

EMMANUAL LUTHERN CHURCH

FEBRUARY 2026



SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15TH

IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING WORSHIP SERVICE

DETERMINE NEXT STEPS WITH CHURCH BUILDING. ALL MEMBERS WELCOME.



Dawn Petty

February 2026 – ELCW

Wasn't our church sanctuary beautiful with all the decorations and the gorgeous poinsettias coloring it up this last December? Thank you to all those people who helped in decorating it and making it such a festive place to worship in. Wasn't it great to have the "cookies and carols" on the last Sunday of the year after Christmas? Singing all those songs and then enjoying all those special desserts afterwards? Perhaps we should make that a special tradition for our little church. Having the time to add more singing, and more "munching" might fit in now and then on a special day. Perhaps socializing is what we need. We have been blessed with more visitors coming to "check us out" and see just how friendly a group we are.

Now we will soon start planning for the Lenten services and Easter. Thank you to all the people who have been filling in at our worship services since our Pastor accepted another call into a church in southern Wisconsin. Now with Lent coming up, will we have mid-week worship also? Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 18th, and goes on into the month of April, with Easter Sunday being on the 5th. We will be having our annual meeting on Sunday, January 25th, and probably will talk about that and the remodeling plans for the building. Hopefully, you will all attend and help us go forward with it all.

Our ladies that take part in the quilting afternoons have been meeting at my house for now, so we can set up tables to do our work on tying the quilts, etc. It is a warm and comfortable place to get together, do the work, have lunch, and solve the "world's problems". Since the damage to the church basement in that storm last summer, we needed a place to work. We usually meet the first Monday of the month, and usually an additional day depending on people's schedules. Our group is called "Pineview Quilters" and was formed in the late 1950's. The quilts we make are given to people in nursing facilities, and to Riverstone Medical Center, and some still are sent to places overseas. We are always ready for newcomers and new ideas, so we'd love to have you join us.

Sincerely,

Dawn Petty

ELCW President

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 62 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'm older than dirt, but I disagree, as I know quite a few others that fit that bill, like the Egyptian Pharaohs for one. 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 in to one special holiday, Presidents' Day, on the 16th. 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, get's 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 lately it seems more like spring, than the end of January. If we don't get back to some cold weather soon, all of the trees will start to bud out, thinking that spring has sprung, when really they should be resting for another month or so.

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, enough from me for now. I hope you enjoy Valentine's Day with your special someone.

See you in Church.

Your Faithful friend in residence at Emmanuel.

T. C. Mouse

1/7/26

Shepherd Emmanuel Lutheran Church Council

Present: Sam Murnion, Jeanne, Kristianne, Jack, Dawn, Jill and Abbey.

Called to order at 6:30PM at Jeanne's house (thank you for hosting!)

Agenda presented by Sam. Jill led with devotion.

Standing reports:

Secretary Report – from last month's minutes taken by Jill Hoffman in Abbey's absence. No changes. (Kristianne/Jack)

Treasurer Report – Discussion. No changes.

Pastoral Report – with our council and congregation working without a pastor, we have relied heavily on our committees. The pastoral report from here on will consist of news from the committees and any scheduling updates.

- **Joyful Worship Committee:** Presented by Jill. We spoke of what church is going to look like going forward. Wise words from our Bishop when we met with him was that we may have to be flexible and possibly even re-invent what church will look like. We are blessed to have the LMA's we have! Ideas were talked about on designating each Sunday to a specific "type of church". IE: First Sunday of the month would be "Youth Sunday", second would be "County Sunday", third would be "Traditional Sunday", and the fourth would be a "Potluck Sunday". The Word would be absolutely there every Sunday but we could look forward to something more as well. Just ideas. Another suggestion would be to make our rare fifth Sundays be focused on a service project for someone in the church, the church itself, or our community. We talked about plans for the LMA's that are serving our congregation now. We spoke of the upcoming Lent/Easter time and we have tabled conversation of the Sedar dinner till our next meeting but we do have the Community Center reserved if we can make that work. The committee purchased "to go communion packs" and they were presented to the council. These can be borrowed from the church to take to a home-bound congregation member to allow them to share in our communion even if they cannot be there for church. They will be blessed by the pastor during service. The Joyful Worship Committee is committed to keeping the Worship services organized and in lieu of a pastor, helping to prepare and keep our church working in a streamlined fashion. Ideas welcome from the congregation!
- **Caring Relationships Committee:** Presented by Kristianne. Maryann Morgenstern asked added to this committee and was accepted. Spoke of the connection cards and getting a link for those onto the website and our Facebook page. The committee reached out to a few families and encouraged them to re-engage with our congregation. The Committee wants to focus on getting the word out there and making sure that we are keeping up with those that may not be able to make it to church on Sundays. We still have an active FB page and we will work to keep that

updated and to answer the FB messenger messages quickly. The Caring Relations Committee is focused on reestablishing our communication to our congregation and the public.

- **Loving Service Committee:** We need YOUR HELP! We have one member willing to be on this committee but if you would like to join a committee and serve your church, this would be a great place to start. If you are interested, please reach out to President Sam Murnion or Jill Hoffman.
- Special thank you to a few of the congregation for stepping up while we are working through our pastor call process: Dawn and Tari for keeping the flowers cared for and the church clean, Laura for taking care of the music portion of our worship, Maryann for designing the bulletins, and to both Maryann and John for providing us with meaningful and engaging Sunday services. Also, please tell your church council members thank you as you see them. They have stepped up and they are working hard to make sure that our church thrives even without a pastor right now. 

Old business:

King of Glory – this church donated \$2K to our church back in July just to tell us they love us and they want to support us during the storm. Later, we were given some information from them that they also had a grant available through their church and they encouraged us to apply for the grant. The grant was written but not turned in by the deadline. Great news-Sam talked to their council and they have still processed the grant and given us another \$5k towards our church repair fund. We are blessed! (It was wonderful to see Linda Schinnow in church on 1/11. She used to be a member here at our church. She presented the check during service.)

Building committee: Presented by Abbey. Abbey covered what we would be discussing at the annual meeting. She made sure that the bank balances were correct and answered any questions the council had. We, as a church, have a very big decision to make and it will be very important to be at the annual meeting so that you can voice your concern and vote on what you feel is best for our church. The decision will be option 1: fix our church or option 2: build a new fellowship hall that will serve as our sanctuary for a few years until more money can be raised to build a new sanctuary. Abbey is willing to talk to anyone that has questions anytime just reach out to her. The money will be an issue for either option. Reach out and please come to the annual meeting for further information.

2026 Budget: presented by Jill and Sam. Jill worked hard to get our budget “in check” and worked hard to keep the numbers realistic and attainable. Our congregation deserves this level of organization and Jill will present this at the annual meeting. If you have questions before the meeting please reach out to Jill, Sam, or Abbey and we can cover it with you.

Insurance update: Sam is still working hard for our church! As of now, we are on hold with any repairs until the building committee and the decision by the church is made. Sam is frustrated with the insurance and as we expected, they have decided not to carry our insurance this coming year. Policy expires in May. Abbey also volunteered to reach out to a friend and see if she can get us coverage. She is a rep for Farmers but specializes in acting as an underwriter with other agencies.

Nominating committee: We have filled all positions on the council as long as the votes approve these positions during the annual meeting. Thank you so much to those stepping down and to those coming aboard, welcome! Open positions were vice president, treasurer, council member, financial secretary,

and youth ministry lead. Continuing through next year is President Sam Murnin, Secretary Abbey Emmons, Council members Jill Hoffman, Jack Martin, Devin Murnin, Dawn Petty, and Kristianne Wilson. We are, again, still looking for committee members for the above listed committees.

Annual Meeting: January 25th following church service. "Finger Food Potluck" will be also served and if you would like to bring something, please do so. Reports for the meeting were due 1/11.

New Business: Ash Wednesday Services will be on 2/18 and Good Friday Services will be on 4/3 both at our neighboring churches. Times will be announced later. Seder Dinner is on hold for now but we hope to still have it, just may not look the same as it has in the past and possibly at the Community Center. We have an opportunity to send a couple members to a Good Shepherd Generosity Project meeting. Voted to send Dawn & Abbey on 1.24. One of us will report back next council meeting.

Next meeting: February 10th at Dawn's home at 7:00.

Closed with the Lord's Prayer and meeting adjourned at

Counters: 1/18: Dawn Petty 1/25: Jill 2/1: Abbey 2/8: Sam





CHRISTIKON CLIPS

FEBRUARY 2026

INFORMATION for our CONGREGATIONS

www.christikon.org

Registration for our 2026 season is **OPEN NOW!** Register soon for camp—and don't forget to invite all your friends and family!

Family Adult opportunities can be found on our website. Watch for details on new opportunities this summer.

Work Weekend is **May 22-25, 2026**. Join us in readying the camp for the 2026 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 26th**. Do you know of an item, service or getaway that would be a great auction item? Please contact the office!

We're excited to introduce Matthew Wigdahl—educator, designer, longtime Christikon camper and staff alum—who will serve as Christikon's Communications, Design, and Infrastructure Manager beginning January 2026, supporting year-round ministry and our 75th Anniversary.

CHRISTIKON

1108 24th Street West | Billings, MT 59102

406 656-1969 | secretary@christikon.org | www.christikon.org

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.”

elcshepherd.org — elcshepherd@gmail.com

“Like” us on Facebook



EMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
JOYFUL † CARING † LOVING