

EMMANUEL LUTHERN CHURCH

APRIL 2025 NEWSLETTER



"I believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living."

-Psalm 27:13

By the time you read this, Easter will be just around the corner—but not quite here yet. In the life of the church, we'll still be sitting in the shadows of Lent, walking with Jesus on the long road toward Jerusalem, toward betrayal, toward the cross. And maybe that's a good place for us to linger a little while longer.

Because right now, the world feels heavy. Even if we're not carrying personal grief or fear, we can feel it in the air around us—in the anxious conversations, the headlines, the ache of uncertainty. And it's in this weight, this tension, that the psalmist's words rise up with quiet courage: "I believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living."

That's not optimism. That's not denial. That's faith—spoken from within the mess, not after it's been cleaned up.

Throughout the Gospel texts we'll read this month, we find Jesus walking steadily toward devastation. He predicts His suffering. He weeps over Jerusalem. He gathers at the table with friends who will betray Him. He is hung between criminals and breathes His last. This is not a season that rushes toward resolution. And yet, woven through these dark moments are glimpses of what's coming.

In Jericho, a blind man is given sight. A tax collector is called by name and welcomed into grace. A borrowed colt carries the Prince of Peace into a city that does not understand Him. Bread is broken and shared. A promise is made to a thief hanging beside Him: "Today you will be with me in paradise."

Even on the cross, love is still speaking.

This is the strange gift of Lent. It does not ask us to pretend. It does not demand that we hide our sorrow or stifle our fear. Instead, it invites us to stand in the middle of it all—right in the thick of grief or uncertainty or fatigue—and look toward a promise we may not yet see. The promise that even here, especially here, resurrection is on its way.

We know the tomb is still sealed. But we also know it won't stay that way. And that changes how we wait.

It changes how we speak into a hurting world—not with pat answers or shallow comfort, but with the steady hope of people who believe that goodness will rise again. It changes how we look at one another—not as opponents or burdens, but as fellow travelers in need of grace. And it changes how we pray—not only for answers, but for courage, for compassion, and for endurance.

Spring is beginning to show itself—hesitant but persistent. Buds on trees, thawing ground, longer light. It's not quite Easter yet. But it's close. And the earth is already preparing to bloom. So are we.

So if the world feels heavy right now, take heart. You're not walking alone. Christ has walked this road before us. Christ walks it still. And He is carrying with Him the promise that nothing—not even death—gets the final word.

We will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. We will.

God Bless,

Pastor Josh Wyman





EMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH WOMEN

There are lots of activities this time of year....spring has arrived, along with the season of Lent. Kids are looking forward to the "Easter egg hunts", with lots of candied eggs, jelly beans and chocolate bunnies, while we are preparing for Lenten services and Easter. We will again prepare the Passover (Seder) Meal, which will be on Thursday evening, April 17th at the church. This has been an annual event for many years, looked forward to by our own congregation and people in the community, as people in the community are also invited to attend.

Here is a brief history of the event: This feast commemorates the exodus of the Jews from Egypt. It is observed in many Judaism homes by the reading of the Haggada on the first day of Passover, and by Orthodox Jews outside Israel also, on the eve of the second day. Passover, a Jewish holiday celebrated for eight days on the 14th of Nisan, commemorates the deliverance of the ancient Hebrews from slavery in Egypt. In Exodus 12, you will see the description of the Paschal lamb which was to be slain and eaten at Passover. Therefore, we serve lamb at dinner, along with other meat and vegetables, sticking to the menu prescribed for this distinctive meal. We also read and follow the ritual for the event.

There is no charge for the meal, and everyone is welcome to come and join us for this traditional event. Everyone must sign up in advance, so we set enough places at the tables. There will be sign-up sheets to attend in the back of our church, and there will be invitations sent out to other churches in the community, as in past years. The sign-up sheets will also list what items can be contributed toward the menu, so you can help with the meal if you choose.

You will also find sign-up sheets in the church to order an Easter lily which can be taken to your own home after the Easter services. To order a lily for yourself, to honor someone, or in memory of someone, please sign-up, give the name of the person, and leave a check for \$15.00 or cash to pay for your share of the plant.

If you have any questions at all, please contact Dawn Petty at 373-6673.

Sincerely,

Dawn Petty, ELCW President

COMMENTARIES OF THE CHURCH MOUSE



Greetings Friends and Neighbors,

April is here and the weather is improving quickly in the right direction. It's almost safe for me to pack away my long johns and put the snow shovel up. We have rain and snow in the forecast tomorrow, but any snow that falls should be the self-shoveling kind from here on out. We sure could use the moisture, so I'll take what I can get. I spent some time on Saturday cleaning up my asparagus patch, so it will be easier to spot new growth once it starts. Nothing like fresh picked asparagus to dress up dinner and provide some change in the diet.

On the 1st we have April Fools' Day, so I hope you all are kind to one another and keep the pranks safe and down to a minimum. I really don't prank anyone since I know that if you dish it out, you must be ready to receive it. I really don't need that kind of excitement in my life.

Easter is on the 20th this year and I'm hoping that the weather will be nice enough for us to all gather on the hill, below the cross, like we have done in years past. If the land is wet, then access is an issue and we have to resort to plan B. I guess we will know more when we get a little closer. Note to self: "May want to keep those long johns handy for Easter morning service, as it has been quite brisk the last couple of years."

On the 22nd, we have Earth Day, so I hope we can all do something good for this place we call home. Perhaps a clean up activity or maybe some planting of trees some place, even if it is just around the home. I'm always amazed at how hard it is to get a tree to grow in the back yard with constant care and supervision, but out in the forest I see trees that have grown quite well in a rocky out cropping! I guess that is the difference between my green thumb and God's green thumb.

Well, that is all for now. Much to do and so little time. Hope to see you in Church.

Your friend in residence at Emmanuel.

T.C. Mouse

3/11/25

Shepherd Emmanuel Lutheran Church Council

Present: President Sam Murnin, Carol, Dawn, Jeanne, Kristianne & Jack (via Zoom), and Abbey

Called to order at 7PM

Agenda presented by Sam.

Standing reports:

Secretary Report – No changes. Dawn/Jeanne

Treasurer Report – No changes. Kristianne/Carol

Pastoral Report – Read a previously prepared report from Pastor Josh. Pastor was unable to attend due to Hardin's Lent Services being on Tuesdays.

Old business: Emmanuel Wednesdays: Waymakers, dinner, worship, and confirmation. (Joyful Worship) Currently in the liturgy for the Lent Season. Council Member induction will be 3/23/25 during church service. (Caring Relationships) Building Committee: Currently waiting for the bid to get finalized. Abbey spoke about where the plans are, a few of the ideas for decorating, and funding. If there are any questions. please reach out to one of the committee members.

Easter/Lent: Soup suppers to continue Wednesdays prior to church service. Easter Lilies will be available during the Lent Season (sign up during church service), Palm Sunday 4/13, Seder Meal 4/17 at 6:30, Good Friday service at First Congregational in Ballantine (time to be announced), and Easter Service 4/20. Youth will have a breakfast at 10 before services with an Easter Egg hunt. (Loving Service)

New Business: Endowment Scholarships are due by the end of April. Please reach out to Linda Oberg with any questions. Maryann M asked for approval for a new banner set for the Easter/Spring season. Approved.

Next meeting: April 8, 2025 at 7PM

Mission Cornerstone: What have we talked about that raises itself to: Joyful Worship, Caring Relationships, and/or Loving Service?

Closed with the Lord's Prayer and meeting adjourned at 8PM

Counters: 3/23 Kristianne/Jack 3/30 Murnins 4/6 Carol 4/13 Dawn 4/20 Dawn

Christikon

Benefit Auction

In Person and Online



Christikon Benefit Auction – Quilts, Vacation Get-aways, and a Whole Lot More will be on Sunday April 27th at the Billings Depot. Items are some of the finest artistry including a variety of hand-made quilts, art work, gift baskets, getaways, jewelry and so much more.

Raffle Tickets on sale now! 1995 Yamaha Motorcycle! Go to <https://christikon.org/donate-to-christikon-one-time/>, choose gift: other and put raffle in the text box. Do not have to be present to win. Tickets sell for \$10 each, 3 for \$20 or 10 for \$50.

Online auction begins April 20th at noon.

Watch for the link to our auction platform on facebook at www.facebook.com/Christikon or on our website www.Christikon.org

Like our page and share it with your friends! Watch for sneak peeks! Online auction ends on Sunday the 27th – be present and you can pick up your items at the Depot.

Campers: Don't forget to register for one of our many sessions available this summer!

How about Work Weekend? Bring your family and enjoy camp/fellowship and more while helping to prepare camp for the season! We look forward to welcoming you to camp! Go to www.christikon.org and register!

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 24th Street West • Billings, MT 59102

406 656-1969 • director@christikon.org • secretary@christikon.org • www.christikon.org



EASTER ANNOUNCEMENTS

LENTEN MEAL/SERVICE 5:15/6:00

MARCH 5, 12, 19, 26, April 2, 9 5:15/6:00

PALM SUNDAY APRIL 13 AT 11:15

SEDER DINNER APRIL 17 AT 6:30

GOOD FRIDAY APRIL 18 UCC BALLENTINE TIME TO BE ANNOUNCED AT A
LATER DATE

YOUTH BREAKFAST 10:00

EASTER SUNDAY APRIL 20 AT 11:15

EASTER EGG HUNT TO FOLLOW SERVICE APRIL 20

**DONATIONS NEEDED FOR CANDY TO FILL THE EASTER EGGS FOR THE
HUNT ON APRIL 20**

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO FILL EGGS AFTER CHURCH ON APRIL 13

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

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