

Morning Prayer was led by Mission Table member Jeanne McCoskery, with Servant 28 providing music.

**Beth Lewis, President and CEO of Augsburg Fortress, provided the Churchwide report, on behalf of Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson.**

“I am very pleased to be here with you for the Montana Synod Assembly. I would like to thank Bishop Jessica Crist for this invitation to join you this weekend as the representative from the ELCA churchwide expression. There are many things that I will share with you in my remarks today. But, the most important thing I want you to remember is this... Thank you!

Thank you for the many ways that you here in the Montana Synod partner with almost 5 million other people throughout the whole of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Sometimes there is a misconception that the people who work in the ELCA’s churchwide office in Chicago are the ELCA. But, that is just one expression of this church! All of us together...4.6+ million Lutheran Christians in almost 10,400 congregations, in our 65 synods, in our 27 colleges & universities, in our 8 seminaries, in Augsburg Fortress, the ministry of publishing I am privileged to lead, and in the various other units of the churchwide staff...all of us together make up the ELCA. We accomplish so much more when we collaborate with one another in mission than any of us could possibly do if we were to try to go it alone. I think that this sense of working together as the ELCA is captured so beautifully with your Synod Assembly theme, “Learning in Christ, Living in Faith” It is by educating ourselves and others in our faith and by living that faith in service & partnership with one another that we are the ELCA together.

I also want to thank you for your “mission support” to the whole church. As a lay person in this church, sometimes I think that we use “church speak” that doesn’t necessarily clarify what we’re talking about. In my opinion, the phrase “mission support” is one of those not necessarily clear phrases, especially to people who are new to synod and churchwide governance.

Thank you! The Montana Synod shares 39.5% of the mission support received from your congregations for national & global ministry through the ELCA churchwide organization. And, in 2010, you are on track to equal this percentage of mission support! These are challenging economic times throughout this country & the world, so thank you, again, for your partnership in God’s work in the US and around the world!

The ELCA is a church of abundance...even in these challenging economic times! The 149 congregations of the Montana Synod hold \$16.4 million in savings, memorials and endowments. And, many individual members and 63 congregations and ministries from your synod have \$6.7 million invested through the ELCA Mission Investment Fund. That investment not only serves this whole church, but in fact, comes right back here

because 7 congregations & ministries in this Synod are supported by \$2.5 million in loans from the Mission Investment Fund!”

### **Greetings**

The Assembly heard greetings on behalf of Luther Seminary and Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, from the Fund for Leaders in Mission, The Lutheran Magazine .

### **Budget**

The Assembly discussed the budget presented on Friday night. Although the budget was unchanged from the documents provided before the assembly online, some voting members who did not print out the document were uncomfortable not having the budget on paper before them. Discussion centered on living within our means, increasing benevolence, restoring cuts to programs that had already been impacted, and cutting other programs. The budget was passed as presented.

### **Apology**

Christine Holler-Dinsmore presented rationale for the adoption of the Apology:

*“Recognizing the long history of injustice towards the Indigenous Tribal Peoples of the United States, we, the Montana Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, express our profound sorrow and repentance for the grief and pain suffered in the past and in the present. For too long, we have remained silent, ignored the violence perpetrated against the Tribes, ignored the violation of treaties, and ignored the tragic aftermath that haunts the original peoples of the land.*

*We ask for forgiveness, forgiveness for what we have done, and what we have failed to do.*

*As a sign of our repentance and a desire to be reconciled, we pledge to walk with our brothers and sisters of the Tribal Nations. We offer our support for the honoring of treaty rights, the healing of lives torn asunder by forced cultural changes, loss of language, racism and poverty. We will stand with The Tribes in honoring the sacred sites and ceremonies. Let it be known to all the Tribes that our door is open to you and we are here to listen and to work for a better tomorrow for all of the Creator’s people.”*

### **Closing Worship**

Closing worship was held at American Lutheran Church, with guest preacher Bishop Elaine Stanovsky of the United Methodist Church.