

EMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

FEBRUARY 2025



For thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: The jar of meal will not be emptied, and the jug of oil will not fail until the day that the Lord sends rain on the earth.

-1 Kings 17:14

In a world that feels more divided than ever, it's easy to fall into patterns of avoidance or hostility. We see it in our conversations, in our news feeds, and, if we're honest, even in our hearts. There's a growing temptation to retreat into the comfort of like-minded communities or to lash out at those we see as being on the "other side." We look across the divide and wonder, How did they get over there?

The prophet Elijah found himself in a similar place. He stood against Ahab and Jezebel, rulers who had led Israel far from its calling. His response? A dramatic, self-imposed drought—a punishment meant to prove just how wrong they were. For years, the land suffered, and Elijah, sure of his righteousness, waited for his enemies to break under the weight of his actions. But the real lesson came later, not in the act of judgment, but in an unexpected encounter.

When the drought left him with no water or food, God sent Elijah to Zarephath—enemy territory, the very place where the culture and worship he despised had originated. There, a widow was preparing her last meal before resigning herself and her son to starvation. She was, by all measures, part of the other side. And yet, Elijah was instructed to rely on her for survival.

Something profound happens in that moment. The drought—the consequence of Elijah's self-righteous indignation—had left both of them broken. And in their shared suffering, they sat at a table together. The widow, despite having so little, shared what she had. And in the act of breaking bread together, they found something deeper than their differences. The food never ran out. The water was sustained. The barrier between them dissolved—not because they had settled all their disagreements, but because they saw each other as people first.

This is where healing begins. Not in proving our point or waiting for the “other side” to admit their faults, but in recognizing that we cannot be whole without one another. The real power isn’t in the drought—it’s in the meal.

It’s easier, of course, to stay in the drought, to choose distance and comfort over the hard work of reconciliation. But when we do, we miss out on the chance to see the other not as an opponent, but as a fellow child of God.

The world is pulling us apart, telling us to choose sides, to divide, to withhold grace. But we are a people of the table. We follow a Savior who invited tax collectors, zealots, and sinners to break bread together. A Savior who knelt to wash the feet of those who would betray Him. A Savior who, even on the cross, extended forgiveness.

So, as we continue through this season, may we resist the temptation of the drought. May we choose to sit, to listen, to share a meal. And in doing so, may we rediscover the hope, healing, and renewal that can only be found when we come together at the table.

God Bless,

Pastor Josh



February 2025 Newsletter – ELCW report

EMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH WOMEN

As you know already, our women's group has a book club that meets on the first Tuesday of each month, up at the Feedlot Restaurant. We decide which book we would like to read for the next month, discuss the book we have read for the past month, all the while we are enjoying a delicious dinner and each other's company. We would like to have more of you ladies join us for this special time. You could come to the restaurant...we always meet in the back dining room at 6:00 PM and check it out.

Did you enjoy the gorgeous poinsettias that decorated the church for Christmas? Most of them were picked up and taken to the homes of the members who purchased them. There were several plants left at the church, and last week, we took those to the Seniors Lunch at the Community Center and gave them away. The senior ladies were delighted.

The Pineview Quilting Club meets at our church basement once or twice a month, and we work on quilts which are donated to nursing homes, Riverstone facility, and to families who have lost their homes to fires. This past year, we also made a quilt for each graduating senior from our congregation and gave it to them. This coming spring, there will be three more graduating seniors, and we will make quilts for them as well.

Dawn Petty

COMMENTARIES OF THE CHURCH MOUSE

Greetings Friends and Neighbors,

February is finally here, and I get to toot my own horn this month. Yep, that's right, old T. C. is turning 61 years old! Do you know what that is in mouse years? Well, neither do I, but it helps explain the host of aches and pains that I feel every morning when I roll out of bed. Mrs. T. C. says that I am older than dirt, but I disagree, as I have seen a lot of dirt in my time and it rarely was looking in the mirror. Anyways, Happy Birthday to me. We also celebrate some other special birthdays in February. Lincoln's on the 12th, Washington's on the 22nd, all conveniently rolled into one special holiday, Presidents' Day, on the 17th. Sounds like a good reason to raise the flag and display Old Glory in front of the house. Salute.

On the 2nd, my distant cousin, the groundhog, gets his day in the spotlight for Groundhog Day. It will be interesting to see what he predicts this year. Actually the winter has been pretty nice so far. We had a few weeks of snow and cold, but that is to be expected around here. The cold and snow builds character and makes one really appreciate spring that much more when it finally does arrive. The big football game is on the 9th, so we can stay inside where it is warm and watch the game with friends and family, while filling up on all sorts of munchies. I hope your team wins.

Then on the 14th, we celebrate Valentine's Day, which is one day of the year that you had better be on your game, if you know what I mean! Please, please, please, take the time and effort to recognize that someone special in your life, so they know how much you really care. I see it every year, people scrambling at the last minute to get flowers or a card or chocolates, which makes everything too stressful. To my own special Valentine, Mrs. T.C., "Happy Valentine's Day Pooky! I wouldn't be half the mouse without you!" I picked up a special box of candy hearts for her. You know the kind with words on them, like "Your Hot, Be Mine, Nice Fur"!

Well, that is enough of my nonsense for now. The wind has blown the snow into drifts on the front porch, so I better bundle up and take care of that.

Hope to see you in Church on Sunday.

Your faithful friend in residence at Emmanuel.

T. C. Mouse



Christikon Clips

February, 2025

Information for our Congregations

Welcome to Pastor Heather Wigdahl as our new Executive Director. She will be on-board the middle of this month.

She begins with us on the recruiting trail with Taryn.

We are currently **recruiting staff** for the upcoming season. If you know someone who would be a good fit, direct them to <https://christikon.org/employment/> for more information and/or to apply.

Register NOW for camp and don't forget to invite a friend!

Go to: <https://christikon.org/registration-individual-information/>.

Family Adult opportunities can be found at our website. Our speaker for the Continuing Ed Retreat and Mountain Weekend is Dr. Dave Ellingsen. Register and see details at: <https://christikon.org/adult-family-programs/>.

Work Weekend is May 23-26, 2025. Join us in readying the camp for the 2025 season. All are welcome! Register NOW!

Donate online! You can use the Internet to make a gift, or to find out more about this special ministry. Go to www.christikon.org.

Save the dates: The Annual Christikon Benefit Auction at the Billings Depot is coming on **Sunday, April 27th**. Do you know of an item, service or getaway that would be a great auction item? Please contact the office!

Watch for further updates on our website or notices at your church.

Our plans for the 2025 season are going forward and we are excited to welcome you to Christikon this summer! Watch for updates on our website.

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

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1/14/25

Shepherd Emmanuel Lutheran Church Council

Present: Pastor Josh Wyman, Jill, Dawn, Carol, Devin, Sam, Lindsey, Buckley, Wendy, and Abbey.

Called to order at 7PM

Agenda presented by Jill. Opening devotion from the book of Matthew. Part of the Matthew lesson was about the gifts given to Jesus. We were then asked what our most memorable gift was. Pastor turned this around and asked us how our beloved gifts can also be shared in our church community. Our gift examples were then used as examples to see how we can give our gifts to our congregation and our community. Prayers! Our hearts, hands, and voices to serve!

Standing reports:

Secretary Report – no discussion/no amendments (Carol/Devin)

Treasurer Report – general discussion. Verizon amendment and a benevolent change. (Devin/Carol)

Pastoral Report – Christmas went well. Children’s Program was awesome! 3 home visits. Re-prioritizing some things and he is happy with the scheduling. Music scheduled through March between Laura and Theresa (Thank you ladies! ***Joyful Worship**)

Youth Committee – no discussion

Old business: Nominating committee and upcoming Annual meeting elections. One change was listing Kristianne as the Synod Assembly representative instead of Abbey Emmons. Motion made to accept the officers as listed. (Lindsey/Wendy) **Worship time change: 11:15 starting Feb 2nd**. Treats & coffee will be after service instead of before as we need to bring back the fellowship time. Spread the word! Announcements in church, Facebook, Abbey to do 2 bright signs for the doors, reminders as well in the Newsletter and email chain. Pastor contract renewal committee to meet quarterly. Motion to approve Pastor Josh’s contract through Feb 2026. (Sam/Carol) Amended contract will be provided for review next meeting. ***Loving Service**

Annual meeting discussion: agenda presentation, opening prayer, youth report, pastor report, food pantry report, WELCA report, old business – need help with service assistants, announcement of fellowship change with the time change, announcement to move all extra services to Wednesdays (Waymakers, Lent services, JR and HS meeting times), volunteers to be on a committee for all things “Building Improvement” (Abbey to make a questionnaire to be passed out during church specific to the Building Improvement Committee), spoke of the annual budget presentation. Discussion about getting the newsletter simplified. ***Caring relationships *Loving Service**

New Business: Waymakers moving back to Wednesday WITH CHANGES! (Welcoming Junior High students and High School students with special time set aside to spend with Pastor Josh). Following Waymakers we are going provide a Community Dinner at 5:15. Following the community dinner we will have a Wednesday church service at 6:00. We need to bring our church priority back to the forefront and hopefully this “Wednesday” focus will help families. Confirmation will also be moved to Wednesdays and will follow the church service and is scheduled at 7:00. ***Joyful Worship**

Easter: Ash Wednesday 3/5 will follow the above schedule. Waymakers, community dinner, Ash Wednesday service at 6:00. The rest of the Easter plans will be set at the next council meeting. Good Friday, Lent dinners to incorporate with the Wednesday night services, Sader Meal on Thursday, etc. Easter is on 4/20.

Next meeting: 2/11 @7pm

Mission Cornerstone: What have we talked about today that raises itself to: Joyful worship, Caring relationships, and/or Loving service.

Closed with the Lord's Prayer and meeting adjourned at 8:07.

Counters: 1/19 Carol 1/26 Wendy 2/2 Dawn 2/9 Carol

**** Worship time moves to 11:15 Starting in February ****



WAYMAKERS

NEWS

First: We are moving back to WEDNESDAYS! Starting on February 5th. We have planned for February and March and will determine if we will continue into April in the near future. We will not be having Waymakers February 19th.

Second: We are adding our Jr. High School Study Group during and High School study Group during this time. Each group will meet separately with Josh. The Jr. High School will meet at 3:15-4:10 and the High School group will meet with Josh at 4:20-5:10 pm. All of the youth are invited to the scheduled Waymakers time, however if your high school or junior high child would like to come only for their bible study please let us know. We will have Waymakers snack/play and study time from 3:00 to 4:00. From 4-5 Waymakers kids will be having a bible lesson and game/craft or activity.

Third: We would like to invite everyone to our Community Dinners! Starting at 5:15. Please stay after pickup and dinner with us. Your entire family and friends are invited. This dinner will be free will donations. We will be serving pizza, unless a community member is moved to provide us with something homemade:}! We only ask that if your Waymakers child would like to stay and eat that they have a parent or guardian attend with them. Take the evening off of cooking and let us serve you!

Fourth: We invite everyone following dinner at 6:00 to come upstairs and attend Wednesday Worship Service! This will be a fun and casual service for anyone to attend! We expect the service to last around 45 minutes. We would love our youth to help with the service, lighting candles, ushering or reading etc.

Fifth: Confirmation will be following the Wednesday Worship service at 7:00 pm.

Emmanuel Lutheran
Church
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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.”
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EMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

JOYFUL † CARING † LOVING