



The Messenger

January 2018

Emmanuel Episcopal Church
P. O. Box 1028
400 Highland Avenue
Coos Bay, OR 97420

Christy's Corner

Giving thanks that the Days are indeed getting longer!



This was the view as I went for my walk two days before Christmas at 6:30 in the morning. It could have been midnight, it was so dark, and I found myself giving thanks for the winter solstice and the promise that the days will indeed begin to get longer. More importantly, it was a reminder to me that we would soon be celebrating the birth of the light of Christ into our world.

The stars were shining brightly on this cold winter morning and I was filled with gratitude for an even more foundational promise, that the darkness will never overcome the light!

I sit at my computer early Christmas morning, pondering all of these things in my heart before our 10:00 Christmas Day service. It has been an Advent unlike any I ever remember with much darkness in the form of injuries, sickness and death of people I love and care about deeply. I can't remember a time when the week before Christmas the church treasurer, secretary, senior warden, and many members of the church were very sick and incapacitated. Then after taking communion to some of our home bound folks on the 24th, I discovered that we had two members in ICU at Bay Area Hospital. All of this on the year when the 4th Sunday of Advent falls on Christmas Eve creating even more bulletins to create, services to prepare for and music to plan and carry out. Our community rallied, everyone chipped in, and the blessings flowed abundantly!

As I ponder all of this in my heart, I realize that in many ways this really represents the truth of our lives...they are messy, and things happen that are inconvenient and certainly not the way we would plan it. Yet the one certainty we have is that love has been born into our world, in the form of a little baby lying in a manger, and that love is strong enough and powerful enough to redeem our messy lives and all of creation!

As we begin to move into a brand new year, let us each ponder the gift that God has given us individually this year. What has been born anew within you? Within our church community? Within our world? ...and what are we personally doing to ensure that we can truly receive that gift with love? Only then will we be able to do our part, passing on the gift we have received as light bearers, bringing light and love to the darker places in our lives and in our world.

I look forward to continuing the journey of bearing light with each of you, giving thanks for Emmanuel, God with us!

Blessings, prayers and my love, *Christy*



My biggest gratitude this year is for all of you who stepped in to help do all of the big and small jobs that needed to be done in order for us to offer our Advent and Christmas services.

We had so many people who were sick and unable to do things they were scheduled for. Despite that, others stepped in to help complete and fold bulletins, read lessons, usher, decorate the church, help carry out the Christmas pageant, provide pastoral care for members and much, much more. We have an amazing community of faith...thank you for offering your gifts in so many different ways!

- To the altar guild for all of the extra work involved in literally decorating the church in hours between the 4th Sunday of Advent on the 24th and our 4 PM Christmas Eve service! It was greatly appreciated.
- To Carla and the choir, Dan and the contemporary group for their extra time practicing in order to provide us with spirit filled music and leadership for all of our services. You were the rock that held our Advent and Christmas services together!
- To the lay readers, lectors and ushers who served during the Christmas services and especially to all those who stepped up to fill in where needed.
- To the children, adults and their families who helped the Christmas pageant come together so we could tell the Christmas story so beautifully at the 4 PM Christmas Eve service.
- To Julianna for her work and leadership with the Christmas baskets and for all who donated money and time helping to shop, wrap the gifts, fill the baskets and deliver them.
- To Doug Laird and Al Rumsch for caring for our grounds so they look so nice and inviting and especially for the wonderful and festive lights on the church and Shepherd's House. A true joy, not only for us but for all who pass by!
- To John Knutson for the beautifully lit Christmas tree in the courtyard providing Christmas cheer to all who see it.
- For Sally and Nat Jaeggli for the wonderful meal they organized and hosted at the church on Christmas Eve, a true gift and time of fellowship and nourishment for all who attended!

We offered our best and trusted that God would transform our offerings into something much grander than any of us could do on our own. Emmanuel, God with us. Thank you to all of you!

Winter is Here... A Reminder of Emmanuel's Snow Policy!

Your safety is the most important thing so this is a good time to review our general snow policy that follows Coos Bay Schools. If they are closed, our office and scheduled meetings will also most likely be closed and cancelled. If they have a delayed start then we may or may not cancel the meetings and the office will most likely be open but the hours may need to be adjusted. Church on Sundays will not be cancelled and as long as there is at least one person present with the priest, we will have Eucharist. If there is no clergy person available then we will have Morning Prayer. The most important thing is your safety, so please don't go out when it doesn't feel safe. Questions, talk to Christy or a Vestry member.



Merry Christmas from #WCPR, Lakeside, OR

These rocks were left for us on Christmas morning from the West Coast Painted Rocks group in Lakeside, OR. They are a group that exists primarily to encourage random acts of kindness, by sharing a little piece of artwork. These two rocks were a wonderful greeting, encouragement and reminder of God's love on a morning where all who helped with the service needed a bit of a pick me up after a long day the day before. A great example of how the smallest acts can help make a difference in our world.

Save the Date: Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper will be February 13th and Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent is February 14th! Watch your February newsletter for more details!

Thanksgiving for the Life of Christy's Mother

Thanks to all who have offered your condolences at the death of my mother on the first Sunday of Advent, Dec. 3, 2017. She was an amazing woman who spent all of her life at Emmanuel Episcopal Church in Mercer Island. She loved the fact that I was serving at Emmanuel Episcopal Church, Coos Bay! In gratitude for her life, we handed out 200 western cedar trees at her celebration of life to be planted in her memory.



Photo: Christy, Jack and their kids with the trees in front of the Emmanuel Bell, given by her grandparents.

In Memory of Ruth Mary Close 1917-2017

In Gratitude for her Stewardship of Creation

Plant this Cedar, Grow a Memory, Beautify your Surroundings.



Vestry Seeking New Members to Join Emmanuel's Leadership Team!

It's that time of year again where three of our Vestry will complete their terms of service and as a congregation, we will elect three new members at our Annual Meeting in February. This year Pat Cross, John Knutson and David Laird will form our nominating committee as the outgoing Vestry members. Please consider whether you might be called to join our leadership team. It's an exciting time at Emmanuel as we seek to move into the future with vision, boldness and generosity in order to continue to offer God's love to our community in meaningful and life-giving ways. Wondering what's required? Basically, a willingness to serve, a commitment to Emmanuel, and a love for Jesus Christ are the only pre-requisites. If you're interested in finding out more about this opportunity, talk to any Vestry member or Christy.

Our Preschool is Successfully Growing! Beginning January 2nd things might seem a little busier in the undercroft and preschool with the addition of five more preschool students and our infant and toddler class now has eight children enrolled. Our "before care" and "after care" program is also having more and more families participating as the word gets out. Please keep sharing the word in the community! The next possible step would be expanding into the upper classrooms since we are finding we have additional families in need of quality education and childcare for their kids on our waitlist and contacting us for information. Keep the preschool in your prayers as we make important decisions in the upcoming months on what our next step will be!

****February 2018 Newsletter Submissions Deadline is Tuesday, January 23****

As we begin the New Year, there are lots of ways to use your gifts at Emmanuel and in our community. How might you serve God and our community this year? Here's something to ponder as you look for ways to get involved.

Is it a Job or a Ministry?

Some people have a **JOB** in the church.
Others involve themselves in a **MINISTRY**.
What's the difference?

*Serving at
the altar*

If you are doing it just because no one else will, it's a **JOB**.
If you are doing it to serve the Lord, it's a **MINISTRY**.

If you quit because somebody criticized you, it was a **JOB**.
If you keep on serving, it's a **MINISTRY**.

If you'll do it only if it does not interfere with your other activities, it's a **JOB**.
If you are committed to staying with it even when it means letting go of other things, it's a **MINISTRY**.

*Serving on
the Vestry*

Ushering

If you quit because no one praised you or thanked you, it was a **JOB**.
If you stay with it even though nobody recognizes your efforts, it is **MINISTRY**.

It's hard to get excited about a **JOB**.
It's almost impossible not to be excited about a **MINISTRY**.

*Taking communion
to our home bound*

If our concern is success, it's a **JOB**.
If our concern is faithfulness, it's a **MINISTRY**.

*Hosting coffee
hour*

An average church is filled with people doing **JOBS**.
A great and growing church is filled with people involved in **MINISTRY**.

Where do we fit in?
What about us?

If God calls you to a **MINISTRY**, don't treat it like a **JOB**.
If you have a **JOB**, give it up and find a **MINISTRY**.

*Helping with
Godly Play*

God does not want us feeling stuck with a **JOB**,
but excited and faithful to God in a **MINISTRY**.
(from St. Margaret's in the Desert, brought to us by Karen Pruhsmeier)

*Volunteering in the
Food Cupboard*

*Rocking or reading
to babies*