



# 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](mailto: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.

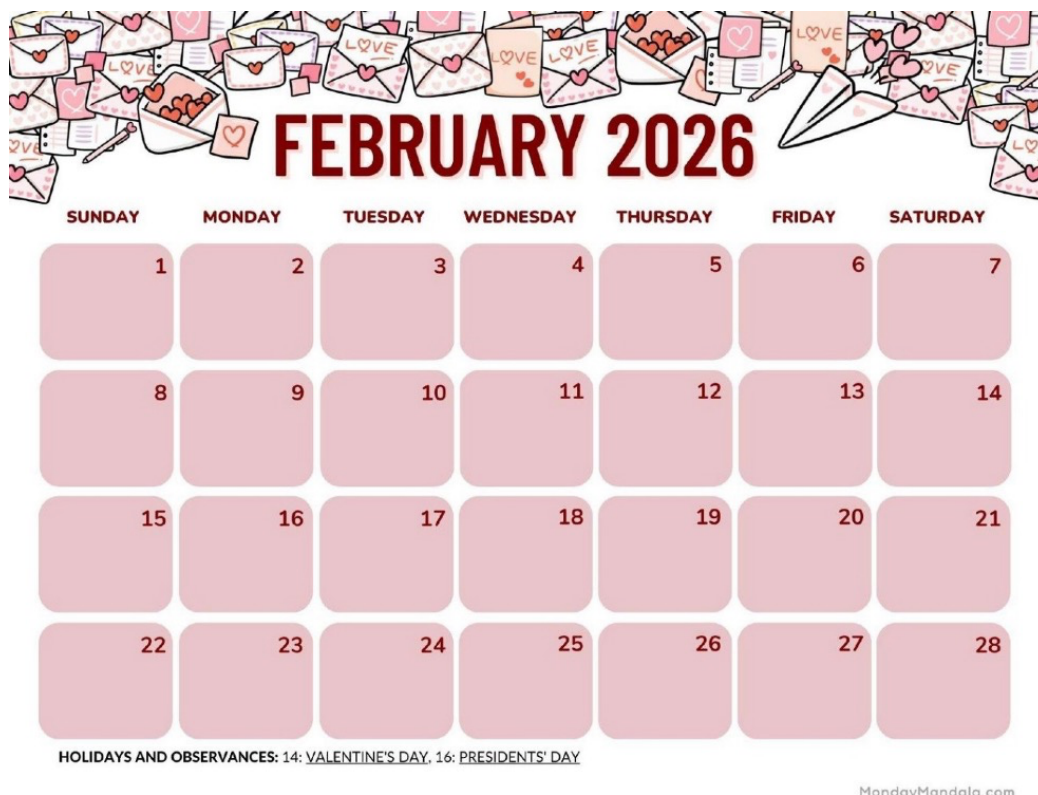
For many people, the idea of evangelism conjures up memories of encounters with strangers—perhaps those who approached them in airports or on beaches with the question, “Have you been saved?” A friend once recounted such an experience, admitting she was so taken aback by the question that she didn’t 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



### February/March Calendar of Events for our Church & Community

- February 1<sup>st</sup> - Worship Service 10:30am with communion, Sunday School 9:45am
- February 8<sup>th</sup> - Worship Service 10:30am, Noisy Offering, Sunday School 9:45am
- February 12<sup>th</sup> - Giving Hearts Day
- February 15<sup>th</sup> - Worship Service with Communion 10:30am,
- February 18<sup>th</sup> - Ash Wednesday service 7pm, Gathered by Grace Community meal 5-6:30pm
- February 22<sup>nd</sup> - Worship service 10:30am, Sunday School 9:45am
- February 25<sup>th</sup> - Simple Supper 6:15pm, Lent service 7pm
- March 4<sup>th</sup> - Simple Supper 6:15pm, Lent service 7pm
- March 11<sup>th</sup> - Simple Supper 6:15pm, Lent service 7pm
- March 18<sup>th</sup> - Simple Supper 6:15pm, Lent service 7pm
- March 25<sup>th</sup> - Simple Supper 6:15pm, Lent service 7pm
- March 29<sup>th</sup> - Palm Sunday worship service at 10:30am, Sunday School 9:45am
- April 2<sup>nd</sup> - Maunday Thursday 7pm
- April 3<sup>rd</sup> - Good Friday 7pm
- April 5<sup>th</sup> - 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:

[haleighjlewis@gmail.com](mailto:haleighjlewis@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.



The banner features a red background with white text and graphics. On the left, a large white heart contains the text "FEBRUARY 12". To its right is a white globe icon with a cross, followed by the text "Eastern North Dakota Synod". The main title "Giving Hearts Day" is in large, bold, white letters. Below this, a white rounded rectangle contains the text "Give on or before February 12 to DOUBLE your impact!". At the bottom right, a white arrow points to the website "www.givingheartsday.org". The banner is decorated with several small white heart icons along the bottom edge.

**FEBRUARY 12**

Eastern North Dakota Synod

# Giving Hearts Day

Give on or before **February 12** to **DOUBLE** your impact!

 [www.givingheartsday.org](http://www.givingheartsday.org)



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](http://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.

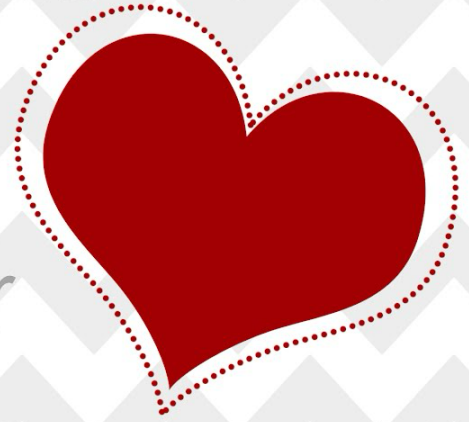
[www.ndchristiansact.org](http://www.ndchristiansact.org)

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 *l*oved the world,  
that he gave his  
only *b*egotten  
Son,  
that *h*whosoever  
believeth  
*i*n him should not perish,  
but have *e*verlasting life.



*John 3:16*



## Eastern North Dakota Synod Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

### **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](http://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).



<b>Congregation Size</b> (baptized membership)	<b>Number of Lay Voting Members Allowed</b> (excludes pastors or deacons)	<b>Gender Suggestion</b>
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](http://www.eandsynod.org/bishop-election)
- For questions about voting eligibility or the nomination process, contact the Nominating Committee at [eandsynodelections@gmail.com](mailto:eandsynodelections@gmail.com).



Eastern North Dakota Synod  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

# 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.

## 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

## 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 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.

## 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 7<sup>th</sup> place, named by the greatest number of conferences.

## MAY 5, 2026

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

## 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 5-7, 2026

**Eastern ND Synod Assembly**

## JUNE 5, 2026

**On First Ballot of Assembly:**

Nominations may be received from voting members attending 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
<b>ASSETS</b>	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
Checking, Bank Forward	9,018.57
Total Checking/Savings	9,018.57
Total Current Assets	9,018.57
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>9,018.57</b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	
Equity	
Unrestricted Net Assets	6,231.99
Net Income	2,786.58
Total Equity	9,018.57
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b>9,018.57</b>

**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
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>2,786.58</b>

# 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](https://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](https://www.facebook.com/sjlcjamestown) and [englishlutheranmedina](https://www.facebook.com/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](https://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](https://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!***



Day	February Member Life Events		
	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 Udem	Duane Suko, Cory Koenig	
19		Desiray Zenker	Henry & Marcene Veil - 1965
20		Gayle Udem	
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: \_\_\_\_\_

**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 <i>sraderma@hotmail.com</i>	701-269-0706 (cell)
Marella Sebring, Council Treasurer <i>marellasebring@msn.com</i>	701-485-3543 (home) 763-228-0599 (cell)
Tina Nitschke, Council Secretary	701- 830-1957 (cell)
Bonnie Denning, Financial Secretary <a href="mailto:sports@daktel.com">sports@daktel.com</a>	701-485-3798 (home) 701-320-5864 (cell)
Lisa Zenker, Steward <i>lisamzenker@gmail.com</i>	701-368-9291 (cell)
Denise Wittmier, Steward <i>denwitt@daktel.com</i>	701-269-1485 (cell)
Steve Moos, Trustee <a href="mailto:Smoos59@msn.com">Smoos59@msn.com</a>	701-320-3597 (cell)
Taylor Lund, Trustee <i>bubbalund@gmail.com</i>	701-307-0056 (cell)

## **Other Contacts:**

Haleigh Zenker, Church Office Secretary <i>haleighjlewis@gmail.com</i>	952-270-1747 (cell)
Bonnie Denning, Organist Church Work Groups <i>sports@daktel.com</i>	701-485-3798 (home) 701-320-5864 (cell)
Julia Friez, Custodian	435-256-5631 (cell)