

EMMANUEL LUTHERN CHURCH

MAY 2025



"By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to set out for a place that he was to receive as an inheritance; and he set out, not knowing where he was going."

—Hebrews 11:8

May is a season of endings and beginnings. School years are wrapping up, seniors are preparing for graduation, confirmands are taking new steps in their faith journeys, and the world around us is bursting into the fullness of spring. It's a time when we feel the energy of movement—some of it exciting, some of it daunting. Whether we are stepping into something new ourselves or watching loved ones do so, change is in the air.

And yet, no matter how much we prepare, there's always a moment when we realize: we are stepping into territory we've never walked before. The future always comes with a little mystery, a little uncertainty. In those moments, we are faced with a question that isn't so much about what comes next, but about how we walk into what's next.

Scripture gives us a picture of what that walk can look like. Hebrews 11 speaks of Abraham—who set out when God called him, even though he didn't know where he was going. His faith wasn't in his map or his own clarity about the future. His faith was in the One who called him forward.

The early followers of Jesus knew something about stepping beyond the familiar, too. As we read in Acts, Philip is sent by the Spirit to meet a stranger on a wilderness road. Peter and the other apostles wrestle with a church growing in directions they hadn't expected. Paul's life is turned upside down as he

discovers that God is working through him in ways he could never have planned. Again and again, faithfulness meant trusting that the Spirit was already out ahead of them, even when the road was new, uncertain, or uncomfortable.

Moving beyond what we know isn't easy. It's tempting to cling tightly to what feels familiar, to stay where we feel confident and comfortable. But our faith isn't built on staying put—it's built on trusting that God's promises hold, even when we step into something new.

Maybe you're facing a big change right now—a graduation, a new role, a new season of life. Maybe you're feeling a sense of uncertainty about the world around you. Maybe you're simply feeling the quiet pull of something shifting in your heart, something you can't quite name yet. Wherever you are, take heart: you are not walking alone.

The same God who called Abraham out into the unknown calls us forward too—not with a full roadmap, but with a promise: "I will be with you." The same Spirit who led Philip into the wilderness, who spoke through Paul's letters, who gathered a scattered community into a living church, still moves among us today. God does not just call us into change—God meets us there, working in the places and ways we least expect.

As we move through this season of transition, both individually and as a community, may we remember that faithfulness isn't about knowing all the answers—it's about trusting the One who does. It's about stepping out, sometimes hesitantly, sometimes boldly, but always trusting that the goodness of God goes ahead of us.

And even when the next step feels uncertain, we can cling to the hope that we are following a God who makes a way, even when we cannot see it yet.

May this season find us ready to move beyond what we know—carried not by fear, but by the deep and steady faith that wherever we are being called, God is already there.

God Bless,

Pastor Josh



EMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH WOMEN

This has been a busy month for everyone. The Passover was celebrated with a great meal on Thursday evening, April 17th, with 45 people attending it. The dinner included turkey and roasted leg of lamb, which were delicious, plus baked potatoes, asparagus, candied carrots, relishes, fresh sliced strawberries, plus the matzoh bread and wine to commemorate the last supper that Jesus celebrated with his disciples. The ritual was so special, along with the sips of wine which were included with the ceremony. It was wonderful to socialize with members of Emmanuel and people from the community.

We had lots of help in cleaning up all the tables afterwards, and we were very grateful to everyone for their assistance, especially when we realized we couldn't wash dishes in the kitchen, as the drains were clogged! Many of the ladies helped by taking dishes, silverware, roasters, etc. home with them to wash in their kitchens. What a great blessing that was! All things considered, it was an inspirational and wonderful event.

PINEVIEW QUILTERS

The quilting ladies meet in the church basement to do their quilting, and they have made a quilt to give to each of our graduating seniors from Emmanuel. There will be three boys receiving a quilt this year, which the ladies have made, and are donating to them. We know they will enjoy them!

The annual Memorial Day service will be held on Monday, May 26th on the lawn behind the church. Several speakers will be on the program, as well as a quartet from the Big Sky chorus to provide patriotic music. Coffee and snacks will be held in the church basement after the service. Mark on your calendar - more details to follow with the exact time of the service.

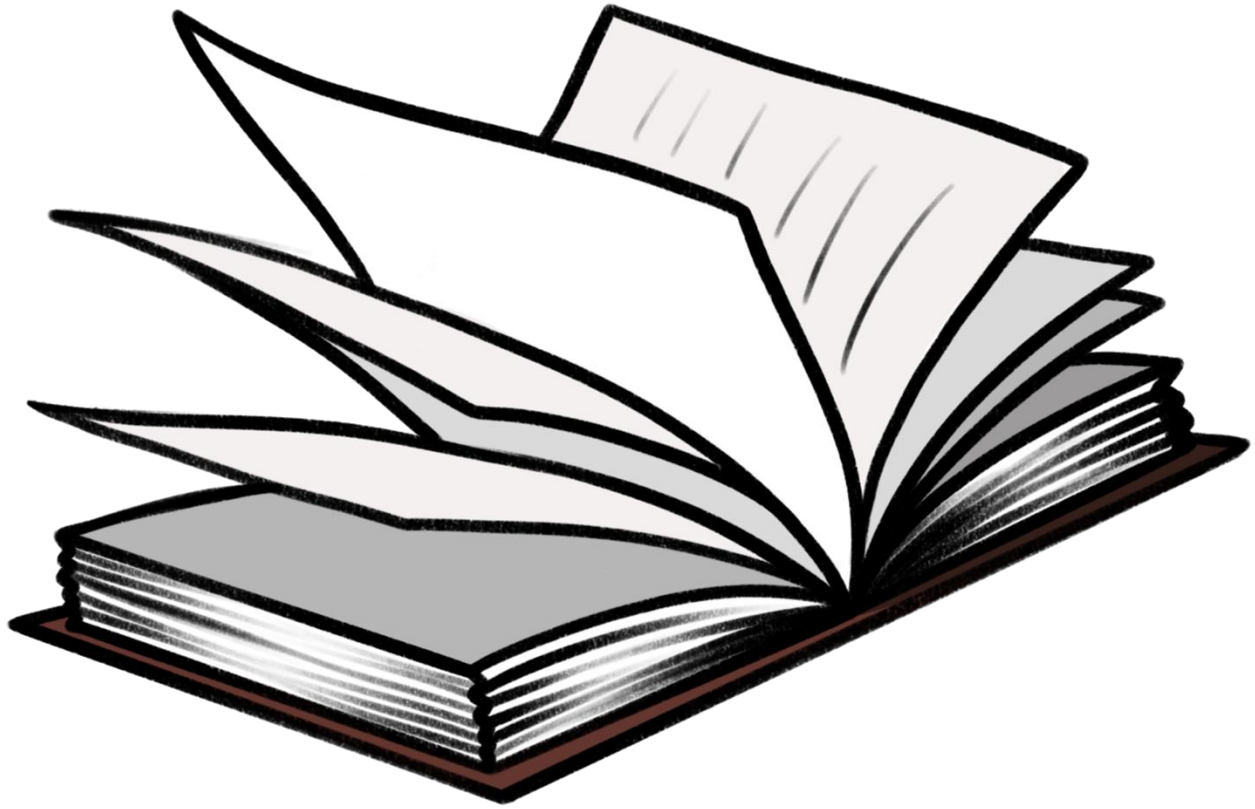
SUMMER BBQ's

The church will again be hosting weekly summer BBQ's for the community starting in mid-June to the end of July. Plenty of good food & conversation to be had, so we hope you will join us this summer.

Sincerely,

Dawn Petty

ELCW President



The updated 2025 Bulletins are currently at the printer. A huge thank you to Laura Vanberg for contacting the people currently in the bulletin and sending me the names and information for new people.

My hopes are that as you get and review the bulletin that you contact me for any corrections. Obviously since the bulletins are at the printer the corrections would not be made until we update again for next year

In the course, of the update I also updated the contact list of the ELC google mail contacts and newsletter list.

I ask if you don't receive the newsletter and would like to receive it that you contact me by text or email, my information is listed below.

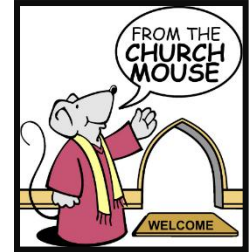
Carole Luster

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Thank you for your cooperation. After I pick up the bulletins from the printer which should be next week, I will leave them at the church.

COMMENTARIES OF THE CHURCH MOUSE



Greetings Friends and Neighbors,

Spring is here and summer is fast approaching. I've been spending my time packing away the warm winter clothes and digging out the flip flops, shorts and tank tops. At the same time, I've been going through all of my stuff to see what I can donate to one of the charitable groups in Billings. I'm kind of a pack rat at heart, as I tend to keep everything. You never know when you might need this or that, but in the long run, all of the good junk just seems to collect dust and never get used again.

The month of May is here, and I get to practice my limited Spanish, if only for a day. Happy Cinco de Mayo everybody! Muchas gracias mi amigos. On the 11th of May, we celebrate Mother's Day, so Happy Mother's Day to all of the moms out there. It wasn't until I became a parent myself, that I truly appreciated the fantastic job that my Mom did in raising my brothers, sisters and me. Being a mom is no 8 to 5 job and I know it takes a lot of hard work. Thanks for everything Mom!

Then on the 26th, we celebrate Memorial Day, a day to remember those who served our country and paid the ultimate price. I always try to attend the service that morning, behind the church, in the land of the great granite stones. We have had some very inspirational speakers in the past and I always leave with a new perspective on life. Happy Memorial Day to everyone and I hope you enjoy the three-day weekend, which typically kicks off the summer. Time to dust off the old barbeque grill and cook something up, while enjoying the company of family and friends.

Time to start planning some summer adventures. Perhaps it's my age, but this last winter seemed really long for some reason and now I'm ready for some summer weather. What are you going to do with the family this year? We have so much to do and see in our own state, that I'm sure you will come up with something awesome. If we are lucky we will run into each other. If not, I know that I can see you in Church on Sunday.

Gotta go for now.

Your faithful friend in residence at Emmanuel.

T. C. Mouse

4/8/25

Shepherd Emmanuel Lutheran Church Council

Present: President Sam Murnin, Jill, Carol, Dawn, Kristianne & Jack, Devin, Lindsey, Jeanne, and Abbey.
(Josh missing due to other requirements in Hardin)

Called to order at 7PM

Agenda presented by Sam. Sam led and opened with devotion using our Mission Statement and prayer led by Dawn Petty.

Standing reports:

Secretary Report – No discussion. (Kristianne/Jack)

Treasurer Report – Insurance went up substantially. Bill is aprox \$12K. Guide One is the insurance carrier and Streeter Brothers is the agent. Our money in our regular account is not large enough to cover this payment. Ideas to move the money from the building fund or the savings. Motion made to move money from the insurance refund from the damage previously to pay the insurance bill. This will short our building fund.

Pastoral Report – Pastoral report was read from an email from Josh. He has met with Willa Jean and Shepherd Seniors. Very happy with the Waymakers and commented that he enjoyed the Soup Suppers. Looking forward to the upcoming Lent Services. No time yet for the Good Friday service in Ballentine but the service in Hardin at 7PM if anyone would like to join. Discussion about the Sedar Dinner. Jill will reach out and see if she can secure a time for the Friday services. Discussion about the upcoming Pastoral meeting tomorrow, opened up the floor. No comments. Will ask about Confirmation Sunday.

Old business: Building Committee: No update as we are still waiting for the completed bid. Only updates will be the gracious giving from the congregation and the matching funds. However, with the council having to make a tough decision to spend the insurance money will change the budget possibly. There are still ways that we could do just the sanctuary and then the altar area later. Waymakers finished for the year. The last dinner will be 4/9. Attendance is slowly dropping and declining on both Sunday & Wednesday. Discussion about how and if we continue Wednesday services. Seder Meal 4/17 at 6:30. Easter breakfast will be served at 10. Please join us for this and a free-will offering will be accepted. Endowment scholarship applications are due at the end of April.

Survey Results: Besides the survey from the yearly congregation, we also need to, as a church, focus on our Mission Statement. We, as a church, are declining in numbers and therefore declining with offering. One of the top survey results was to grow. Sam would like to see a plan or a pathway to see how we can do that. Conversation about how to extend ourselves to meet the cornerstones. Discussion about adding the money situation we are in. Discussion about past members that have stopped coming and why. Kristianne volunteered to head a committee to start digging a bit more into the why's and the direction of the church. Council decided to accept an offer from a coaching service to help OUR church get focused back on to our Mission Statement. This assessment will be free of charge and then a decision to be made later if we choose to hire his services. The committee to get the feedback will be Kristianne, Jack, Dawn, and Jeanne. We, as a congregation, NEED to have a membership/congregation willing to open

communication lines and move forward with our expectations. The free meeting will be 5/2 at 6PM with the coaching service.

New Business: Vacation Bible School: will need to set a date and we need volunteers that might be willing to organize it. Graduating Senior Recognition. Pineview Quilters will be receiving a quilt. Nate, Hank, and Cole are the graduating seniors. Baccalaureate Service? Discussion to plan for a service before graduation which is May 18th and May 25th (2 Shepherd and 1 Central High). We discussed making a sign or changing the church sign to say something congratulating the Seniors.

Next meeting: May 6th at 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 8:40.

Counters: April 20th Jill & Abbey // April 27 Carol // May 5th Kristianne & Jack // May 11th Jill // May 18 Dawn

Youth

WAYMAKERS NEWS

Waymakers ended for the Spring on March 26th. It was a successful year and we welcomed many students from the community to Emmanuel Lutheran over the weeks the program was held.

Thank you all who volunteered time and donated snacks!!

Vacation Bible School dates will be announced soon! Stay tuned.



Christikon Clips

May 2025

Information for our Congregations

There is still room to register for camp this summer! Space remains in youth onsite sessions, Mountaineers 3 and families/adult sessions; limited openings in Wayfarers and Mountaineers 2. Contact the office for availability.

Work Weekend, May 23-26. Come enjoy camp, comradery, food and fun while helping us prepare camp to receive our campers and summer staff! Families register online. Remember there is no cost.

Just bring your willing hearts and hands! See you there!

Christikon's first ever Artist-In-Residence, John Hermanson, will spend the summer engaging with campers and staff through his soul-stirring music and deep theological imagination. This new opportunity is made possible through a partnership with Hope Lutheran Church in Bozeman's new Center for the Arts. More information will soon be added to our website!

Special guest speakers become part of the Christikon life this summer during sessions for adults and families. During Continuing Education Retreat (July 28-31) we feature **Dr. Dave Ellingson aka The Paddle Pilgrim. Session Topic: Go Outside and Play**

Watch for more details and updates for both Continuing Ed and Mountain Weekend on our website. Come spend a few days of relaxation, learning, and faith growth with us. Full details can be found on our website www.christikon.org .

We covet your prayers for Christikon's this summer, for our summer and fulltime staff, and for all who join in the Christikon life.

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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