



Emmanuel News

DECEMBER 2016

Kids...
Come be
part of the
Christmas
Program...

Came at 9:30 am on
Sat. Dec. 17th to
practice for the
program. We will also
practice in Sunday
School on Dec. 4th and
11th.

Call or email Jill
Hoffman if you would
like to be part of the
program or have any
questions. 671-3030
hoffmjm@yahoo.com



Emmanuel
Lutheran
Church
Christmas
Program
Sunday
Dec. 18th
10am

Advent & Christmas Worship Schedule

- December 14 — Mid-week Advent
Worship @ 6:30 p.m.
- December 18 — Sunday School
Christmas Program
10:00 a.m.
- December 24 — Christmas Eve
Candlelight Worship
8:00 p.m.
- December 25 — No Worship (please
join us on Christmas
Eve)



"My spirit
rejoices
in God my
Savior."

LUKE 1:47



Dear Friends at Emmanuel,

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

John 1:1-8

There is no doubt about it! The days are getting shorter and the night is getting longer. On December 21st, the winter solstice, we will experience the day which has the greatest amount of darkness. I'm not exactly crazy about this fact. I like the light—I need the light. The darkness makes me feel uncomfortable, cold and even sometimes afraid.

I'm pretty sure this is not just due to the lack of sunshine, but rather is do to all the metaphorical darkness we experience in our lives. The world can seem like a dark place when we are constantly faced with war and the rumors of war; when people fight and speak evil of one another; when there are natural disasters such as earthquakes, tornadoes, flooding and severe snow storms; when our lives are touched by diseases and when death comes calling at our doors.

Yes, we live in this world surrounded by darkness. It is amazing then, that in the midst of the deepest darkness we celebrate Christmas. God comes into the darkness of our world through a poor, helpless baby. God comes into the darkness in the most vulnerable of ways and brings a light into the darkness. That light is the light of God's eternal love and forgiveness. This is what John is talking about when he wrote: *What has come into being ⁴in him (that is Jesus) was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.*

Indeed, the world did it's best to overcome this light,



event to the point of nailing Jesus to a cross to experience the most cruel form of torture and death that human beings have ever created. And yet death could not hold Jesus, he rose from the grave—the darkness could not overcome him. Christmas is about celebrating the birth of God in the flesh who comes into the darkness of our world to give us light and life.

Every year at Christmas time I hear Christians saying we need to bring Christ back into Christmas. On the one hand I agree with this; Christmas has certainly become more secular than religious. On the other hand, however, I disagree with the statement “bring Christ back into Christmas” because Jesus has never left. I believe that the reality is that we, unlike John the Baptist, have forgotten or refused to bear witness to the light that is Jesus, God's own son. We have been seduced by the secular Christmas to get all wrapped up in partying and purchasing rather than witnessing to the one who gives us true light.

Christmas is a time to witness to and testify regarding the light that has come into our darkness. Christmas is a time to live the reality that love overcome hate; that forgiveness brings healing while revenge brings death. Christmas is the time to declare with the way we live our lives the truth that in Jesus the light has come into the world and the darkness cannot overcome it!

May God's light and love be with you and yours this Christmas.

Pastor Mark

Dear members of Emmanuel,

Maryann and I would like to thank you for your generous and quite unexpected gift

certificate to Chico Hot Springs. We appreciate your love and thoughtfulness. It is truly a joy and privilege to be a part of this faith Community!

Pastor Mark & Maryann

Thank You!

COMMENTARIES OF THE CHURCH MOUSE

Greetings Dear Friends and Neighbors:

December is finally here. For the record, I've been a very good mouse! Before we expound on that thought, we should bring up the other two very important happenings this month. On the 7th, we take time to remember a day that will live in infamy. Yes, Pearl Harbor Day. Such a long time ago, but still a forever reminder to keep one's guard up. I know that I'll be flying Old Glory on my front porch that day as a small gesture to show that I remember. I had the honor of manning the rails as we went past the Arizona Memorial one time, back in my Navy days. What a sight to behold.

On the 21st, we officially welcome winter to our lives. I wonder what we are in store for this year? Will there be tons of snow or barren brown grass? I hope we get a good helping of snow, so we can enjoy the winter sports, but not so much that I bust my back shoveling snow from my door, which would hinder my participation in said sports. It truly is a fine line that we must walk. We at least need enough snow to allow for Santa's sleigh to operate efficiently. Yes Christmas is about a month away and the anticipation is building. Did I mention that I've been a good mouse?

So now we have come full circle to my first thought. What are you hoping or wishing for this year? My family did a name exchange again this year, so we only have to buy one gift each and it is fun to find out who had your name in the gift exchange. Less stress this way and easier on the old wallet too. The true gift of the season isn't wrapped in paper. I really have to be careful about what I say out loud, as it most often ends up being wrapped in paper, whether I need it or not. I once saw a commercial for The Perfect Brownie Pan and said, "that looks pretty neat". Well that year for Christmas, guess



what I got? Yep, been making brownies in it ever since, as it does work pretty well. I once saw a commercial for a frying pan, that had three different sections in it, so the whole meal could be cooked in one pan! Only one pan to clean up right? Again I thought out loud and said "what a fantastic idea"! Well as you can guess, that baby was wrapped up and under the tree with my name on it for Christmas that year. Seems like what ever I say out loud is taken to heart. At Halloween, I mentioned that I like Snicker Bars and now I have a pantry full of Snicker Bars! More chocolate than you could shake a stick at. You should have seen the look on

Mrs. T.C.'s face when I started packing those tasty bars through the front door. I couldn't let them go to waste. You can't look a gift candy bar in the mouth, so to speak. Anyways, these three instances alone, got me to thinking that I must count my blessings and that maybe I'm setting the bar too low. Perhaps I've been voicing my opinion too freely on the little stuff. What would happen if I shared my feelings about other things, that seem out of reach or unattainable? I saw a commercial the other day about the new 2016 Chevy Corvette! Wow what a ride. Shiny, sleek and fast. I could really see myself using one of those. I said out loud, "that looks pretty neat" and "what a fantastic idea". So we will see what happens! Any color would be great. Wish big or go home, right?

Anyways, I hope you all get what you truly wish for this Christmas and that you enjoy your time spent with family and friends. Maybe if you wish out loud, Santa will hear you more easily, just like me. Did I mention that I've been a very good mouse this year? Merry Christmas everyone!

Your Faithful Friend,

T.C. Mouse, In Residence at Emmanuel

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING 11/13/16

Vision: We will follow God's plan for us to grow in faith, family, and community.

Mission: ELC is a welcoming church, in a rural community, called by God to joyful worship, caring relationships, and loving service.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Pastor Mark, Kristianne, Laurel, Carol, Matt, Sharon, Wade, Liz, and Karen

SECRETARY: Minutes from October were approved as printed

TREASURER: Had a great month with giving in October. The new Simply Giving reports are easy to follow. Shows when and how much was given and is now officially on our website. Jim will be putting Information out in the bulletin and for the newsletter. There are categories that can be selected and the Simply Giving will also show separately. A motion was made to accept the treasurer's report. Motion passed.

DEACONS: Local family will be receiving food pantry delivery. Mother has temporarily been removed from the home and father is taking on extra hours to try and make ends meet. Teenage daughter has been doing the cooking so Liz put together some groceries that would be easy for this girl to cook food for the family. This will be addressed by Liz as Loving Service for Mission Cornerstone and she will present on December 4.

TRUSTEES: Wade has been working on the locks. Concrete still needs to be sealed. Wade made progress on this and used up all tubes of caulking that was in the garage - more caulking needed and still work to be done / weather permitting. Thanks Wade! Sharon is checking in to possibly insulating the new food pantry as there is no insulation currently. Will report on this at our December meeting.

PASTOR: Attended the Bishop's Convocation in Helena, has had his normal meetings. There is a continuing education event hosted by Amy-Jill Levine on 11/27. Contact Pastor Mark if interested in attending. Advent services will be held at 6:30pm this Advent Season on November 30 and December 14. No ecumenical Thanksgiving service this year as poorly attended in the past. Will have Christmas Eve service but there will be no Christmas Day service as the majority of the congregation said they would not be attending since Christmas is on a Sunday. December 18th is the Christmas Program with the kiddos and we will also have a baptism that day after the program.



OLD BUSINESS: Went over the notes from the Council Retreat and what our goals are for the remainder of 2016 and in to 2017. A motion was made to accept the council's goals and the motion carried. We have already started making great progress on these goals and will continue to update. Will also be looking at adopting the new model ELCA Constitution of 2016 as we have not amended ours since 2001. We will discuss this further at our next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS: We will be having our **Annual Meeting on January 29, 2017** following our normal worship service. Positions on the council that will be up for election are: President, Secretary, Treasurer, 1 Deacon position, and 1 Trustee position. The nominating committee will include Kristianne, Carol, Liz, and Jim. Please contact any member of council if you are interested or want more information about these available positions.

Counters/Communion Helpers

11/20 Karen
11/27 Sharon
12/04 Liz
12/11 Carol

Our next meeting is Wednesday, December 14 at 7pm.

The meeting was adjourned and we closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully, Karen Vanberg, Secretary

EMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH — INFORMATIONAL MEETING NOTES FROM NOV 13, 2016

The church council held an informational meeting for the congregation following worship on November 13th to revisit our vote from several years ago to build a new/replacement parsonage. Questions have come up since that vote as to whether building a new parsonage is the best thing for our church. No decisions were made at this meeting as the purpose was to share some new information that has been compiled comparing what it will cost to have a parsonage versus paying a housing allowance. Here are a few of the questions that were asked at this meeting following the presentation by Wade Malchow and Sharon Wolske.

(Continued next page)

****What if we build a parsonage (say 3 bedroom/2 bath) but they have multiple children and the house isn't big enough?**

We most likely won't have someone with a large family looking at such a small, rural church as we probably wouldn't be able to pay them enough to support a large family.

****If we have a parsonage but the pastor has their own house, would we be paying both the mortgage and a housing allowance?**

We would have to make living at the parsonage part of our requirements of a new pastor.

****If we build the parsonage and have a shared pastor that is not living there or have an interim pastor, what happens to the house?**

We would still have to make the mortgage payments on it so we would probably end up renting it out which then makes us landlords. Also, the rental income would then have to be reported on our income taxes.

****Would we still have to pay a housing allowance if we had a parsonage?**

No, it would be the expectation that the pastor/family would live in the parsonage. We could choose to add a housing equity allowance to the pastor's salary and benefit package for their long term asset development.

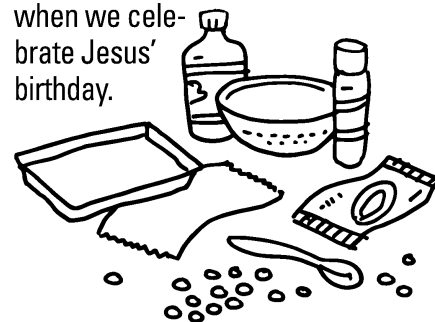
****What would happen if we choose not to build a parsonage?**

Even though we don't currently have a housing allowance in our budget it is a Synod expectation and if we choose not to have a parsonage, this new expense will require additional congregational giving.

Following discussion and a question and answer session there was a sense that those present desired to revisit the former decision to build a parsonage. This will be an agenda item at the January 29th, 2017 Annual Meeting.

birthday bark

Make this yummy treat to give to family and friends at Christmas, when we celebrate Jesus' birthday.



What you need:

- Nonstick cooking spray
- 3 cups chocolate chips
- Microwave-safe bowl
- Spoon or spatula
- 2 Tbsp. shortening
- Baking tray lined with wax paper
- Red and green M&M's (or sprinkles)

What you do:

1. Lightly spray bowl and wax paper.
2. Microwave chocolate chips in bowl for one-minute intervals until chocolate is melted. (Stir after each minute.)
3. Stir in shortening. Heat in 10-second intervals, stirring until smooth.
4. Pour chocolate onto tray and firmly press in M&M's or sprinkles.
5. Refrigerate until firm. Remove bark and break into pieces.



The Church Council will be adopting a resolution at their December meeting to create a 3-5 member Constitution Review Committee. There is an opportunity for 1-2 congregational members to serve on this committee that will meet periodically over the next year to update Emmanuel's constitution. Resources and

support are available through the Montana Synod to bring our current constitution, last updated in 2002, into compliance with the required provisions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA). The committee will also be reviewing provisions that we can tailor to meet the needs of our church operation.

If you're interested in the governance of the ELCA, like detail, and/or have computer skills please contact Council President, Kristianne Wilson – 373-6215 or kristianne@billingsclinic.org.

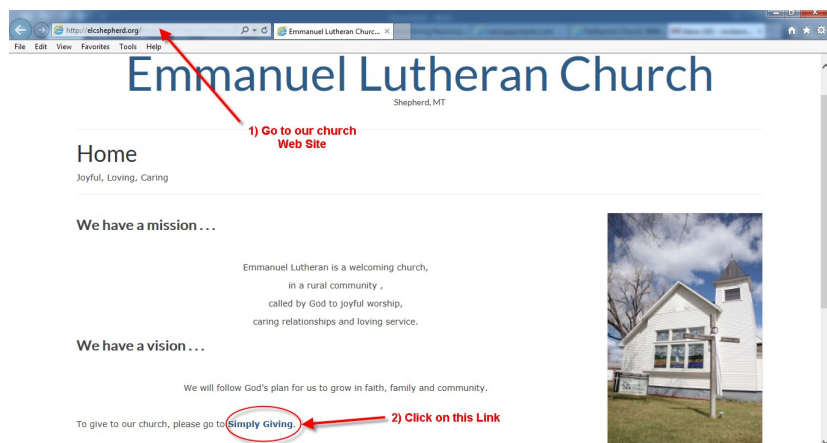
Emmanuel Lutheran Church E-Giving

During this Christmas season, please consider signing up for Electronic Giving (E-Giving). Offerings may be set-up for the General Fund, Building Fund, Parking Lot, Food Pantry, or youth. Electronic giving is easy to set-up and saves you the time of writing checks. Giving can be set-up to be on a weekly, biweekly, or monthly basis or one-time through ACH, Credit, or Debit cards.

Electronic giving helps the church by providing predictable and consistent giving. The solution is provided by Vanco Services. Vanco, an industry leader in online giving, provides a safe and secure solution. All electronic gifts are tracked and included in your yearly offering statement.

Instructions to set-up Online Giving:

1. Go to our website, <http://elcshpherd.org> Please be patient as it takes about 15 to 20 seconds to load.
2. Once the site has loaded, scroll to the bottom and click on the 'Simply Giving' Link.



3. The link will take you to the following page. On this page, a one-time donation may be made or you can click on the "Create Profile" button to set-up your own account and profile.



Emmanuel Lutheran Church

Online Donation

[View Mobile Site](#) [Return to our Home Page](#)

Donations

If you've already created a profile, please "Log In" on the right, otherwise continue.

Church Giving

-General Fund:

-Building Fund:

-Parking Lot Loan:

Other Giving

-Youth:

-Food Pantry:

Total: \$0.00

Donation Frequency: (About recurring donations)

Donation Start Date: mm/dd/yy

Log In

Email Address:

Password:

[Forgot your Email Address or Password?](#)

Create Your Online Profile

If you have any questions regarding e-giving, feel free to contact Jim McKenney.

Email: mckenney.james@gmail.com

Home Phone 406-967-2213

Cell Phone: 406-861-7441

LOVING SERVICE

EMMANUEL

LUTHERAN CHURCH WOMEN



Our annual Harvest Dinner, Bazaar and Auction event was a fantastic success! A special thank you to Abbey Emmons for listing and beautifully displaying all the auction items; to Laura Van Berg for handling the bake

sale and bazaar items so efficiently, besides setting it all up outside the church; and to Pastor Mark and Randy Van Berg for auctioneering. Then we had a fantastic kitchen crew! Phil Ehlers was the dishwasher, Chuck Super cut all the roasts, Sharon Wolske and her daughter Raedawn busily made mashed potatoes, gravy, green beans, etc., and Louise Nunemaker served the pies. Thank you to all the servers at the food window, the youth who waited on tables in the dining room, under the guidance of Roseanne Plath and Jennie Ingram. Laurel Noland efficiently collected the money for the diners and made sure all adults left with a free coffee mug or thermos from Emmanuel. Upstairs at the auction, Abbey displayed the items, Nancy Byxbe handled the sales, and everything went very smoothly.

Our dinner brought in \$1765.28; the Bazaar and Bake Sale totaled \$394.50; the quilt raffle brought in \$301.00; and the auction took in \$3570.25, for a grand total of \$6031.03. Wasn't that terrific? Such excellent teamwork throughout the day was so gratifying to see. A big hearty "THANK YOU" again to each of you. God bless. Gratefully, Dawn Petty and ELCW.



December 2016



Lutheran Campus Ministries of Montana

Emmanuel Sunday School

The Emmanuel Sunday School and the Jr. & Sr. High School youth helped decorate the Sanctuary for Christmas following worship on November 27th. They had pizza when they were done and then Sunday School headed out for a fun afternoon of "jumping around"! See the pictures below! Thanks for the great job.



CARING RELATIONSHIPS

Prayers of the Church

Call Dawn Petty, 373-6673 with requests and updates



Members:

Esther and Bill Green; Eileen Johnson's niece, Jeanie Schyultz, in California on chemotherapy following cancer surgery; Meagan Malchow with various health issues; Roxanne Powell, Linda Hinkle's niece; Clarence Beddes hospitalized with a serious infection; Russell Osmundson, Judy and Howard's son, is recovering at home following surgery; Sandie Green still recovering from broken arm; Eileen Johnson is now at RiverStone Hospice house; Brad Green recovering at home following complete shoulder replacement; Bob Wolske recovering from hip replacement surgery; June Weber, Dawn Petty's sister in Dallas, Texas, will be having her pacemaker replaced; Lee Borgen, Doreen McKenney's father, had a total knee replacement and is not doing well; the family of Tim Garcia as they mourn his death.

Children:

Andrew Green, tumors on internal organs.

Friends of the Congregation:

Shirley Sept, cancer; Katie Rightmire ALS; John Barta, cancer; Tom Weichel, cancer; Kynzee Cooper, continuing to recover from her accident; Eileen Harbaugh struggling with numerous health issues; Kamrey Leiser, 5th grader from Shepherd, at home with wheelchair after numerous surgeries following a landslide accident; Spencer Beddes, with kidney problems; Caitlyn Beley, a woman in her 30's with brain cancer; Ali McCarty, daughter of Greg and Vicky McCarty, in a coma after a horse accident; Joyce Brown, wife of former Pastor Wendell Brown, was recently hospitalized for a serious illness and is now home with hospice support.

Community Living:

St. John's:

Eva Swenson; Esther Green, *Jensen Cottage*

RiverStone Hospice House: Eileen Johnson

West Park Village: Lenora Weist, Esther Bengtson

Yellowstone County Jail: Chance Mavity

Rob Larson, MN



12/01 Lisa Strecker
12/01 Laura Vanberg
12/02 Jim McKenney
12/05 Sue Hawthorne
12/12 Conor Reitler
12/19 LuAnne Super
12/22 Holly Reitler



12/13 Scott & Durene Green
12/14 Robert & Peggy McSweyn
12/18 Lauris & Nancy Bixbe
12/18 Charles & Laurel Noland
12/28 Randy & Laura Vanberg
12/29 Tom & Rosanne Plath
12/30 Bill & Holly Reitler





December 2016



Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

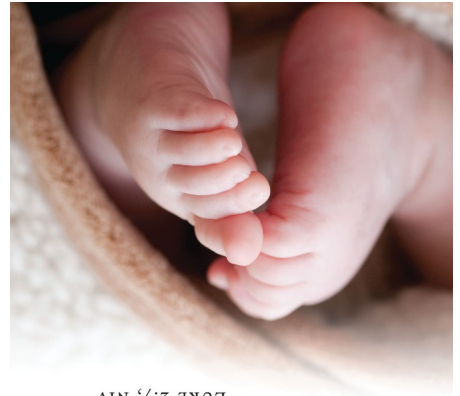
Thu

Fri

Sat



November 2016				January 2017		1	2	3																				
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8:45 Adult Sunday School 9:30 Sunday School 10:00 Worship		6:30 Cub Scouts		6:30 Girl Scouts																								
8:45 Adult Sunday School 9:30 Sunday School 10:00 Worship	7:00 Shepherd Pioneers 4-H	6:30 Cub Scouts	6:30 Advent Worship 7:00 Church Council	6:30 Cub Scouts																								
9:30 Sunday School 10:00 Worship & Christmas Program																												
																												
NO WORSHIP																												



LUKE 2:7, NIV

*She wrapped him
in cloths and placed
him in a manger...*

Address Service Requested

Shepherd, MT 59079

P.O. Box 66

Emmanuel Lutheran Church

We have a mission . . .

Emmanuel Lutheran is
a welcoming church in a rural
community, called by God
to joyful worship
caring relationships and
loving service.

We have a vision . . .

“We will follow God’s plan for us
to grow in faith, family,
and community.”

elcshepherd.org – elcshepherd@gmail.com



EMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

JOYFUL † CARING † LOVING