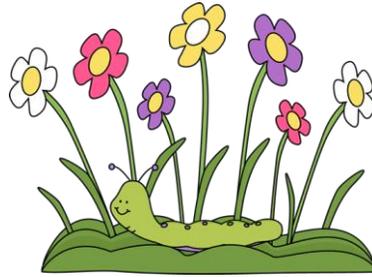


Emanuel



Good News

Volume 51 • Issue 3 • March 2026

A Publication of Emanuel Lutheran Church, 810 Scott Street, PO Box 501, Napoleon, OH 43545
419-592-2616 • emanuel@bright.net • www.emanuelnapoleon.org

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, Emanuel's mission is to witness to the good news of salvation through Christ to individuals, the community and the world through discipleship and service.

Thoughts from Pastor Janine...

Hi dear ones,

I didn't grow up in a congregation that encouraged memorizing scripture. It just wasn't part of the culture there. But I did grow up in a congregation that sang. A lot. And pretty well for being tiny. From the time I was young, I remember knowing bits of scripture because I knew a hymn or some liturgy piece that included it!

My first summer far from home I worked on the Blue Ridge Parkway. I could be found singing hymns at the top of my lungs while driving on the parkway. Each time I go back, I do the same thing.

I don't remember nursery rhymes. Clark's most common bedtime songs come from Holden Evening Prayer. He hears hymns throughout the day. Just because those are the songs that are in my head and heart.

Our theme for this Lent is "How can I keep from singing?" where we honor some of our favorite hymns. Throughout the season, we will hear bits from our dear ones about why the hymn is meaningful to them. We will sing along Jesus' journey to Jerusalem. Lent may seem like a silly time to sing favorite hymns, but music is such an integral part of our faith. Our favorite hymns give us sustenance for the journey of life. Even when the world is a mess, even when our dear ones are struggling, even when there are more questions than answers, even when things are heavier than we can handle, we sing. We sing in the car and in the pew and in our homes and anywhere else where we go. When we don't have other words, we sing the words of our faith.

Join us this Lent, on Thursdays at 7pm and Sundays at 9am. While we hear the same readings, the liturgy, sermon, and hymn of the day will be different. On the good days and the hard days and everything in between: how can we keep from singing? Wishing you all a song filled Lent,
Pastor Janine



A Message from Vanessa Organist/Music Coordinator

Dear Emanuel,

Happy March and happy first day of Lent! Our Ash Wednesday service was truly unique and special this year. It was such a gift to welcome our Presbyterian friends and see the sanctuary filled not just with people, but with song and spirit. It always amazes me when I play the opening hymn and recognize instantly when there are more people in the pews than normally. The sound becomes absorbed by all the people and I find myself having to adjust accordingly to make sure everything sounds balanced!

We were so grateful yesterday to have the choir sing so beautifully for our service. I wanted to give a special shout-out to Joleen for bravely agreeing to sing such a stunning solo. I had so many people share with me afterward how Joleen's voice truly sounded like that of an angel. Several even mentioned they had to fight back tears while she was singing! Even after fighting a cold she persevered and was determined to share her gift with us. Thank you also to Joe Kohout for always taking care of the behind-the-scenes details such as making sure the binders are collected and distributed, arriving extra early to check that the live-streaming is all set up, and double-checking that the mic is turned on for choir. It's the little things that make the biggest difference. As we warmed up in the chapel, it was wonderful to hear more and more voices join us and fill out the space so beautifully. I know I've mentioned it many times to the choir, but the way they sing the song "So Beautiful" truly sounds like a chorus of angels! I'm very grateful to have the core group of people that returned after the pandemic -- and then some more people! Some members had to leave the group for a while but somehow found their way back -- it doesn't surprise me one bit that they were all welcomed back with open arms. We have such a kind group of people and our weekly rehearsals have been described by a member as "their weekly therapy." It's special to meet with the same dedicated group week after week, and to use our voices in a different way such as singing louder or making sure we're all pronouncing a word in the same way. It weaves in an entirely new layer of connection amongst the choir members.

Ash Wednesday was seamless because we have such an amazing group of people who worked so hard behind the scenes. The sanctuary and the rest of the church was spotless thanks to Terri who somehow finds a way to make the carpet and floors look brand new! I think we're so spoiled having such a clean and well looked after church. Sally did an excellent job formatting and printing the bulletins for her first ever Ash Wednesday service. Even despite some setbacks she caught on quickly and is making such amazing progress! And finally a huge thank you to Pastor for making sure any fire is put out while also being a beacon of light amidst our church! It's truly amazing how many problems she can solve all while juggling being a wonderful mom. She's present for people who are transitioning into the next part of life, always so positive for the rest of the team, and making sure we're laughing along the way. I feel very grateful to have these wonderful women to work alongside!

Gift Card Collection

Want to help our neighbors with a meal? Drop a \$10 gift card to a local fast food restaurant in the offering plate or in the office. We will share them with folks who are looking for a meal that day. Thank you to Phyl and Steve’s home congregation for this great idea of another way to love our neighbors!

Congregational Life Board Update on Caring Corner – Nanette Schwab & Julie Callaway

Caring Corner for March will be collecting quarters or cash/checks plus laundry soap and laundry bags for Operation Clean Duds. Monetary donations may be labeled Clean Duds and placed in offering plate.

Caring Corner from January received \$40 in donations, 30 bars of soap, 15 boxes/bags of cereal, and 25 other food items for Together We Can Make a Difference Initiatives.

Super "Souper" Bowl Sunday soup pot donations took in \$139 that went to feeding the local hungry. The Patriots beat the Seahawks, \$92 to \$47. Thank you to all who donated!

Shrove pancake supper was held Tuesday, 2/17/26 with proceeds going to Soul Food. We will update you on this event in next month’s newsletter.

Lenten Offerings will be divided between the Sight Center of NWO, HOPE Services, and Sarah's Garden in Wauseon. Sarah's Garden is a non-profit organization that specializes in Autism Intervention, Conductive Education, Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Sensory Integration and Speech-Language Pathology services.

Palm Sunday Potluck Brunch will be hosted by the Congregational Life Board after the service on Sunday, March 29. Please bring your favorite potluck dish to share and enjoy the fellowship of your friends!

Easter flower sale is being held now until March 1.

JANUARY GIVING: We have been asked to put the money collected each month into the newsletter and bulletin. This is what was collected in January 2026.

INFLOWS

General Fund	11,816.00
Building Fund	90.00
Caring Corner	40.00
Soul Food	25.00
Youth Fund	20.00
Sunday School	25.00
Youth Subs	35.00
Paypal Fees	-6.96
Vanco Fees	-38.97
TOTAL INFLOWS	12,005.07



Join Us for the upcoming worship services! Maunday Thursday w/ communion 7pm, Good Friday 7pm, Easter Sunrise w/communion at Meyerholtz Park 7am, Easter Worship w/communion 9am.



Altar Flowers

3/1/26 To the Glory of God.
3/8/26 Will Behnfeldt's 13th Birthday.
3/15/26 Terry & Sally Roehl 39 Anniversary.
3/22/26 From Rita Kryder in memory of George.
3/29/26 Matthew And Andrea Van Gilder 17 Anniversary.

A Space To Grieve

Carol Castello and Pastor Janine invite those of you who are grieving to a time to check in, hear scripture, and share stories on March 10, 2026 at 7pm in the Bible Study room. Some participants of the morning session will go out for lunch afterwards. Folks in the evening session are invited to eat before arriving. As the Honduran proverb goes, "Grief shared is half grief. Joy shared is double joy." Let us hold some of your grief for you.

Remember our Members in nursing homes and assisted living facilities.

Lutheran Home & Alpine Village
(1032 – 1036 S. Perry St., Napoleon)
Ken Lange
Oneta Wiechers

Vancrest Nursing Home
600 Joe E. Brown Avenue **Holgate**, OH 43527.
Ed Panning

Brookdale BG
(121 N. Wintergarden Rd., #141, Bowling Green, 43402)
Cheryl Ritchey



Emanuel Lutheran Church Council Meeting Council Minutes Monday, January 19, 2026 @ 6:30 p.m.

Open: Devotions, Tom Jenny and the Fable of the Porcupine. December minutes approved.

Treasurer's Report:

- Passed out financial statements for September 2025, October 2025, November 2025, December 2025. No initial questions

- Angel Tree received \$60 in donations after the gifts were purchased and turned back in. Decision was made to put \$60 in cash in the safe for next year's angel tree project.
- Kelli: it has been a stressful two years with the transition of financial treasurers and church secretaries. Kelli and Denise are working closer together to keep things in check and on time.
- We are looking for new software that can keep track of giving and contributions to the church as well as putting in expenses and being able to report on expenditure vs budget. As of now, Denise has a new spread sheet to plug numbers into for an easier view of the comparisons. Reporting and the financial statements take 4+ hours on top of the regular duties of paying bills and counting the offering.
- Would a new laptop be helpful? New software? Both need to be looked into.
- Assets are stronger now than they were in 2020
- Changing process on paying out donations (i.e. gifts for soul food, or gifts to ELCA World Hunger, caring corner, etc.) will be paid out monthly to the specific charity rather than at the end of the year.
- Motion to accept report, Ed Biederstedt; seconded, Peggy Snyder. All approved.

Pastor's Report

- Installing new council members on Sunday, January 24th.
- February 7th: Council retreat at Christ United Methodist Church from 8-12. Breakfast will be provided, Lunch afterwards is optional. The goal of the retreat is to hit on some heavy and difficult conversations, in a more neutral setting, before they come up.
- February 8th: Youth will make subs for a fundraiser prior to worship, order forms are out to the congregation. After worship, sub pick up along with handing out the meal-in-a bag dinners (open to the public and advertised on Facebook)
- Lent devotions (like 2006): 200-word blurbs from congregation about a favorite hymn, scripture, or God story to be put into a book form and given out to congregation. We need 45 folks to participate. Sign up with pastor Janine or on Facebook.
- Office copy machine has died. Roger (the tech that has been servicing the unit) thought he could get a trade in unit for around \$1600. Terry Hershberger motioned approval, Denise seconded it. All approved. Tom Jenny suggested upping the budget to \$2000 to purchase without bringing it back to council. Money will come from properties budget.
- Brought up concern about the icy parking lot. Terry Sedam shovels and salts the sidewalks and steps of the church. Gerken scrapes the lot for free. Is there anything that can be done about the icy buildup? Ed and Terry will investigate a solution and will take care of it in the meantime.

Properties Board:

- There was a light bulb replaced outside above the stained glass by the back door.
- We have a quote of \$458 to have a new light installed in the back door stairwell. Advised by council to go ahead with it.
- Ed has a call into Speiser Electric to install a light in the second-floor stairwell. We are on the list.

- Johnson Control continuation: September 2025 Carey Plummer sent cancellation form to cancel service. Johnson has since sent us to collections over \$720 in unpaid invoices. Latest notice says it is up to \$1300. Ed called Johnson and asked about paying \$720 because we had cancelled service. The gentleman on the phone was less than helpful and sent Ed the same form that was already filled out and sent back in September. Ed believes there is an office for Johnson Controls in Oregon, Ohio and is going to stop there in the next two weeks to see if he can get the service cancelled as all phone calls have been ineffective. We are now monitored by Corson for fire protection.

Congregational Life:

- January caring corner is Cereal and Soap for TWCMADI.
- February caring corner is donations for Pillars.
- Souper Bowl Sunday donations to go to ELCA Good Sam Funds and ELCA World Hunger.
- Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner, Feb 17 will replace Soul Food on Feb 18 that week. Soul food will still purchase food/ingredients.
- Easter flower sale is set to go in bulletin at the end of Feb or beginning of March.

Educational Board

- January Birthday cards went out (2), and clarified who gets them (ends at 6th grade when kids enter confirmation)
- Sarah updated the Sunday school list to include the 3-year-olds.

Doctrine and Worship

- After 2025, the Altar Guild will be folded into D&W instead of remaining separate. Julie Calloway will be co-chair of the Altar guild with Char Weber. They have the calendar filled with folks to cover all parts of the Guild for 2026. They will get with Peggy and Julie Mt. Castle to figure out who will order things (candles, wine, wafers, Etc.), and who will take care the Altar linens
- Peggy plans to revamp the book for D&W as there are many redundancies and items that are no longer relevant.
- The sheets to sign up as worship assistants, communion assistants and ushers have been moved to the bulletin board by the Church office rather than the bulletin board by the Scott Street Doors. Kids will remain readers on the third Sunday each month. The Altar Guild listing will be posted by the office as well. We will put up 3 months at a time. Hopefully this will keep people more informed.
- There will be no Thursday service the week of Feb 18, as Ash Wednesday service will replace it.

Old Business

- Tom: Who handles the church website? It is out of date. That is a secretarial duty and pastor Janine will get Sally up to speed on it soon.

New Business:

- Nannette: Wasn't there a discussion last year about adding the attendance and giving numbers in the bulletin as had been done in the past? Kelli: The giving numbers would be hard

to do weekly but could be done monthly due to the PayPal/Venmo/Vanco items. Attendance could easily be added each week.

- There is Pie please eat some!
- Motion to close meeting, Ed Biederstedt, motion seconded by Denise, All approved.

Next Meeting date March 16, 2026

Devotions: Denise Etzler

2026 Meeting Dates

~~January 19, 2026~~

May 18, 2026

September 21, 2026

~~February 16, 2026~~

June 15, 2026

October 19, 2026

March 16, 2026

July-no meeting

November 16, 2026

April 20, 2026

August 17, 2026

December 21, 2026

WORSHIP SERVICES

Sunday Worship - 9am
In person - Online Facebook
Thursday Worship - 7pm
In person only

OFFICE HOURS

Monday – Wednesday-Friday 7:30 am to
9am & 12:30pm-5pm
Tuesday & Thursday 7:30am-2:30pm

COMMUNION SERVICES

First Sunday of the month - 9am
Third Thursday of the month - 7pm

Pastor

Rev. Janine Shearer
330-524-2552 or jshearer520@gmail.com

Custodian

Bell Choir Director

Terri Sedam

Altar Guild Chairman

Char Weber & Julie Callaway

Prayer Chair Coordinator

Parish Secretary

Sally Roehl

Organist & Music Coordinator &

Vanessa Kwiatkowski

Congregational Life

Nanette Schwab & Julie Callaway

Board of Education

Laura Klein & Sarah Ruffer

Properties Board

Ed Biederstedt & Terry Hershberger

Finance Board

Ron Wiechers & Kelli Burkhardt

2026 Church Council

President – Tom Jenny

President-Elect – Dea Plummer

Secretary – Mary Eickhoff

Treasurer - Denise Etzler

Doctrine & Worship Board

Peg Snyder & Julie Mt Castle