



The Red Door

March 2014

Church Renewal Process

Much has been said lately about the church renewal. But I wonder, what are some of our ideas, and dreams about this process? What do we hope to achieve? What are we expecting that will happen? I guess that many people will tell you they are hoping for greater worship attendance, more members, and yes, more offerings. This probably doesn't surprise anyone. I'll add myself to those who hope to see pews full of people supporting the ministry of our church every Sunday. And yet, such thinking makes me just a little bit leery. Undoubtedly so, we all love it when our Sunday worship has lots of people attending, but I'm not entirely sure that's the mark of a healthy congregation. At least not the only one...

Dave Daubert, in his book Living Lutheran: Renewing your Congregation warns that "evangelism simply to recruit members for the church doesn't work. God isn't interested in a bigger church as much as God is interested in a transformed world." And he continues, "Renewing ministry means reconnecting the church with what God is up to in the world. A renewed congregation exists for others more than for itself." I like that! You see, attracting new church going people to have a better ministry is similar to the proverbial cart before the horse. It doesn't work! The goal is not to attract more people to the church so that we can have more ministry. Instead, we strive for a better ministry model, one that is contextual and responsive to both the call of the Gospel and the needs of the world, because *that*, I believe, will bring new people.

That's why our church renewal process has to start by taking a look at ourselves. This is one instance where inward ministry becomes necessary. Not because we want to be self serving, but because we want to strengthen our spiritual life. And in order to do that, a good place to start is bible study. The first step in our Church Renewal Process is to come together, as a community of faith, as a worshiping community, around Scripture. The Word of God will help us to shape our faith and to gain a more clear understanding of what God wants for the world around us. With that we will not only have a stronger spiritual life but it will also lead us in defining the ministry of our congregation.

We are encouraging members and friends of Emanuel Lutheran to gather together in groups of two's and three's to have fellowship, read Scripture, and pray. Each weekly session will go around two chapters in the book of Acts. For each two-chapter portion we'll use ask three basic questions to lead our sharing: What is God doing in the text? What are people doing in the text? And, what can we as church learn from this? Other than that, there is no formal curriculum to follow; this is just plain faith conversation. Other questions, ideas, and themes could arise but that will be totally up to each small group. The goal is simple and yet it has the potential to be very powerful and transformational. This is about people of faith coming together to share, read and pray. In the process we are renewing our spiritual life and our faith. That in turn, will renew our church. The way to renew the ministry of our church is by renewing the spiritual life of our brothers and sisters.

We are hoping that all small groups will start to meet on the week of March 10. Look inside this issue of the Red Door to find more details about our Bible study.

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

Church Renewal Process: Acts Bible Study

1. Choose one or two people to meet with. To encourage the participation of everybody, groups should be of no more than two or three people. You meet with whoever you want, but groups are gender specific (men with men, women with women). This breaks up husbands and wives and it avoids other temptations
2. Prior to the group meeting, each participant will read individually two chapters of the book of Acts. The group session will then share around the two chapters for that week. The book of Acts has 28 chapters, we then have 14 weeks (3 ½ months) to meet.
3. Meeting time and place are totally up to the group: 6:30 a.m. at the coffee shop, noon at work, after dinner in your living room... Whatever! Make it fun and enjoyable by all.
4. Meetings are divided into three parts:
 - a. Part one (10 minutes) – Check in time. “How's it been with you this past week?” “What's going on?” The kind of stuff we do naturally when we greet people. This part is about relationship building. If we are not building relationships, we are not building a church.
 - b. Part two (20 minutes) – Conversation about the text. Remember that each two chapter section is to be read before arriving to the group meeting. Use the following questions to lead your discussion: What is God doing in these two chapters? What are people doing in these two chapters? (which is sometimes at odds with God). What can we as church learn from this?

Note: These are the basic questions. Other questions, ideas and themes can arise from the group discussion. Don't try to make this into a curriculum. This is a simple faith conversation about the text.
 - c. Part three – Prayer. Make a firm commitment to **at least 15 minutes of prayer**. What to pray for? Each other, and the things you heard from each other at check in. For the gift of the Word you have just encountered. For the ministry of the congregation. For a vision for mission for the church. For ministry to be connected to our neighborhood and to real life. And for the things that God knows we need but that we forget to pray for... Make sure that you are dedicating the full 15 minutes to your prayer time. More if you wish but not less.
5. Add up the numbers: 10 + 20 + 15 = 45 minutes. If you are going less than 40 or longer than an hour something is not right. Part of the success of this time together will rely on being mindful with the usage of time. Too little time and you won't accomplish your goals. Too much and it can be overtaxing.

First week of meetings: March 10-15

Emanuel Community Center Treasurer's Report

February, 2014

INCOME-EXPENSE STATEMENT

Beginning Balance	\$10,423.65
Income	\$1,371.15
Expense	\$2,512.67
Ending Balance	\$9,282.13

Notes

ECC incurred no unusual expenses for the month of February. The Boy Scouts from Preston Meadows LC donated approximately 200 pounds of food valued at 200.00 along with a cash donation of 287.00 for the food pantry. Feathercrest Farms gave a generous in-kind donation of 552 dozen organic eggs valued at 2,740.00, this is an important protein supplement for our food pantry and non-kitchen clients.

*Cal-Maine Foods donated 705 dozen organic eggs valued at 2,800.00 at the end of January. This was not noted on the January report. The in-kind balance has been corrected to reflect this donation.

INCOME/EXPENSE THROUGH FEBRUARY 28, 2014

	Income	Expense	In-Kind
Food Pantry	\$4,124.00	\$4,572.50	\$5,495.00
Creations of the Heart	-	\$213.91	
Family Hair Care Class	-	\$249.31	
Unidos Podemos	\$240.00	\$0.00	
Operating Expenses	\$1,437.47	\$341.48	
Angel Tree Program	-	\$0.00	
Summer Reading Program	-	\$0.00	
Back to School Carnival	-	\$0.00	
Totals	\$5,801.47	\$5,377.20	\$5,495.00

March 2014 Church Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 English service – 10 Spanish service – 12:15	3	4 Food Pantry – 8 a.m. 6 p.m. – ECC dinner meeting	5 Family Hair class - Noon	6	7 Creations of the Heart 9 a.m.	8
9 English service – 10 First Sunday in Lent Daylight Savings Time Spanish service – 12:15	10 Council meeting 6:30 pm	11 Food Pantry – 8 a.m.	12 Family Hair class - Noon	13	14 Creations of the Heart 9 a.m.	15
16 English service – 10 Spanish service – 12:15	17	18 Food Pantry – 8 a.m.	19 Family Hair class - Noon	20	21 Creations of the Heart 9 a.m.	22
23	24	25 Food Pantry – 8 a.m.	26 Family Hair class - Noon	27	28 Creations of the Heart 9 a.m.	29
30	31					



Birthdays for the Month of March:

4	Maria Isabel Trevino	12	Jesus Palacios
5	Emily Streck	13	Jerry Lopez
8	Cindi Ruiz	14	Silvia Monjaras
10	Martin Arrendondo	20	Brian McLouth
		26	Kristina Villareal

Notes from Emanuel Church Council

The church council members were very pleased with the attendance and response to the annual meeting in January. Roberto Hernandez is the new member of the council this year.

We were also pleased with the response to the goals and committees for 2014. More members are needed to serve on committees, so please consider helping in an area of your choice. Gaynelle Schulz is organizing a visitor and evangelism committee. Steve Johnson agreed to lead a stewardship committee with a year round educational emphasis on commitment and giving. Church property, planning for the vacant lot and for the church house are 3 committees headed by Barry McDonald and Miles Schulze . They welcome your help.

Also, Sandy Duvall, leading the yard and grounds committee, has scheduled day for yard work for Saturday, March 22, in time for Easter. Maria Torres volunteered to organize a church-cleaning club to do special cleaning for the church. The first day for cleaning is Saturday, March 1. We so appreciate these women volunteering to help make our church look nice. In addition to accomplishing good work on these projects, we will be able to spend some time getting to know each other better.

Will Dorward and youth group members, Sonja Cerda and Alma Cruz will help us with social media. We have a lot to do to improve our participation in this modern means of communication. Our most recent visitors all found us from our web site and we want to expand our outreach through this popular means.

On Saturday, February 22 the council meet all day at Greenland Hills United Methodist Church to do more planning for 2014. Spiritual development and congregational growth were our main focus. Additionally, we discussed the various projects we have as challenges for this year. We look forward to Pastor Julio leading us in the Church Renewal Process throughout the year.

We welcome new ideas from everyone on making Emanuel a more dynamic and supportive church. Please share your ideas with anyone on the council or Pastor Julio.

In Peace,
Karen Roberts, Council President

ECC Board Meeting

January 14, 2014

1. Present: Krystal Kittisopikul, Ted Brown, Miles Schulze, Buzz Taylor, Pat McDonald, Nancy Johnson, Connie McLouth.
2. Treasurer's Report
 - a. Ending balance of \$8,857 and change balance at the end of December 2013
 - b. Nancy estimates that we must have received over \$10,000 (conservatively) on in-kind donations. This includes Angel Tree, gifts for the homeless, canned goods, etc.
 - c. Some deposits came too late to be deposited within December. If those amounts had been included in the month, it would have come to a wash out.
 - d. It was moved to accept the treasurer's report. Motion was seconded and proved.
3. Fundraising opportunities
 - a. Nancy wants to put together ways to demonstrate how much further donated money goes in feeding people.
 - i. The hope is to increase monetary donation which we can stretch to the maximum by buying in bulk from CCs.
 - b. Nancy is also retrieving information from our database that can help in grant writing.
 - i. She is working with Connie to interpret and use the data appropriately.
 - ii. Miles has offered to support Nancy and Connie in any ways they deem necessary.
4. 2014 Calendar (All dates are subject to change):
 - a. Tax Credit Classes – Starting on February
 - b. Family Hair Care Classes – Going on now
 - c. Healthy Kids, Healthy Families – Starting by the end of February going for on 9 weeks
 - d. Summer Reading Program – Jennifer had said that she wanted to return to direct the program. She recommended:
 - i. Extend it to 4 weeks. (June 9 through July 3)
 - ii. Do it in the afternoon instead of mornings (noon to 3:30 pm)
 - e. Food Matters – Starting on July 7 for 6 weeks
 - f. Back-to-School Carnival – August 2 (Carnival committee suggested changing it to Saturday instead of Sunday)
 - g. Global Village – November 1-2
 - h. Angel Tree – December 15
5. Board Members:
 - a. Mimi presented her resignation.
 - b. Ted would like to ask a couple people from Greenland Hills UMC to join the board.
 - c. Two other members from Emanuel LC will be invited to join the board.
6. Potential new services for non-kitchen:
 - a. Informal poll shows that the items the most needed items are toilet paper, toothpaste, and size 8 boots. Among food items peanut butter and crackers.
 - b. It was also discussed to consider distributing emergency mylar blankets.

7. Food Pantry:
 - a. A subcommittee met to try to come up with strategies to reduce the waiting list for the food pantry services.
 - b. Clients will be recertified in the next couple of months.
8. Lot adjacent to church property:
 - a. Emanuel LC is forming a committee to suggest potential uses for the lot.
 - b. ECC has been asked to provide two other members from the board to be part of that committee.



Let's celebrate the end of a cold Winter and the coming of Spring by sprucing up the church's grounds! On Sat., March 22, 2014, beginning at 9:30 am, please come by with your garden tools, flowers to

plant and/or snacks to share with the volunteers. If you have any questions or ideas, please call Sandy Duvall 956.457.8729. See you there!

Sandy

Risky Business On The Good Ship Life On Earth

God has welcomed each of us aboard his ship – The Good Ship Life On Earth. His ship's no luxury cruiser as some might expect of Him, though. It's a battleship rigged to ward off attempts by the enemy to capture and destroy all of us on board. The captain called us to a life of service on his ship; we're charged with making sure *everyone* aboard reaches the distant shore safely. There's a lot of work to be done to accomplish the captain's goal. Some of us use the power of prayer and worship to protect the ship and all on board from attacks by the enemy. Others care for the crew, feeding and clothing them and training them for hand-to-hand combat with the enemy should the ship be boarded. Still others are concerned with safety, manning the guard rails and rescuing anyone who tumbles overboard, especially in rough weather and during hard-fought battles at sea.

Of course, God, himself, is the captain of the ship.

Although many of us in the crew have quite different backgrounds and came on board the ship at widely differing times in our life, we've each experienced the same first encounter with the captain – a personal call to come and sail with him. One by one we followed him from among the shacks and shanties of life and across the gangplank to board this ship. Once on board, though, the harmony among us we expected to find – because we'd all been called in the same manner by the same captain – fell apart to become almost constant bickering over one thing or another.

The problems started almost as soon as the ship got under way when we began noticing distinct differences among ourselves – differences in appearance and dress; differences in the language we spoke and, especially, differences in the beliefs we hold about the work that had to be done on the ship. Some of us believe, for example, we're all volunteers on board the ship. Others respond, "No, the captain picked each of us to play a very specific role on board even before he built the ship." Some others say service to the captain is the only thing of importance on board. Others argue, "No, no, no; what the captain wants most from us is that we serve each other while we're on board." But then there are also on board those who have no thought of service at all. Some of them believe they're on board to educate themselves on the technical details of sailing ships, not

to actually get involved in the work of sailing this particular ship. They spend most of their time below deck, studying and discussing among themselves the mechanics of the engines and the structure of the hull. And like them, there are those who believe their acceptance of the captain's call to sail with him is all that's necessary to guarantee their safe passage to the ship's destination. Service to the captain and others on the crew is of no interest to them, either. They enjoy chatting among themselves on the sunny top deck, and leaving the chores of sailing the ship to others.

Well, a while back, some of the crew grew tired of the many problems of such a lack of cooperation. So they approached the captain to ask for his advice on how they might all get along better with each other. First, he told them how his son, Jesus, had dealt with problems similar to theirs that he'd encountered some years ago when he went ashore to find more crew members. He said even on the night before he died at the hands of the enemy, Jesus was focused on solving those problems, sending a message to the captain saying, "*I pray for these followers, but I am also praying for all those who will believe in me because of their teaching. Father, I pray that they can be one. As you are in me and I am in you. I pray that they can also be one in us. Then the world will believe that you sent me.*" (John: 17:20) Then the captain advised, "Go about your work on the ship as my son did. Live and work as one in me, your captain. Live and work as one in my son, Jesus, and me. And live and work as one in each other. This will solve all the problems you're having that have been caused by your reaction to the the differences you've discovered in each other."

Indeed! Live and work as one in the father and one in each other. What a wonderfully simple solution to the many problems of life here on The Good Ship Life On Earth. Live and work with no more intention than serving Him by making a difference in the lives of others – no matter how much they or their beliefs or their practices differ from our own. In my former congregation, we called this vision risk-taking service. By "risk-taking" we meant getting personally involved in efforts to improve the conditions of others, pushing our self out of our individual comfort zone, stretching our self beyond service to people we already know, exposing our self to people, situations and needs we'd never normally encounter. Jesus devoted much of His life to that very type of service. He stepped across oppressive social boundaries, intermingled with those who suffered crippling infirmities and social stigma and offered hope to those at their point of gravest despair. He loved the least lovable and the most vulnerable, and He offered the same unmerited grace to the greatest sinner as to the finest saint.

Now He calls each of us – you, me and all of our brothers and sisters – into this kind of love. We are among "...*all those who will believe in me because of their teaching...*" whom Jesus prayed for in His last moments on earth. We are among "...*these followers...*" whom He prayed would become one "...*as you are in me and I am in you...*" The oneness He ached for us to achieve is in those for whom love is not automatic, not easy, not common or not generally accepted by others in our daily life. The oneness He prayed for in the Garden is in making those others feel respected, confident and blessed in their life. The oneness He shed His blood for is in our measuring the worth of our own life in the number of lives we change through our work among the people on board The Good Ship Life On Earth, so "...*Then the world will believe that you sent me.*"

Jim Hyland

(Story line adapted from "*In the Grip of Grace*" by Max Lucado.)



Announcements

The 2014 FLOWER CHART is already posted on the bulletin board in Ericson Hall. We invite you to take a look at it and choose your favorite dates (birthdays, anniversaries, memorials, etc.) to bring a floral arrangement for our altar.

HELP IS DESPERATELY NEEDED at Briarwood camp to get ready for the start of construction of the new Leadership Formation Facility and Welcome Center. There is need of volunteers to help get the area ready by helping clear out, clean out, and tear down the old maintenance building on the property. They will be having work days **EVERY SATURDAY OF FEBRUARY 2014**, working from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. with free lunch provided to those who help. Please RSVP to Jean by calling her at 940-241-2099 so they can ensure to have enough food and refreshments for everyone.

OFFERING ENVELOPES – The 2014 offering envelopes are available. Look for yours in the Narthex. If you don't find your name, simply grab a blank box of envelopes and make sure you let our financial secretary, Carl Schulze, know your number.

PENNE POMODORO has partnered with our Emanuel Community Center by donating 15% of their sales all day on Tuesday, March 4. So, lunch or dinner you can participate of the fundraiser. Bring your family and invite your friends and coworkers to one of Penne Pomodoro's three locations on Lakewood, Preston & Forest, or Snider Plaza and support our ECC. We want to recognize 5 year old Jack Brown (the son of ECC board President, Ted Brown) for bringing up this idea. He actually gave up his birthday gift in exchange for the opportunity to raise funds for our food pantry program. Way to go Jack! For more info on locations go to www.pennepomodoro.com.

MARIA TORRES IS ORGANIZING A "SPRUCING UP CLUB" and is inviting others to join her. She will have a calendar of opportunities for people who may want to come to give some TLC to specific areas of the church. This is **not** in replacement of the regular weekly cleaning of the church, but an additional opportunity to do some much needed special projects. The first time will be on Saturday, March 1 from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm to work on the sanctuary. The invitation is for both men and women as there are all sorts of tasks to do. For more info contact Maria at mena24778@hotmail.com or 972-487-7538.

THE CHILDRENS CHOIR will resume practicing on March 9. They'll be singing on Palm Sunday.

NEW ADDRESS FOR BOB & LINDA MOODY – We enjoyed being a part of Emanuel Lutheran Church and we will miss each and every one of you. Please come visit us in Tulsa any time. We are keeping the same email addresses and cell phone numbers.

Bob & Linda Moody
1126 S. Evanston Avenue
Tulsa, OK 74104