



# Emmanuel News

January  
2023



For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope.

-Romans 15:4

For the majority of my life, I never participated in the tradition of New Year's Resolutions. Some years, I would write down the traditional ones; eat healthier, work out more, get good grades, etc., but after January 6th, I would never look at them again. However, when I met Anna, that all changed. She took her New Year's Resolutions very seriously, and on our first New Year's together, she made me sit down and really think about what things I wanted to do in the coming year. When I really took it seriously, it changed how I saw the practice entirely.

While the biggest change from December 31st to January 1st may truly be simply having to relearn yourself what year to write as you date different documents, the change in the year does provide a space where reflection and hope collide. Traditions like New Year's Resolutions not only raise the question of what have I done and what would I like to do, but who have I been and who would I like to be? When midnight comes on New Year's Eve, the slates of our previous year have been wiped clean, and we are free to go and be whoever we want to be as we enter the New Year.

This space of reflection and hope is a space that we as a society celebrate every December 31st, is a space that we as people of faith are called to live in, and to live out every day. New Year's Eve is not the only time that we reflect like this, but we do so every Sunday during our time of Confession and Forgiveness. As a community, we center ourselves around the experiences we have had, and the places we may have fallen short, and our slates are instantly wiped clean by the amazing gift of grace given to us through Christ. This grace frees us and calls us to go into the world and to bring this good news of hope and love to those around us.

My New Year's Resolution this year is to celebrate New Year's all year long. To rest in this space where reflection and hope collide. To continue to reflect on who I have been, and who I would like to be. To remind myself that I am good enough, because my slate has been wiped clean. To hope and dream about what the world could be, and to live out the ways that God is calling me to bring the Kingdom of love and grace to the world around me.

God Bless,

Josh





**January, 2023**

*Information for our Congregations*

**Watch this month for Christikon brochures** on opportunities for youth. It's not too early to start thinking about this summer. Youth brochures will be mailed to every young person in grades 4-12 in our congregations this month. Those brochures will detail some very special deals for registering early for camp. We hope to serve even more people from our member congregations in 2023!

Early registrations have been very strong so get registered earlier than later!

**Save the date: Christikon Benefit Auction** is scheduled for April 23rd.

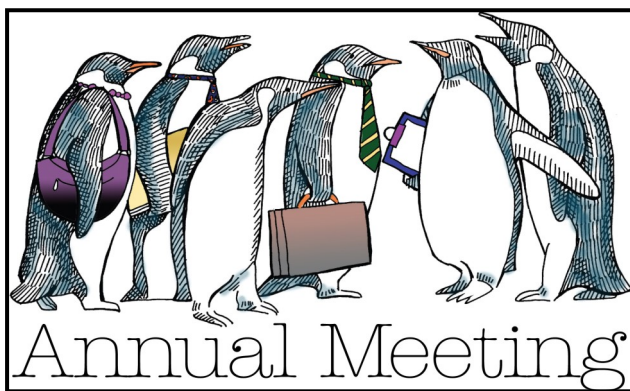
Too few of our nation's young people (not to mention adults) have significant outdoor experience. Christikon combines spirited outdoor experience with a community experience that helps open people to the life of faith. Think about joining the Christikon life this coming summer. It can do a world of good...

**It is the mission of Christikon to awaken and nurture faith in Christ—  
exploring God's creation and the adventure of life together.**

**CHRISTIKON • 1108 24<sup>th</sup> Street West • Billings, MT 59102**

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**The Annual Congregational Meeting will be on January 29th, 2023. Please submit reports by January 13th**



# COMMENTARIES OF THE CHURCH MOUSE

Greetings Friends and Neighbors,

Happy New Year

Are you ready to embrace 2023? Are there any New Year resolutions that you plan to make and keep? I always resolve to eat less cheese, but this year that plan is already out the window. I received a cheese and sausage box for Christmas, so I have a plethora of different cheeses to sample and enjoy. While I enjoy my nightly cheese and crackers snack, I'll have to work on coming up with something new to work on to better myself or my life. Perhaps I should resolve to exercise more to try and keep the aches and pains of aging at bay. Anyway, I hope you all get to enjoy the New Year celebrations and that 2023 is good to you.

On the 16<sup>th</sup>, we celebrate Martin Luther King Jr. Day and take some time to reflect on his famous speech. I've always grumbled in the past that only bankers and government types get the day off as a holiday, but this year I get the day off too. Probably should put the flag up in honor of the day and make time for an afternoon nap, so I too can have a dream.

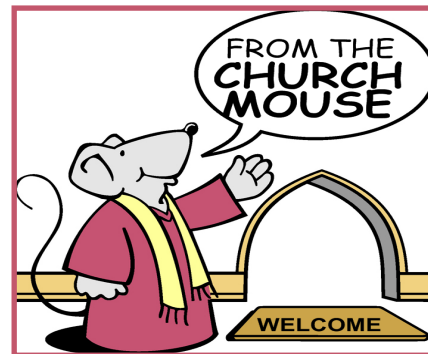
Winter has been good so far. Most of the snow has landed in the mountains or neighboring states, so I haven't had to break my back shoveling snow. Those couple days of 21 below zero temperatures were really a wake-up call. I had to wear both sets of my red union long underwear at the same time, just to stay warm! My cousin in Buffalo is still digging out from the latest blizzard. I'm sure glad that we didn't have to deal with a storm like

that. I'm looking forward to hitting the slopes again this year, so I better spend some time checking out my gear.

Well, enough of my ramblings for now. I wish you all well in the New Year and hope to see you in Church on Sunday. Oh yeah, since the new year gives us all a clean slate, I decided to rip up the honey do list that I've worked on for the last 365 days. I suddenly caught up! I'm sure it is a fleeting moment, as Mrs. T.C. is really good at making lists.

Your faithful friend in residence at Emmanuel.

T.C. Mouse



Are you interested in helping people and making an impact? Join a St. John's United community as a Volunteer Driver and you can help residents get to I

important appointments. No CDL required! Call 655-5390 or email [Volunteer@stjohnsunitd.org](mailto:Volunteer@stjohnsunitd.org) for more information.



## ECL CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES

Dec 14, 2022 Church Council Minutes

The Church Council met on Wednesday evening, December 14<sup>th</sup>, at the home of Lindsey and Buckley Reynolds. Members present were Pastor Josh, Jill Hoffman, Liz White, Dawn Petty, Sharon Wolske, Ricker Olson, Greg Plath and Lindsey and Buckley Reynolds. Pastor Josh opened with devotions from Isaiah 9: 2-7.

Standing Reports included the minutes of the previous meeting, which were approved, motion made by Sharon and seconded by Greg. The Treasurer's report, given by Lindsey Reynolds, was approved; the motion made by Liz, seconded by Sharon. It had been suggested to put the balances in the monthly church newsletter, and that will be done.

The Youth Committee ( Liz and Greg) are preparing the Christmas program for the 18<sup>th</sup>, and a possible bowling party this winter. The Music Committee ( Jill and Pastor Josh) has been scheduled through March.

Pastor Josh reported on the type of services we have been having, and he wanted to know if that was agreeable, or if we wanted to change it to be more modern. The Council thought less ritual would be helpful, as we have had some new members, and it could be less formal. The Christmas Eve service will include the Sherseth's music.

Old Business: The heating and air conditioning equipment was discussed, and Buckley Reynolds has ordered and is waiting for some new equipment to update the system. Liz reported on the beef raffle , which has brought in \$3400.00. The Audit Committee, led by Liz and Robin, is working on their report, and plan to have it ready the first week in January. The Nominating Committee, consisting in Jill, Liz, Robin, Megan and Dawn, will be working on their list in January, in preparation for the annual meeting.

The Christmas schedule is planned, and we will again have an Angel Tree, and Christmas baskets to be given out to those needy families who come to the food pantry. December 18<sup>th</sup> will be the time for the Children's Program, in place of our regular Sunday service. On Christmas Eve, Dec. 24<sup>th</sup>, there will be a service at 8:00 PM. There will not be a service on Sunday, Christmas Day. Pastor Josh has been discussing an ecumenical service with neighboring churches for Wednesday evening, December 21<sup>st</sup>, and it will be a Blue Christmas service, held here at Emmanuel at 7:00 PM.

Our next meeting with the American Lutheran Church in Hardin will be January 4<sup>th</sup>, and a schedule for the regular Sunday worships will be discussed. The Council thought we should continue with the same hourly schedule for Sundays that we now have. A schedule has to be made for Lenten services, and we could do a service on Tuesday or Thursday evenings. A class for new members, and their induction, will be held on February 19<sup>th</sup> . Luanne Super will no longer be doing the changing of the altar paraments but Maryann Morgenstern will take that over.

New Business: Preparations for the Annual Meeting will take place on the 13<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> of January. The annual meeting is planned for January 29<sup>th</sup>. Plans for new officers, annual budget, and technology will be discussed. We need to have streaming set up for the basement area, with TV and computers, and Colter has recommended having a camera in the back of the church, in the area of the stained glass window. The costs for all this will be decided, as will the prices for new ceiling lighting in the sanctuary, along with the costs for the new ceiling, and what material will be used.

Sunday Service Attendants (offering counters, etc.) will be using the large vase in the back of the church for the offerings taken during the Sunday School Program, then on the 24<sup>th</sup> for the 8:00 PM service, Sharon will count the offering; January 1<sup>st</sup>, Ricker will count ; January 8<sup>th</sup> Dawn will count; and Liz will do the counting on January 15<sup>th</sup>.

Ricker suggested replacing the large wooden cross on the lawn at the front of the church, as the wood is rotting in the ground, and it is unstable now. He will look into replacing it with a metal cross.

The next Council meeting will be held on January 11<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM at the church basement. The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Petty, Secretary



## Welcome New Members

If you are interested in a 1st Communion class for your children, please contact Pastor Josh. We will put a class together depending on interest.

### WANTED

Church Council officers and members. Please consider serving our congregation on our church council. Contact Jill Hoffman or Liz White if you are interested.

### EMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH WOMEN

Fall seems to be such a busy time of year - with the Harvest Dinner in the first part of November, and then preparing for Advent and Christmas, decorating the church, our homes, and shopping for the holidays. This year, we sold 20 outdoor Christmas wreaths to church members for decorating their front doors, which brought in \$300.00. Those proceeds are put into a separate fund for the Youth and Sunday School members, to have one or more special outings, such as a bowling afternoon, a fun time at a water park, a movie or two, or a sight-seeing event.

We also helped to shop, bake and gather items for Thanksgiving baskets, Christmas baskets and gifts for the names of children on our Christmas "angel" tree, helping the Lions' Club supply the food for the homes of people who primarily use our Food Pantry, and presents for their children. The food baskets contained a frozen turkey, vegetables, potatoes, salads, rolls and pies for those special holiday dinners. Ten food baskets were provided at Thanksgiving, and eight baskets at Christmas, plus 20 gifts for children under the "Angel tree". Our special thanks to the Lions' Club for all they have done.

Blessings

Dawn Petty





# CARING RELATIONSHIPS

## Prayers of the Church

Call Dawn Petty, 373-6673 with requests and updates

Prayer request forms are also available at the church.

### Hope you have a safe and blessed week!

Please pray for Holly Pearson, daughter of Marge and Milton Kinghorn, who is now on hospice care. She is suffering from tumors on the brain and spine. The whole family needs our prayers, as they are grieving for her pain, knowing there is no more that can be done to help her.

Loraine Welch's son, Randall (Randy), passed away on December 10. Services are private. Please keep the family & friends in your thoughts and prayers during this difficult time.

Jore family residence was lost in a fire on December 22. We will be passing the offering during the Sunday service to help this family.

Christy Hastings, 60 y/o, who lives in Springfield, MO, is battling metastatic kidney cancer. The Hastings family grew up in the Shepherd area.

May God bring comfort and strength to these families in these difficult times.

### Community Living

St Johns United: Inez Oberg

### Local Youth Serving in the Military

Dan Johnson deployed to Iraq; Taylor Green deployed in the Asian Pacific Fleet, Jacob Wagenaar, Tucker Wilson, Brooke Nebel Bohrer, and Brandon Bohrer. Please keep these soldiers in your prayers that they may return safely home.



04 Nate Reynolds

06 Connie Herberg

08 Ashton Christman

08 Brenda Emerick

12 Vivian Pierce

12 Bill Vincent

15 Connie Halvorsen

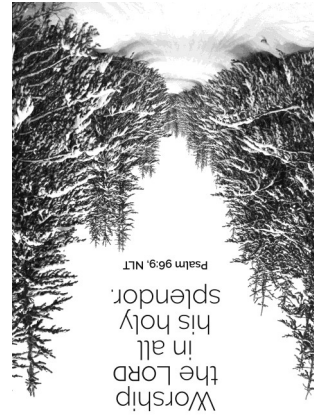
23 Jackson Christman

26 Seeley Christman

31 Willa McSweyn



A special thanks to everyone who helped assemble the Christmas baskets and "adopt" the angels.



Emmanuel Lutheran Church  
P.O. Box 66  
Shepherd, MT 59079  
Address Service Requested

## 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](http://elcshepherd.org) — [elcshepherd@gmail.com](mailto:elcshepherd@gmail.com)



**EMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
JOYFUL † CARING † LOVING