

IMMANUELITE

April 2019

Pastor John Sharp

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After God gives the Ten Commandments from the top of Mount Sinai He also gives Israel these instructions: "You have seen for yourselves that I have talked with you from heaven. You shall not make gods of silver to be with Me, nor shall you make for yourselves gods of gold. An altar of earth you shall make for Me and sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your oxen. In every place where I cause My name to be remembered I will come to you and bless you. If you make Me an altar of stone, you shall not build it of hewn stones, for if you wield your tool on it you profane it. And you shall not go up by steps to My altar, that your nakedness be not exposed on it." Exodus 20:22-26

This is an odd passage and pastors do not talk about it much. There are several odd things about it.

First of all, in Exodus 27:1-8 we find the following instructions from the Lord regarding the permanent altar before the tabernacle: "You shall make the altar of acacia wood, five cubits long and five cubits broad. The altar shall be square, and its height shall be three cubits. And you shall make horns for it on its four corners; its horns shall be of one piece

with it, and you shall overlay it with bronze. You shall make pots for it to receive its ashes, and shovels and basins and forks and fire pans. You shall make all its utensils of bronze. You shall also make for it a grating, a network of bronze, and on the net you shall make four bronze rings as its four corners. And you shall set it under the ledge of the altar so that the net extends halfway down the altar. And you shall make poles for the altar, poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with bronze. And the poles shall be put through the rings, so that the poles are on the two sides of the altar when it is carried. You shall make it hollow, with boards. As it has been shown you on the mountain, so shall it be made."

If God was going to give instructions regarding a permanent altar in Exodus 27, why give instructions regarding an altar of earth or stones in Exodus 20? The only answer I can think of is that God is giving instructions regarding the earthen or stone altar in Exodus 20 as a temporary measure until the permanent altar can be constructed according to the instructions in Exodus 27 (which they did in Exodus 38:1-7).

Secondly, why does God indicate that if they use a tool on the stones they will profane the altar?

I think that this question is closely related to the final question: why does God forbid Israel from making steps to go up to the altar and He forbids the steps so that their nakedness may not be exposed on it?

If you run an internet search on ancient Baal altars, you will find pictures of such altars at archaeological digs where they have been found. The Canaanites and other ancient peoples made altars to their gods and to Baal using dressed stones. Most of the altars were very large to accommodate large numbers of sacrifices. Because of their size the Canaanites built steps into the side of the altar so that the priests could climb up on top of the altar and perform the sacrifices.

Canaanites also practiced ritual prostitution. That means that fornication was a formal part of their worship of Baal and other gods. The steps on the altar were one of the places where such fornication took place in worship of Baal or whatever god they were worshipping. That is why the Lord talks about nakedness being exposed on the steps of the altar.

In order to prevent all of this from happening in Israel God simply forbade the construction of altars after the manner of the Canaanites and other pagan peoples. This would eliminate one avenue that Israel would have to worship false gods.

In this way God closes off the worship of Himself by means of fleshly desires. The Canaanites institutionalized fleshly desires in their worship services through ritual prostitution. This is one of the reasons why Baal worship was so appealing to Israel during the Old Testament period. To put it bluntly Baal threw a better party than the Lord did. Because of the fleshly desires which the Canaanites had incorporated into the worship of their gods, Israel was often seduced to participate in their worship because it was more appealing to the flesh as opposed to the worship practices that the Lord instituted which prevented the indulgence of the flesh.

From this a lesson can be taken for worship in the New Testament. No worship in the New Testament shall engage the lusts of the flesh whatever they may be. If the lusts of the flesh are indulged in worship, then a false god is being worshipped even if the people who worship the false god call it the Lord.

Consider the following from Ephesians 4:17-24: "Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. But that is not the way you learned Christ!—assuming that you have heard about Him and were taught in Him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness."

Because of Jesus,
Pastor





G.R.O.W, a Christian ecumenical men's group in the Newman/Broadlands area, will meet Sunday, April 7 at Broadlands Community. All interested Christian men in the area are invited to attend the meeting, which begins with breakfast at 7:00 am, and includes a devotion and a spiritually uplifting topic or speaker each month. There is no charge for the meeting, although opportunity is given for a free-will offering, which is used in various ways to serve others in the community and beyond.



The Knitting Group will meet Monday, April 15 at 1:30 pm. Please join us and help make blankets.



The Sewing Ladies meet the first Monday of each month. They enjoy sewing and sharing a wonderful lunch together. This month, they will meet Monday, April 1 at 9:00 am.



High School SAT testing is Tuesday, April 9.

Quarterly Voters Meeting is Sunday, April 28 at 10:15 am. We recommend that all voting members attend.

Special Dates:

- Sunday, April 14: Palm Sunday and Confirmation Day
- Thursday, April 18: Holy Thursday
- Friday, April 19: Good Friday
- Sunday, April 21: Easter Sunday
- Monday, April 22: Earth Day
- Wednesday, April 24: Administrative Professionals Day



Sunday, April 7: Building Fund

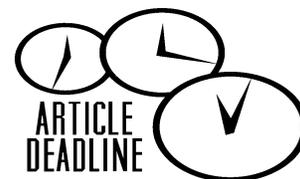
This is our first of four Building Fund offerings. This money is used towards repairs and maintenance for the church building. Please use the "Building Fund" envelopes, and be sure to write your number in the memo.

Sunday, April 14: Camp CILCA

This offering goes towards Camp CILCA. Please use the "Love" envelopes, and write CAMP CILCA and your number in the memo.



Blood pressure screening this month will be April 14 and April 28.



Immanuelite deadline for May is, Wednesday, April 24.



Easter Service is Sunday, April 21 at 7:30 am. After service, breakfast will be served at 9:00 am.



Pastor is on vacation, Tuesday, April 23 - Saturday, April 27

Baptisms

Titus Daniel Herriott was baptized on Sunday, March 17, 2019. Titus was born on December 5, 2018 at OSF in Urbana, IL. His parents are Daniel and Constance Herriott. His sponsors were Kristina Herriott and Chris Kirschner.



The Easter Egg Hunt will be Saturday, April 13 at 1:00 pm. Weather permitting, the egg hunt will be outside. If there is rain or mud, the egg hunt will be inside the church.



VBS is June 17-21, 9:00 am-11:30 am. Register online through Facebook, or by filling out a registration form located on the bulletin board, then turn it in to the office. Please register by May 4.



Dear Family and Friends,

April is World Autism Month. It's also been deemed National Autism Awareness Month in the United States. However, many advocates have rightly called for the need to increase awareness about ASDs year-round, and not just during 30 select days. Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a broad term used to describe a group of neurodevelopment disorders. These disorders are characterized by problems with communication and social interaction. People with ASD often demonstrate restricted, repetitive, and stereotyped interests or patterns of behavior. ASD is found in individuals around the world, regardless of race, culture, or economic background. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), autism does occur more often in boys than in girls, with a 4 to 1 male-to-female ratio. The CDC estimated in 2014 that nearly 1 in 59 children have been identified with ASD. There are indications that instances of ASD are on the rise. Some attribute this increase to environmental factors. However, experts debate whether there's an actual increase in cases or just more frequent diagnoses. Certain treatments and therapies can work for some people but not others. Parents and caregivers can also have differing opinions on the best way to advocate for a child with autism. Understanding autism and people who are on the spectrum starts with awareness, but it doesn't end there. Earth Day is April 22. If you have any unused and/or expired medications sitting around, please bring them to the Parish Nurse office for safe recycling! Also, if you have any syringes that need safe disposal, we can help you with those as well!

Your Parish Nurse,
Jody Farmer and Tiffany Paul



BAPTISMAL ANNIVERSARY

- 1 Beth Rutledge
Dustin Jolley
- 4 Thomas Wolf
Sandy Smith
Janet Franzen
- 5 Charles Negangard
Harriett Cress
- 7 Jay Humphrey
- 8 Travis Wade Jr.
- 9 Donna Negangard
- 10 Robert Siuts
Ainsley Maher
Dave Lancaster
- 11 Rolane Renfrow
Christian Paul
Janice Wienke
- 13 Susan McKee
Ann Wright
- 14 Morgan Darley
Tyler Bickers
Alicia Osborne
Traci Cokley
Belinda Smith
- 15 Kevin Block
Logan Chandler
- 16 Desiree' Pollock
- 17 Jeannie Glasgow
- 19 Carl Smith
- 20 Heather Cuppernell
- 21 Lance Kingston
Hadley Kirschner
- 22 Austin Bergmeier
Jessica Armstrong
- 23 Rodney Campbell
Randy Campbell
Gena Thurman
- 25 Lindy Aden
Penny Stone
Jamie Stierwalt

- Judi Struck
- Mary Rardin
- 26 Andra Luth
- 28 Patrick Sanstrom
- 29 James McKee
- 30 Tyler Gruschow



First, I want to thank everyone for the prayers for my health and peace of mind. I graciously accept any and all prayers.

Second, here at Immanuel, we go through a lot of paper. Its very hard for me to see it not being recycled. With that being said, I am unaware of any recycle places in the area other than Homer, but we are unable to use their bins. If you know of a place that we can take our paper to be recycled, please let me know.

Thank you, Crystal Ball



Confirmation Day is Sunday, April 14, 2019

Confirmands:

- Kelsey Luth
- Adena Paul
- Raena Stierwalt
- Elizabeth Boyer
- Mary Boyer