



Emmanuel Lutheran News

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Pastor's Word for February 2025

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Sometimes life surprises us with unexpected twists and turns. Many of these are joyful surprises but there are also times when we find ourselves caught off guard and wonder how we ended up where we did! Even the biggest lover of being surprised doesn't want to live their entire life wondering what is coming next, with no idea of what to plan for. Most of us feel safer if we have some idea of what to expect in the future.

When we are in school, we want to know what material will be on our exams so we know what to study to be ready. As we get older, we are careful about what job to take, where to live, which house to buy, who to marry, etc. We don't want to live a life full of unnecessary risk. It is human nature to try to limit risk in our life. Now to be sure, everyone has different levels of tolerance for risk but all of us have some amount of it. We try to gather as much information and as many details as possible so that we can make the right decision. The problem is that we can never know completely what our future holds. There will always be some element of risk with every decision.

But here's the thing, even with all our technology and access to information, every decision involves risk. We can't know everything or plan for every possibility. And we can't always sit by the wayside waiting to make a decision. Sometimes the best decision is to simply choose the best option possible and see what happens; because not choosing can lead to stagnation or even falling backwards.

The good news is that we are never alone in whatever choice we make. Jesus has promised to walk alongside us and to guide us even if we don't make the perfect choice. After all God is always creating something new. Sometimes those new things are joyful surprises. Other times God picks up the broken pieces of our bad decisions and creates something even more beautiful out of them. How exciting our life together could be if we were all more willing to risk trusting Jesus when we make a decision, good or bad, right or wrong. I for one am willing to risk that God's grace is greater than any bad decision I might make, are you?

As we continue into 2025 together, let's take some risks. Let's risk loving our neighbors as ourselves even if we might not always know how we will be received. Let's invite someone to church, even if we worry about being told no. Let's reach out into our community and share the Good News even if we risk being ignored or ridiculed. It might be uncomfortable or even scary, but trust me the risk is worth it!

In Peace,

Pastor Carol



February Celebrations

February 4 Diane Baye

February 5 Pastor Carol Yeager

February 8 Peggy Page

February 17 Chris & Melissa Falk

February 28 Don (Butch) Plummer

February 12 Virginia Plummer

February 19 Anthony Wicks

Emmanuel Lutheran Church Council Minutes

January 6, 2025

Members present: Charlotte Preuschoff, Chris Falk, Tessa Wicks, Gary Cook, Sam Mathis, Buddi Williams, Pastor Greg Yeager, and Pastor Carol Yeager. Guests: Johanna & Colleen Ellis.

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 pm with an opening prayer.

Buddi Williams moved, and Sam Mathis seconded to approve the December 2nd meeting minutes as written. Motion carried.

Minutes for council business that took place via text on 12/10/24 in which Buddi Williams moved and Pastor Carol seconded to contribute the \$500 Emmanuel Lutheran proceeds from the St. John's Bazaar to the Reardan Bites2Go program. The motion passed unanimously. Tessa read those minutes and Pastor Carol moved to approve – the motion was seconded and passed.

Pastors' report:

The pastors reported that the Christmas holiday events (Tea, Christmas "Eve" Sunday and, Hymn Sunday) were well attended and well received.

The pastors took post-Christmas vacation time in lieu of their planned November vacation which was cancelled.

Pastor Greg will be attending the Emmanuel Annual meeting this coming Sunday, while Pastor Carol will be attending St. John's.

They reported on visitation to congregational members and Pastor Carol's upcoming vacation.

Reardan Presbyterian's Pastor Katie will soon be on maternity leave and our pastors will be that congregation's emergency on-call contacts through March.

Maundy Thursday will be hosted by Emmanuel Lutheran this year.

Church Secretary Report: Johanna will be out of the office from January 27th through the end of March.

Financial report:

The financial report for the month of December was presented. Gary Cook moved, and Sam Mathis seconded to accept the report, with some questions being and to be answered by the Church Secretary. Motion carried.

Committee reports:

Stewardship: The preliminary annual report was distributed, there were recommendations for budget adjustments, which will be made and then submitted for the Annual Meeting packet.

Worship & Music/Outreach & Fellowship: Buddi reported that the Christmas program went well and fifty-six goodie bags were distributed to attendees. She'd also like to thank the Schmidt family for both decorating and taking down decorations for the holidays. The Annual meeting will be a brunch and Nancy will be in contact with congregation members for meal contributions. She also reported that the janitorial fees will increase by \$10 per month in 2025.

Property & Remodeling: Gary has been in contact with the Andersons, and they will be in touch with the Falk family to schedule a time to repair/replace the parsonage front door. Chris also reported that the hot water tank has been repaired.

Endowment: Todd Ekstrom presented the committee's annual report following the January 5th service.

Sunday School: Activity packets are continuing to be available during service and have been and will be changed out every couple of weeks.

Old Business:

Parsonage Hot Water Tank Repair/Replacement: The tank has been repaired. The bill was paid in 2025.

New Business:

With Johanna's upcoming absence, a secretary with bank account signature approval is necessary. Buddi Williams moved, and Tessa Wicks seconded to approve Colleen Ellis as a signer on the Emmanuel Lutheran Church bank accounts. The motion carried.

Congregational Affirmation of Baptism will take place at the Annual Meeting on January 12th.

With Sam Mathis and Buddi Williams graciously serving their time as council members, there are vacant positions available. The constitution states that there can be no less than five and no more than seven members on the council, so at least one spot must be filled.

Roundtable:

Pastor Carol inquired about Christmas gifts for those that provide valuable services to the church. Chris Falk moved, and Gary Cook seconded to give each of those people a \$35 gift card. The motion carried.

Upcoming events:

The Annual Meeting will be held January 12th.

The next Council meeting will be February 3rd at 6pm.

The meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer at 7:05pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Tessa Wicks, Council Secretary





Happy
Valentine's to
EVERYONE
from
Emmanuel
Lutheran
Church!



Sunday School Lesson for February

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In our church calendar, we are in the season after Epiphany and before Lent. It's the time when we learn about Jesus' early ministry. But, this month is also February – a time when we think about Valentine's Day and love. The Bible has a lot to say about love, so here are some things you can do at home to talk about God's love for us.

1. God loves us! 1 Corinthians 13:1 - 13

- ☐ This is the chapter where Paul explains the importance of love and how we can practice it in our own lives
- ☐ Ask each other - how do we know that God loves us today?
- ☐ What are ways to show we love others?
- ☐ Sing: Jesus Loves Me!
- ☐ Activity: Cut out hearts and on each heart write one attribute from the bible reading (patient, kind, does not envy, etc.). Then glue them on a piece of paper with the words "Love is...." written on top to remind us of what is love and how we can show it to others

2. God calls us to spread the good news! Read Luke 5:1-11 and talk about...

- ☐ How Jesus called Simon, James and John.
- ☐ What does it mean to fish for people?
- ☐ How do we follow Jesus today?
- ☐ Sing: I'll Do My Best https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S8URE4T4_U8
- ☐ Activity: Create colorful paper fish from construction paper, or learn to make origami fish. Create Valentine's Day cards and include a special message about God's love

3. God made us special, and He loves us very much! Read Ephesians 2:10, 1 John 3:1, John 3:16 and talk about....

- ☐ How we were made specifically by God. Just like no two snowflakes are exactly alike, no two people are exactly alike!
- ☐ What makes us unique?
- ☐ What makes us special?
- ☐ Sing: Wonderfully Made (IES Kids Church) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U6ZPy-NtTeE>
- ☐ Activity: Make paper snowflakes to remind us that we are all unique and special to God

4. Love your enemies. Read Luke 6:27-38 and talk about...

- ☐ Why do you think God wants us to love our enemies?

- ☐ What does it mean to “turn the other cheek”?
- ☐ How can we work towards forgiving others who have wronged us?
- ☐ Sing: “Love your Enemies” https://youtu.be/212_GFxyxCs
- ☐ Activity: Pray for someone who has wronged you. Play Friends and Enemies Basketball: 2 balls, 2 buckets/bins labelled “friends” and “enemies”. The object is to toss both balls and get one ball in each bucket. If you do, then you score 1 point, if you get a ball in one bucket, but not the other, you get 0 points. The lesson is that Jesus wants us to treat all people the same; those who are nice to us and those who are mean to us.

We LOVE to have families with young children and school-aged children attend worship with us – and we are ready for you! In the Narthex you’ll find brightly colored activity bags filled with a clipboard, crayons, a brief lesson you can read at

home, coloring pages and/or activity books for kids to work on while attending church service in the sanctuary. You can even color and decorate the bag! Pastor Carol and Pastor Greg will provide a special children’s sermon for those in attendance. Children can take home the coloring pages or leave them here and we’ll display their work downstairs in our Fellowship Hall. We ask that you leave the clipboard, bag and crayons so they can be cleaned and re-used.

If you would like to be part of our Advisory Committee, donate items for the activity bags, volunteer as a teacher, or have any questions or comments about our Sunday School program, please reach out to Charlotte Preuschoff candepreuschoff@gmail.com or any of the Advisory Committee members.

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Pastor Carol invites all women of the church to join her at Lutherhaven for a women's weekend retreat! The dates are March 14-16. Sign up is available on Lutherhaven's website or let Pastor Carol know you want to attend. Hopefully we can rt a good group of ladies from both churches and be housed near one another!

Lutherhaven is so excited to welcome Guest Speaker, Amy Meyer, to our 2025 Spring Women’s Retreat! Our theme for the weekend is, “Abide” from John 15:4, “Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.”

- \$197 includes 2 night’s lodging, 5 meals, program and shared lodging

• **Friday Evening**

- 4-7pm: Registration
- 6pm: Supper
- 7pm: Opening, Lutherhaven Chapel

Saturday Includes

- Speaker and Breakout Sessions
- Crafts
- Massages
- Lakeside Walks
- Singing and Worship
- Lots of time to laugh and chat with new and old friends
- Professional Napping

Sunday

- We will wrap up the Women’s Retreat with Worship at 10:30 AM with check-out following.



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