



February 2026 Newsletter

Thank you all so much for your attendance during our recent Annual Meeting. We are really working hard to make the best decisions for Emmanuel Lutheran. We are already going into the second month of the year, and we have so many great things to look forward too! Thank you to members of council for committing themselves and a warm welcome to our new council member, Liezl Ferreira! We are all available to discuss the wellness of our church and any ideas for areas of improvement.

February is one of those months that I try to get some of “my” projects done. Of course, these projects do not usually include anything outdoors. Unless for some odd reason, we get some really nice days, which we did have a few in January. Whether it be deep cleaning each room in the house, decluttering a closet, reorganizing the pantry, or defrosting the freezer, the list seems endless. And that is the list of things that really should get done, and then there is the next list of things to get done, but are lesser priority and might get done this year or next year or the next... My scrapbooking seems to be on the last list.

Please continue to pray for those on our prayer list and in our nursing homes.

February is a month of Love

Peace and Blessings,

Sandi

sraderma@hotmail.com

701-269-0706

Exciting news- Vicar Andrew will no be Pastor Andrew. He has taken a call at a church in rural Minnesota. Anyone is welcome to attend his installation or send him a card at the address listed below.

Installation Sunday, February 8 (time probably 9:30 am, best to call first to be sure) 218-927-3935

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
36696 320th Street
Aitkin, MN 56431

Thoughts on Evangelism

Several years ago, the EaND Synod offered a course on evangelism, which was attended by approximately 22 people. On the first day of class, participants were divided into small groups and asked to share their current understanding of evangelism. The variety of perspectives shared was enlightening. One man remarked, “If they think I’m going to start knocking on people’s doors to talk about Jesus, they’re crazy.” Most in the group nodded in agreement, indicating a shared hesitation toward traditional notions of evangelism.

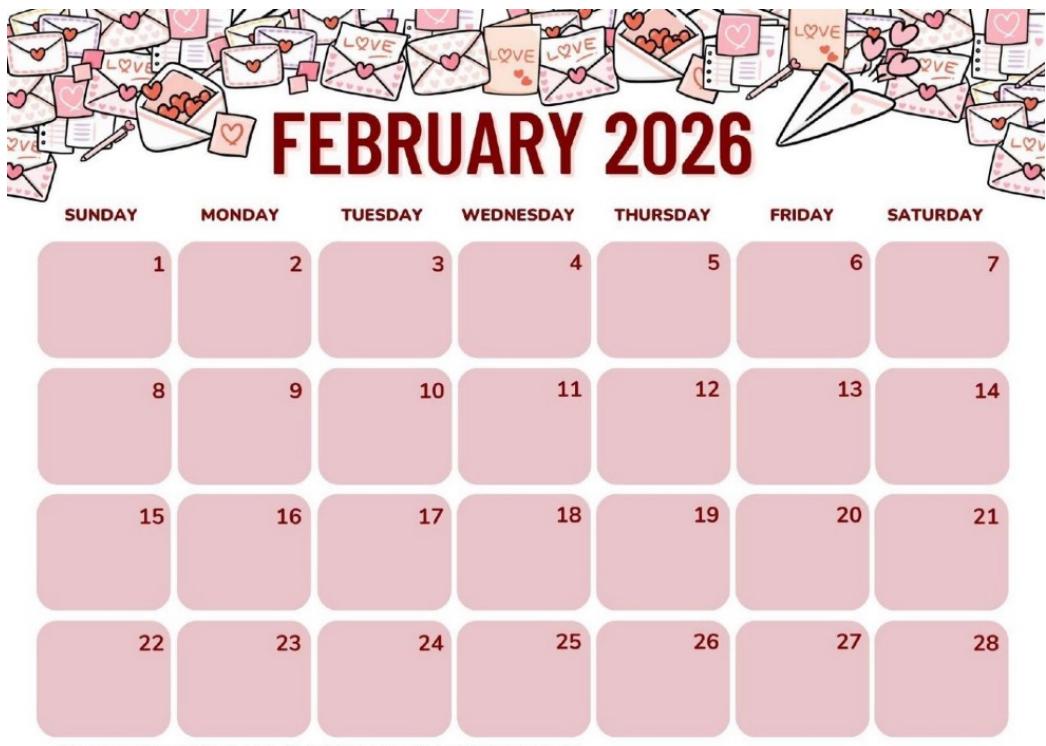
For many people, the idea of evangelism conjures up memories of encounters with strangers—perhaps those who approached them in airports or on beaches with the question, “Have you been saved?” A friend once recounted such an experience, admitting she was so taken aback by the question that she didn’t know how to respond. The young man who approached her led her in a prayer and proclaimed, “Now you’re saved!” before leaving abruptly, without sharing his name, offering a Bible, or providing any information about his church. This impersonal approach left a lasting impression, but it is important to recognize: dear friends, this is NOT evangelism.

Evangelism truly begins with being evangelized yourself. In order to share God’s love with others, you must continually experience that love in your own life. Evangelism is about sharing your personal story and expressing how your relationship with the God who created you is the most important relationship you can have. It involves communicating how God’s grace and love impact you and those around you. As you become more aware of your own need for God and repeatedly hear the Good News of Jesus Christ, your ability to share your faith story with others will grow stronger.

Evangelism starts with relationships—with God and with one another. Building these relationships begins with good listening. Jesus invites others to “Come and See,” and similarly, you can be prepared with a few starter questions that are non-threatening but reveal much about the other person. Listen attentively, not only with your ears but also with your eyes. Through careful listening, you can discern what the other person is experiencing, whether they are hurting, or if they feel unloved or undervalued. Understanding their needs and concerns is essential.

Before speaking about God’s love, it may be necessary to demonstrate that love through action. Meeting people’s basic needs—such as food, shelter, and clothing—can be a powerful way to embody God’s love and open the door to deeper conversations about faith. Each of us has a calling to serve as a witness for Christ. Jesus declared, “You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” This message can be understood in our local context as, “You will be my witnesses, in Gackle, in Logan County, in North Dakota, and throughout the world.” We are encouraged to share our personal faith stories, both through the words we speak and the actions we take. Our everyday deeds and conversations become opportunities to bear witness to the hope we hold in Christ Jesus. Scripture urges us to “always be ready to give an account for the hope that is within you...with gentleness and reverence.” Our hope is rooted in Christ, and we are called to share this good news with others, approaching each opportunity with kindness and respect. Let’s share the good news. Let’s be evangelists!

Shar Gumke,
Synod Lay Minister



HOLIDAYS AND OBSERVANCES: 14: VALENTINE'S DAY, 16: PRESIDENTS' DAY

MondayMandala.com

February/March Calendar of Events for our Church & Community

February 1st - Worship Service 10:30am with communion, Sunday School 9:45am

February 8th - Worship Service 10:30am, Noisy Offering, Sunday School 9:45am

February 12th - Giving Hearts Day

February 15th - Worship Service with Communion 10:30am,

February 18th - Ash Wednesday service 7pm, Gathered by Grace Community meal 5-6:30pm

February 22nd - Worship service 10:30am, Sunday School 9:45am

February 25th - Simple Supper 6:15pm, Lent service 7pm

March 4th - Simple Supper 6:15pm, Lent service 7pm

March 11th - Simple Supper 6:15pm, Lent service 7pm

March 18th - Simple Supper 6:15pm, Lent service 7pm

March 25th - Simple Supper 6:15pm, Lent service 7pm

March 29th - Palm Sunday worship service at 10:30am, Sunday School 9:45am

April 2nd - Maunday Thursday 7pm

April 3rd - Good Friday 7pm

April 5th - Easter Sunday

We want to continue to improve our monthly newsletter. Do you have something to add? Please let Haleigh know. Send her your information to her via email:

haleighlewis@gmail.com



Those in need of continued Prayer:

Gackle Care Center: Helen Elhard, Wilbert Denning, Arlyss Mertz

Edgewood: Quentin Mertz

Wishek Living Center: Violet Diede

New Salem: Karen Miller

Also in need of prayer: Dawn Veil-Stein, Nicole Olson, JD Dahl, Kenny Gumke, Duane Suko, Haleigh Hermanson, Perry Mertz, Ruth Staber, Carol Erbele, and Donna Freestone (Cousin of Ardell Schmidt and MaryAnn Widmer), Jim Lewis (father of Haleigh Zenker), Perry Mertz, Mark Wegner, family of Delmer Sukut, and family of Marge Tarno

February Worship Support

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Ushers | Ardell & Barb Schmidt Wayne & MaryAnn Widmer |
| Greeters | Ardell & Barb Schmidt |
| Altar Guild | Barb Schmidt & MaryAnn Widmer |
| Steward/Acolyte | Liezl Ferreira |

March Worship Support

| | |
|-----------------|----------------------|
| Ushers | Pat & Sandi Rivinius |
| Greeters | Pat & Sandi Rivinius |
| Altar Guild | Sandi Rivinius |
| Steward/Acolyte | Denise Wittmier |

Synod Assembly- June 5, 6, & 7, 2026

We are looking for delegates to attend this year's synod assembly. Please contact any council member if interested.

Visitations and Personal Communion

We are committed to looking into new options and the best ways to serve our congregation. Are you not able to make it to communion and wish to receive? We want you to know that we can serve you communion anytime. Would you like a personal visit? Let us know and we will schedule a time to get together. Know of anyone that hasn't been able to come to church that could use a visit? Let us know and we will give them a call and check in. We are still looking for people that would like to help with visits too. All you need is the ability to talk, we can help with the rest.

Offering Envelopes:

If anyone does not have or is in need of offering envelopes, please let Bonnie Denning know. She will get them to you!! Thanks.





Our synod website has so much information to share with us about events happening in our area, training courses that we can attend or participate over Zoom, and so many more resources. They also have a newsletter that you can subscribe to through email. Please take a look!

www.eandsynod.org



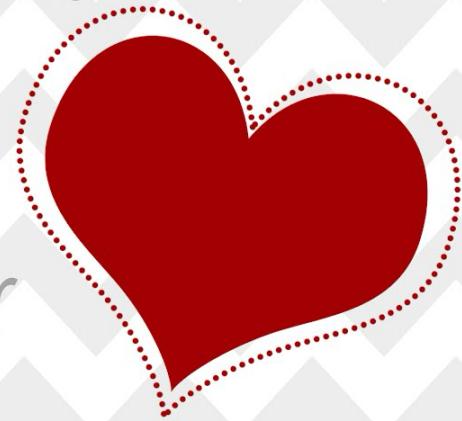
Online Donations

Forget to bring your offering to church, haven't made it in for a while, or just want an easier way to donate to our church? You are able to donate online. Just a few clicks and you can share funds with us. Go to the address listed below, click on the donate button on the top. Select contribute under select support a specific congregation, click on another partner congregation, and then you can select Emmanuel Lutheran from the listed congregations.

www.ndchristiansact.org

Those members who bank at Dakota Heritage can also donate easily by setting up regular transfers between accounts. Contact the bank directly and see how they can help set this up for you.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.



John 3:16



Bishop Nomination Process

- Each congregation may submit up to three names of Ministers of Word and Sacrament in the ELCA (pastors) for consideration as bishop.
- Nominations must be the result of official congregational action (e.g., council or annual meeting).
- Nominations are to be submitted via an online form, which will be available by February 5, 2026.
- Deadline for nominations: February 25, 2026.

Further information, including the nomination form and timeline, will be available on the Bishop Election page of our synod website: www.eandsynod.org/bishop-election

Conference Assemblies: Voting Members

Who is eligible to vote at Conference Assemblies?

According to the Synod Constitution [**S12.01.32.**]:

Voting members of the conference council shall be:

- a. All ministers of Word and Sacrament and ministers of Word and Service serving under call in the conference,
- b. members of the congregational councils or their designee (as appointed by the council),
- c. Officers of the conference,
- d. Synod Authorized Ministers serving under contract in the conference,
- e. Members elected by the assembly to churchwide or synod boards who reside in the conference; and
- f. Chairpersons of the conference women's, men's and youth auxiliaries, if any.

Note: Only those present at the conference assembly may vote. Proxy and absentee voting are not permitted. Each congregation should ensure its council and rostered ministers are informed and able to attend.

Synod Assembly: Voting Members

How does a congregation determine its voting membership for Synod Assembly?

Per the Synod Constitution, each congregation is allotted lay voting members based on baptized membership (see chart on next page).

| Congregation Size (baptized membership) | Number of Lay Voting Members Allowed (excludes pastors or deacons) | Gender Suggestion |
|---|--|-------------------------------|
| 0 - 174 | 1 or 2 | (male or female) or 1 each |
| 175 – 500 | 2 | (1 male, 1 female) |
| 501 – 1,000 | 3 | (1 male, 1 female) + 1 either |
| 1,001 – 1,500 | 4 | (2 male, 2 female) |
| 1,501 – 2,000 | 5 | (2 male, 2 female) + 1 either |
| 2,001 – 2,500 | 6 | (3 male, 3 female) |
| 2,501 – 3,000 | 7 | (3 male, 3 female) + 1 either |

*Add one voting member for every additional 500 members

In addition to lay voting members, all rostered ministers (pastors and deacons) under call are voting members at Synod Assembly.

Key Dates & Next Steps

- February 25, 2026: Deadline for congregational nominations
- March 21–29, 2026: Conference assemblies (dates set by each conference)
- May 2026: Open forums for bishop nominees (dates to be announced)
- June 5–7, 2026: Synod Assembly and bishop election

Resources & Contact

- Bishop Election Process Timeline, nomination form (by February 5), and more information: www.eandsynod.org/bishop-election
- For questions about voting eligibility or the nomination process, contact the Nominating Committee at eandsynodelections@gmail.com.



2026 Bishop Election Timeline

FEBRUARY 5, 2026

Sitting Bishop must submit written notification to the synod nominating committee at least 120 days prior to the Synod Assembly as to their intentions for seeking another term.

MARCH 7, 2026

The secretary and officers of each conference shall tabulate the names submitted by congregations and report the results to the synod Nominating Committee by this date.

APRIL 16, 2026

Nominating Committee shall tabulate the results of the conference assembly votes as reported to the committee by the secretary of each conference. The Nominating Committee shall identify the 7 pastors, plus any tie for the 7th place, named by the greatest number of conferences.

MAY 18, 2026

The secretary of the Synod shall obtain a comparable biographical summary of each of the 7 ministers identified by the Nominating Committee.

JUNE 5, 2026

On First Ballot of Assembly:

Nominations may be received from voting members attending assembly.

FEBRUARY 25, 2026

Congregations of the synod may submit the names of up to three ministers of Word and Sacrament of the ELCA to the secretary of their conference

APRIL 1, 2026

Conference assemblies shall be held to vote on a maximum of seven names per conference from a list as tabulated from conference reports to the synod Nominating Committee.

MAY 5, 2026

The 7 ministers, plus any tie for 7th place, shall be available for open forums to be established by the Synod Council.

JUNE 5-7, 2026

Eastern ND Synod Assembly

JUNE 6-7, 2026

Ballots 2-5 take place until an election takes place.

CHRISTIANS IN ACTION MINISTRY
Balance Sheet
As of December 31, 2025

| | Dec 31, 25 |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| ASSETS | |
| Current Assets | |
| Checking/Savings | |
| Checking, Bank Forward | 9,018.57 |
| Total Checking/Savings | 9,018.57 |
| Total Current Assets | 9,018.57 |
| TOTAL ASSETS | 9,018.57 |
| LIABILITIES & EQUITY | |
| Equity | |
| Unrestricted Net Assets | 6,231.99 |
| Net Income | 2,786.58 |
| Total Equity | 9,018.57 |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY | 9,018.57 |

CHRISTIANS IN ACTION MINISTRY

Profit & Loss

January through December 2025

| | Jan - Dec 25 |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Ordinary Income/Expense | |
| Income | |
| 281BOLD _ St John's Endowment | 6,000.00 |
| Administrative fees | 7,502.76 |
| Donation | 169.64 |
| Donations applied | -50.00 |
| Grant Income | 4,800.00 |
| Mileage | 5,849.80 |
| Pulpit supply | 27,909.48 |
| Youth Director | 46,055.76 |
| Youth Event | 5,097.75 |
| Total Income | 103,335.19 |
| Expense | |
| Administrative expenses | 6,589.41 |
| Internship expenses | 580.89 |
| Mileage reimbursement | 6,550.04 |
| Payroll Expenses | 490.46 |
| Payroll Wages | 6,411.35 |
| Pulpit supply reimbursement | 22,007.50 |
| Youth Director expenses | 53,146.57 |
| Youth event expenses | 4,772.39 |
| Total Expense | 100,548.61 |
| Net Ordinary Income | 2,786.58 |
| Net Income | 2,786.58 |

CHRISTIANS IN ACTION MINISTRY

2025 Actual vs Budget

| | ACTUAL | BUDGET |
|--|---------|---------|
| INCOME | | |
| Administrative fees | 7,403 | 4,800 |
| Pulpit supply (<i>based on actual billed</i>) | 21,854 | 18,200 |
| Youth events (<i>based on actual</i>) | 5,098 | 1,500 |
| Director CYF Ministries (<i>salary/benefits/taxes</i>) | 46,056 | 80,640 |
| Synod Lay Minister (<i>salary/taxes -- 2 mo</i>) | 6,056 | 6,899 |
| SLM housing | | 1,334 |
| SLM admin/payroll fees | 100 | 100 |
| Mileage | 5,850 | 13,468 |
| Other donations | 120 | |
| 281BOLD income/grants | 10,800 | |
| | 103,335 | 126,941 |
| EXPENSES | | |
| Administrative expenses | 7,070 | 4,800 |
| Pulpit supply (<i>based on actual billed</i>) | 22,008 | 18,200 |
| Youth event expenses (<i>based on actual</i>) | 4,772 | 1,500 |
| Director CYF Ministries payroll expenses | 53,147 | 80,640 |
| Synod Lay Minister payroll expenses | 6,902 | 6,899 |
| SLM housing expenses | | 1,334 |
| SLM administrative expenses | 100 | 100 |
| Mileage | 6,550 | 13,468 |
| | 100,549 | 126,941 |
| | 2,787 | - |

Christians in Action Ministry – 281BOLD

Launching a new way to connect with our communities

January welcomes 281BOLD – a digital forward faith community with roots in rural North Dakota. This online space is for Christian inspiration and local connection.

The site will include locally made short form videos, questions to inspire your faith in Jesus Christ, and one longer video each week. The theme for videos in January and February 2026 is Exploring Favorite Bible stories. As the community grows, content variety will expand.

Look for content on **Instagram at 281bold**. Additional details are available at NDChristiansAct.org

281BOLD is affiliated with Christians in Action Ministry and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Thank you to everyone who watched the Advent devotion videos on sjlcjamestown and englishlutheranmedina and helped grow interest in this new way of connecting with neighbors. Sharing the posts invited people to hear the good news of Jesus in the voices of members of the congregations that participate in Christians in Action Ministry.

Thank you also to the 281BOLD leadership team of Haleigh Zenker (Emmanuel, Gackle), Alannah Valenta (Montpelier), Chris Flann (Trinity, Jamestown), Shane Ede (St. John's, Jamestown), Pastor Kristi Weber (Trinity, Jamestown), and Deacon Tara Longden (initial content editor) who helped envision this ministry. Initial financial support has come from grants from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Eastern North Dakota Synod, St. John's Endowment Fund, and Trinity Lutheran Foundation. Additional financial support will come from other congregations from Christians in Action Ministry and from individual donors who give online at NDChristiansAct.org/donate or through their local congregations in Dickey, LaMoure, Logan, and Stutsman counties.

Congregations participating in Christians in Action Ministry:

| | Board Member | Officers |
|----------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Atonement, Jamestown | Taryn Schurhamer | |
| Christ the King, Ellendale | Dianne Billey | Vice-Chair |
| Emmanuel, Gackle | Joyce Spitzer | |
| English, Medina | Bryan Behm | Secretary/Treasurer |
| Montpelier, Montpelier | Abram Valenta | Chair |
| St. John's, Jamestown | Paulette J Ritter | |
| Trinity, Jamestown | Christopher Flann | Takes Notes at Meetings |
| Zion, Kulm | Lucinda Malm | |

Pastor Kristi Weber serves as the ministers' representative on the board.

Pastor Lucinda Lien will become the new ministers' representative in February.

Common website: NDChristiansAct.org

Gathered by Grace

Free Community Meals

NOTICE:
Extended
hours this
month!



February 18th
from 5-7pm

Join us for a meal before
the Ash Wednesday
service!

Now offering delivery and take-out meals!

Emmanuel Lutheran
Church, Gackle

Everyone is welcome!

| February Member Life Events | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Day | Birthday | Baptism | Marriage |
| 1 | | | |
| 2 | | | |
| 3 | | | |
| 4 | JoAnn Janke, Taylor Lund | | |
| 5 | | | |
| 6 | Carol Muller | Allison Zenker, Robin Moldenhauer | |
| 7 | Myron Zenker, Neil Suko | Benjamin Burkle | |
| 8 | Ross Kleingartner | | |
| 9 | David Suko | | |
| 10 | Clifford Klundt | Bonnie Denning, Christina Zenker, Theodore Zillmer, Curtis Fischer, Jr | |
| 11 | | Sarah Lehr, Chris Zenker | |
| 12 | Wayne Widmer | Roan Lund | |
| 13 | | | |
| 14 | James Zenker | Joel Zenker | |
| 15 | | | |
| 16 | | | |
| 17 | | Lee Fischer | |
| 18 | Gayle Undem | Duane Suko, Cory Koenig | |
| 19 | | Desiray Zenker | Henry & Marcene Veil - 1965 |
| 20 | | Gayle Undem | |
| 21 | | Karly Rivinius | |
| 22 | | | |
| 23 | | McKayla Ruff | |
| 24 | Brenden Zenker | Marella Koenig | |
| 25 | Danny Denning, Tiffany Pike | | |
| 26 | | | |
| 27 | | Joyce Spitzer | |
| 28 | | | |

Church Records

We are updating our Church records. Lots of information is missing.

Please fill out a sheet for each family member with the following information to assist with the records.

Full Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: Home _____ Cell: _____

Birth:

Date: _____ Where: _____

Father's Name _____

Mother's Maiden Name _____

Brothers: _____

Sisters: _____ Baptism:

Date: _____ Where: _____

Pastor: _____

Sponsors: _____

Confirmation:

Date: _____ Where: _____

Pastor: _____

Marriage:

Date: _____ Where: _____ To Whom: _____

Pastor: _____

Children: _____

Emmanuel Lutheran Church

Duties of the Ushers

(reviewed on 3/2022)

1. Arrive at church 30 minutes prior to service.
2. Turn Sanctuary lights on and off before and after service.
3. Raise and lower shades on windows before and after service.
4. Put up hymn numbers (numbers are in room to left of altar in cupboard).
5. Turn on the Cross at altar (switch is labeled in room to the right of altar).
6. Turn lamps on for the Lectern and Pulpit. Turn off after service.
7. Fill ceramic pitcher with water and place on baptismal font along with silver bowl that goes in the baptismal font (pitcher and bowl are located in room to the left of altar on the counter by sink).
8. Hand out bulletins, newsletters, etc.
9. Ring church bell at least 3 times just before beginning of the service.
10. Count the number of people attending the service (easily done from the balcony sometime after service has begun) (number in attendance is to be written in the book which is in the fellowship hall).
11. Receive offering plates, gathering offering, and bring offering forward when pastor signals.
12. Usher people forward for Holy Communion (one usher stands towards the front to allow worshipers to advance to front).
13. Usher people out when church service has concluded.

2025 EMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Church Office 701-485-3368
SAM-Shar Gumke 701-320-1920
SAM- Joel Zenker 701-997-9047

Council Members:

Sandra Rivinius, President 701-269-0706 (cell)

sraderma@hotmail.com

Marella Sebring, Council Treasurer 701-485-3543 (home)

marellasebring@msn.com 763-228-0599 (cell)

Tina Nitschke, Council Secretary 701- 830-1957 (cell)

Bonnie Denning, Financial Secretary 701-485-3798 (home)

sports@daktel.com 701-320-5864 (cell)

Lisa Zenker, Steward
lisamzenker@gmail.com 701-368-9291 (cell)

Denise Wittmier, Steward 701-269-1485 (cell)
denwitt@daktel.com

Steve Moos, Trustee 701-320-3597 (cell)
Smoos59@msn.com

Taylor Lund, Trustee 701-307-0056 (cell)
bubbalund@gmail.com

Other Contacts:

Haleigh Zenker, Church Office Secretary 952-270-1747 (cell)
haleighjlewis@gmail.com

Bonnie Denning, Organist 701-485-3798 (home)
Church Work Groups
sports@daktel.com 701-320-5864 (cell)

Julia Friez, Custodian 435-256-5631 (cell)