Karen their concerns about the cleaning.

Linda proposed a monthly bi-lingual service. It would introduce the youth in the Spanish to the liturgy and music of the English service. They could participate more in English worship. The council agreed to work toward this project.

The council agreed to formulate a plan to repair and protect the stain glass windows. Barry McDonald and Steve Zwernemann agreed to begin work on the project.

Next meeting: Monday, March 4, 2013.

For the Good of the Church: The council lifted up Pat McDonald for her contributions that led to the Dallas Foundation grant to the ECC. Also, Connie and Miles for their work on the grant and the presentation. The council also honored the new council members.

The council closed with prayer.

The Financial Education Workshop Series classes at Emanuel were through the YW. The series consisted of 12 hours learning how to manage money, how to save, using a spending plan, understanding credits, investing and IDA (matching savings accounts). The class consisted of 20 participants who were enthusiastic to learn and appreciated the information.



March 2013 Church Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 English service – 10 Sunday School – 11:20 Spanish service – 12:15	4 6:30 Council Meeting	5 Food Pantry – 8 a.m. ECC Board Meeting – 7 pm ESL Class – 6:30 p.m.	6 Lenten Soup Supper 6:30	7	8 Creations of the Heart 9 a.m.	9
10 English service – 10 Sunday School – 11:20 Spanish service – 12:15 DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINS	11	12 Food Pantry – 8 a.m. ESL Class – 6:30 p.m.	13 Lenten Soup Supper 6:30	14	15 Creations of the Heart 9 a.m.	16
17 English service – 10 Sunday School – 11:20 Spanish service – 12:15	18	19 Food Pantry – 8 a.m. ESL Class – 6:30 p.m.	20 Lenten Soup Supper 6:30	21	22 Creations of the Heart 9 a.m.	23
24 English service – 10 Sunday School – 11:20 Spanish service – 12:15 31 Easter Sunday	25	26 Food Pantry – 8 a.m. ESL Class – 6:30 p.m.	27 Lenten Soup Supper 6:30	28 Maundy Service 7 p.m.	29 Good Friday Service 7 p.m.	30



Birthdays for the Month of March:

4	Maria Isabel Trevino	42	Maria Isabel Trevino	12	Jesu
5	Emily Streck	53	Emily Streck	13	Jerry
8	Cindi Ruiz	84	Cindi Ruiz	14	Silvi
9	Gage Langston	90	Gage Langston	20	Brian
10	Martin Arrendondo	20	Martin Arrendondo	24	Greg
		26	Kristina Villareal	26	Krist

Food For Thought by Ted S. Brown



I thought this update would be a great opportunity to introduce and thank some of our ECC Food Pantry volunteers so I'll begin this month with highlighting a few of our great volunteers. We have a great group of Emmanuel Lutheran Church members who help pick up food every week including Miles Schulze, Nancy & Steve Johnson, and Barry McDonald. Trish Major of Greenland Hills UMC has been a great fill-in driver when one of our regulars is unable to

make it or we are receiving a big order. Brenda Mathus of Greenland Hills has also helped pick up large food orders and load the volunteer trucks. A nice thing that has happened is that several of our clients are starting to volunteer to help in our distributions as well. It is truly a team effort!

In the last month, we have had some great news! The ECC Food Pantry received a \$10,000 dollar grant from the **Safety Net Fund** of the **Dallas Foundation**. Miles Schulze and Connie McLouth went to a Dallas Foundation meeting and were awarded the money to help us grow our food pantry. We will use some of the money to purchase personal hygiene items for our homeless neighbors. If anyone can help us acquire these types of items please contact me at tedsbrown@gmail.com.

We are into our eighth month with our new food distribution system and the Tuesday distributions are running pretty smoothly. A benefit of our new system is that we are able to spend more time getting to know everyone. This allows us to find out about their needs. Veronica with **Young Women** talked to some of our clients this month to help them enroll in programs that will help their families. In the coming months, we will have the opportunity to hopefully do this on a regular basis. **CCS**, our food distribution partner, has several new programs that we will be looking at to improve our clients' quality of life. I have also had interest from **Habitat for Humanity** in coming and giving a seminar to see if any of our clients are interested in pursuing a new home through Habitat's program. I believe this time spent getting to know our clients is a very crucial step in getting them back on path to success. Thank you all for your continued support!

Well that is enough to chew on for now. Thanks for your time and God bless you all.



Announcements

Children's Choir – Remember that the children's choir is rehearsing on Sundays at noon. They will be practicing through the season of Lent for a special presentation on Easter Sunday. We ask the cooperation of their parents by bringing them every Sunday to church.

Volunteers – Our food distribution program is in need of volunteers. If you can dedicate 2 or 3 hours on Tuesdays, Wednesdays or Thursdays, please let us know. Talk to either Pastor Julio or Pat if you are interested in helping.

Wednesday Night Gathering – We started our Lenten Bible Study. As part of our Lenten practice, you are invited to fast during the day and then to bring a favorite soup and bread or crackers to share during the study. We'll break fast together starting at 6:30 p.m. to feed both the body and the spirit. All are welcome!

Nooma – That's the name of a series of short videos exploring some of the basic questions of the Christian faith which we are using for four Wednesday night Lent gatherings. The word itself is a phonetic spelling of the Greek word pneuma, meaning "wind", "spirit", or "breath". The videos are an invitation to search, question and wrestle with the implications of the teachings of Jesus. We hope our discussions will provide a provocative but also fresh approach to what we learn from the Bible. For more information, you can visit nooma.com.

Church Secretary – We bid farewell (sort of) to our secretary, Blanca Illades, who has accepted a position at the Wilkinson Center. She remains committed to the ministry of our church as a member of the ECC board and in other ways she can make good stewardship of her time and talents. Sandra Cortez, coordinator of the Creations of the Heart group, will fill in for Blanca at the office. Sandra will be there Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Leave It Cleaner than You Found It – As always, we appreciate everybody's help in keeping the church clean. Some simple ways of helping include putting tables and chairs away after events, making sure to take with you or recycle your Sunday bulletin, and cleaning up after yourself after Fellowship. Every little bit helps!

Sunday School Spring Break -- In keeping with our children's school Spring Break schedule, our Sunday School classes will not meet on March 10th and March 17th. Sunday School classes will resume on Palm Sunday, March 24th.