

Emmanuel Lutheran Church Council Minutes

February 3, 2026

Reardan, WA

Members present: Charlotte Preuschoff, Todd Eckstrom, Barbara Hamilton, Gary Cook, Chris Falk, and Pastor Rod Vereb

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 pm by President Charlotte Preuschoff, with Pastor Phil offering the opening prayer.

Call Committee Discussion

Members of the Call Committee were present to discuss their role in the coming months: Jim Baye, Chris Cook, Ramona Hoff, Emily Zwainz, and Todd Eckstrom.

Pastor Phil will provide orientation for the Call Committee and plans to meet separately with the committee to determine next steps, including options available during the call process and an option to explore partnerships with neighboring congregations, specifically the Presbyterian Church.

Charlotte summarized conversations held since the departure of Pastors Yeager in October. The Council recognizes that the congregation is unable to sustain a full-time pastor independently and remains open to exploring both a new pastoral call and partnership opportunities.

Pastor Phil reviewed the three stages of ministry transition: leave-taking (completed in October), discernment (current stage), and welcoming a new pastor. The Call Committee's primary role is to help the congregation discern God's direction for the future. Effective discernment requires prayerful listening to one another, the congregation, and God's leading.

Pastor Phil noted that approximately 20 congregations are currently in the call process. He emphasized that partnership with the Presbyterian Church and calling a new pastor are not mutually exclusive. The proposed "friendship" model is intended as a flexible framework rather than a rigid process. Pastor Phil requested feedback as discussions continue and asked the committee to identify leadership if pursuing a partnership.

Election of Council Officers

Barbara Hamilton moved that Charlotte Preuschoff remain President, Chris Falk remain Vice President, and Barbara Hamilton serve as Secretary. Gary Cook seconded. Motion carried.

Pastor's Report

Pastor Rod reported no home or hospital visits. Pastor Rod discussed his experiences about pastoring a Lutheran congregation and Episcopal congregation. He is open to sharing his opinions with the call committee. Worship services are going well.

Church Secretary Report

The January financial report was reviewed. Gary Cook moved and Barbara Hamilton seconded to defer approval of the January financials until March, pending explanation and final reconciliation. Motion carried.

Pastor Rod's income was missing from the report, there were two January 4 deposits, and reconciliation is complete only through January 21.

Barbara Hamilton moved and Gary Cook seconded to continue benevolence designations to Bite2Go and We Care. Motion carried.

Committee Reports

Stewardship: No report.

Worship & Music: There was no formal report but Pastor Rod raised a question regarding Ash Wednesday and Good Friday service locations. It is believed Ash Wednesday is hosted by Emmanuel Lutheran and Good Friday by the Presbyterian Church; this will be confirmed.

Property & Remodeling: Gary Cook reported that the floodlights in the belfry will remain out until a boom truck can be secured. It was suggested that sticky threads be applied to the ramp for safety as it gets very slick in the winter. This will be evaluated and possibly completed as a summer job.

Outreach & Fellowship: No additional report.

Endowment: Todd Eckstrom reported that the new scholarship application will be available March 1, with a May 1 deadline.

Sunday School: No report.

Old Business

US Bank Closure: No new developments regarding a change in financial institutions. It was noted that the Davenport Branch may also be closing soon so we need to make a decision on how we will proceed.

New Business

Meeting Schedule: Council meetings will continue on the first Tuesday of the month at 6:00 pm.

2026 Goals: Deferred due to time constraints.

Congregational Meeting Follow-Up: Wind turbine information discussed at the Annual Meeting was revisited. The representative has not responded; contacting Jim Baye was suggested but Todd Eckstrom will be reaching out again to determine if the representative can meet with the congregation to answer questions and provide further information.

Congregational Survey: The call committee will be reviewing a template provided and make changes to send to the congregation. This will help determine the needs of the membership and how we will move forward through the call process.

VBS: Ramona Hoff will lead VBS this year and will use the church for a meeting this month. The Council emphasized the need for an updated, accessible church calendar.

Monthly Newsletter: Following discussion at the Annual Meeting, it was agreed that the monthly newsletter should be sent the week following Council meetings and posted to the website after approval instead of waiting until the end of the month. Ensuring that the minutes are completed and approved in a timely manner will ensure this is possible. This change could happen as soon as April.

Roundtable

A Children's Sermon is planned for the first Sunday in March.

The meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer at 7:47 pm.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 3, 2026, at 6:00 pm
January minutes were approved via email.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Hamilton, Secretary