



# Emmanuel Lutheran News

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## Pastor's Word for January 2025

*'The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt: This month shall mark for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you.'* - Exodus 12

The Children of Israel did not begin their year as we do, (they began in the spring, near Passover) and this chapter of the Old Testament describes in detail the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Passover of the Israelites.

Passover is for Jewish folks today much the same as Easter is for Christians: the annual celebration of God's act of salvation - in the Old Testament, that means the Israelites' deliverance from Egypt, 'out of the hand of Pharaoh, out of the house of bondage'. In the New Testament, that means Jesus' dying on the cross and rising again on the third day.

Jewish folks begin their year with that big event, while we Christians begin our year here in the darkest days of the year. Romans chose to begin their year on January first a long time ago, (even for Romans!) to honor old Janus, the oddball, one-head-with-two-faces Latin deity of beginnings and endings. Seems appropriate, even if we don't worship or honor old worn-out Roman gods. Taking to mind endings and beginnings right at the start of the year seems logical, and that's enough.

Because things end, and things begin. We Christians like to think we're not like those old Romans, superstitiously fearing and appeasing a gaggle of primitive and inscrutable gods and demigods. We worship the One, true God who speaks with grace and clarity, who loves us and redeems us in Jesus who came to dwell with us!

And yet, we Christians and human, just like those old Romans. We want the things we love to endure, not to change. We're nostalgic for how good it used to be, and we worry about what might happen in the year ahead. Many of us really, really don't like change. And yet on this, Janus and Jesus both agree: nothing on this earth is permanent, nothing lasts forever, evil cannot endure forever, and all good things come to an end.

So Christians look to the Last Day, when Jesus will return, when wrong will be righted, and we will all see the Lord in glory together.

Until that day, we look forward and we look back. We let go of things that are passing, and we reach forward for what is to come, even as our old self struggles with change.

That's what St Paul wrote about in Philippians:

*Not that I already obtained this or am already perfect; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus made me his own. Brothers and sisters, I do not consider that I've made it my own; but one thing I do, forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.* - Philippians 3. 12-14.

That's a good word for us today as January comes around, and God's future beckons.

Love and grace be with y'all

Pastor Greg



## January Celebrations

January 1: Garrett Ellis; Colleen Ellis

January 2: Kaitlynn Guhlke

January 7: Tammy Booker

January 10: Buddi Williams

January 13: Gracey Falk

January 24: Mina Mittelstaedt

January 30: Hal & Nancy Johnson

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### ***Emmanuel Lutheran Church Council Minutes December 2, 2024***

Members present: Charlotte Preuschoff, Chris Falk, Tessa Wicks, Gary Cook, Sam Mathis, Buddi Williams, Pastor Greg Yeager, and Pastor Carol Yeager. Guest: Nancy Johnson

The meeting was called to order at 6:11 pm with an opening prayer.

Sam Mathis moved, and Buddi Williams seconded to approve the November 4<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes as written. Motion carried.

#### **Pastors' report:**

Due to Pastor Greg's surgery, their planned November vacation time was cancelled. The pastors discussed visitations with members unable to attend services. They reported that Bible Study is going well and there is a good core group attending regularly. On Friday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, they'll be attending the graveside service for Ed Preuschoff's mother. Pastor Greg held a "membership class" after the December 1<sup>st</sup> service and had 12-15 people in attendance.

**Church Secretary Report:** A letter from the Town of Reardan was included with financials reporting the rate increase for garbage disposal. The stewardship committee will amend the budget accordingly.

#### **Financial report:**

The financial report for the month of November was presented. Tessa Wicks moved and Pastor Carol seconded to accept the report. Motion carried.

#### **Committee reports:**

**Stewardship:** The committee met on November 11<sup>th</sup> to discuss the financials and 2025 budget. The committee reached out to St. John's for some clarification on the pastor's compensation spreadsheet and corrections were made. A "estimated" budget was distributed to council members and a final draft will be completed pending year-end financial reports.

**Worship & Music/Outreach & Fellowship:** Buddi reported that there will be a Christmas program organized by Nancy Johnson for our Christmas service on Dec. 22<sup>nd</sup>. There will be a Hymn sing on December 29<sup>th</sup>. Buddi reminded members that slots are still open for the Reading and Treats sign-up sheets for 2025. Buddi would also like to extend a public thank you to Alex, the church neighbor, who lives kitty-corner from the church and assisted by doing a large amount of the leaf pick-up this fall.

Property & Remodeling: Gary reported that Hal Johnson and Ed Preuschoff have agreed to be part of the property committee. Chris reported that the parsonage sprinklers had been drained for the winter.

(Council meeting minutes continued)

Sunday School: Activity packets are available during service and will be changed out for the Christmas season.

**Old Business:**

Parsonage Hot Water Tank Repair/Replacement: Sam and Chris received an estimate for both repairing or replacing the hot water tank in the parsonage. Buddi moved to repair the tank and upgrade with the required expansion tank, with a cost estimate of \$1500. Tessa seconded the motion. Discussion continued and the motion passed.

**New Business:**

The Pastor's reviewed their compensation package as prepared by and collaborated on with St. John's. A lengthy discussion of church membership, as defined by the ELCA, took place. Pastor Greg moved to accept Sam Mathis and Janet Mitchell as members. Buddi Williams seconded the motion it carried.

**Upcoming events:**

The next Council meeting will be January 6<sup>th</sup> at 6pm.

The Annual Meeting will be held January 12<sup>th</sup>.

The meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer at 7:48pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Tessa Wicks, Council Secretary



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Have you had a change in address? Need to update your email? Have you added a new member to your home? Please fill out the form and return it to the church so the new directory can be updated! (Please write the information as you want it to be typed and if possible, please write legibly)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Ok to text this number

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## WINTER WEATHER UPDATE



With the winter weather coming, worship service and other related church activities may be cancelled at a moment's notice.

There will be a text message, a Facebook post, and an update on the church website about the change as soon as it is known.

Pastors and our church leaders take these decisions very seriously and do not want people out in dangerous situations.

If you feel uncomfortable travelling, please stay where you are. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact either Pastor or a council member.

**“Don't leave Jesus in the manger; don't remember Him only at Christmas. Instead, learn to walk with Him every day, as you pray and read His Word and ask Him to help you.”**

Billy Graham



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