



Montana Synod, ELCA

Volume 2010, Issue I

January 15, 2010



Words From the Bishop—“Still Seeking Him”

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We start the season of Epiphany remembering the visit of the Magi to the Christ Child. We continue to make meaning out of this strange historical event by repeating the phrase, “Wise men still seek Him.” And indeed they do. Later this month a small delegation from the Montana Synod will be visiting our companion Synod, the Cape Orange Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Southern Africa. It is our way of “still seeking Him.”

The Cape Orange Diocese is our original companion synod, since the beginning of the ELCA. (It was some years later that we also took on the Bolivian Church as a second companion synod.) Over the years numerous delegations from the Montana Synod have visited our companion synod, and several folks from South Africa have visited our synod. This will be my first visit to this companion synod, and it will be the first face-to-face interaction between our churches since the election of their new Bishop, Bill Bowles.

There are many reasons that a visit like this is important, especially in Epiphany. The first reason is **accompaniment**. The ELCA is committed to accompaniment as a model for doing ministry. Particularly in our global relationships we emphasize accompaniment, which is relational. Accompaniment is based on the premise that partners each have something to share. Global mission is no longer the “haves” sharing with the “have-nots.” Rather it is partners walking together and sharing gifts with one another. And of course there

is no better way to learn to walk together than to practice it, to do it. So we are going to South Africa to be faithful partners with our companion synod.

“Wise men still seek Him.” Christianity has its origins in the Middle East. For much of the first two millennia, Christianity flourished in the northern hemisphere, first Europe, then North America. Many of our assumptions about Christianity are northern European/North American in origin and orientation. But things have changed. Christianity is growing, and growing fast in the global south. While

churches in North America and Europe are losing members, churches in the global south are growing. So we are visiting a part of the world where Christianity is thriving, where churches are growing. Part of our walking together will be experiencing a church that is growing and vibrant. We have much to learn from our partners in the south.

“Wise men still seek Him.” Jesus said we would find him where we find the poor, the oppressed, the marginalized.. Therefore we expect to encounter Christ in the people of South Africa, who have lived through tribal rivalries, colonialism, apartheid, poverty,

disease, violence, AIDS. We expect to encounter Christ in the experience of the Church, proclaiming the Good News for all people.

I ask your prayers for our visit, and for our companion synod in South Africa, and our Companion Synod in Bolivia. And I also ask for your prayers for our Synod, and for the ELCA. We are all members of the Body of Christ.

In Christ,

Bishop Jessica Crist



News Notes

Interim

Donald Melchert to Faith, Hamilton, 11/1/09

On Leave from Call

Jonathan Kibler-McCabe, from Devon/Galata Parish 12/31/09

Resigned from ELCA

Jeffrey Stoopes, from Christ, Big Sandy, 12/31/09

Transfer

Thomas Schlotterback, from King of

Glory, Billings, to Dir. Vocation and Leadership, Concordia College, Moorhead, Minn. 1/1/2010

Congregations in Transition

Key = V – Vacancy, I – Served by Interim, S – Served by Seminary Intern

Arlee, V I

Bigfork, V I

Billings, King of Glory, V

Cody, WY, Trinity, V I

Cut Bank, St. Paul's, V I
Fairfield Parish, V I
Great Falls, Redeemer, V, I
Hamilton, V I

Helena, Our Redeemer's Senior V, I

Missoula, Atonement, Senior V I

Plentywood, V I

Sidney, Pella, Associate V I

Whitefish, Christ, Associate, V I



Worship at the Work Ranch

“Pastor, would you pray for my little girls? They are going through a hard time right now”. “Please pray for me, too. I’m leaving the ranch tomorrow. Pray that I continue to live the right way when I get out”.

These prayer requests were offered at worship at the Work Ranch dorm at the Montana State Prison which I was privileged to lead recently. The opportunity came for volunteers to be responsible for leading worship at the work ranch at the Montana State Prison in Deer Lodge the first Sunday of each month. As a member of the Montana Synod Freedom in Christ Prison Congregation Task Force and as the nearest ELCA pastor to the prison, I agreed to coordinate Lutheran volunteers. The prison reached out a hand to us, and I believe we needed to take this ministry opportunity seriously.

I typed up a handout with an outline of the service. Last Sunday I was privileged to share the body and blood of our Lord Jesus with watery fizzy prison “grape juice” (could it have actually been soda?) with 16 men who treasure the gift and promise of forgiveness of sins from the depths of their hearts.

With your support so much more could be done. I am hoping to prepare the way for the one who comes after me as pastor for our prison congregation. We are growing the ministry as Bible study materials have been ordered, volunteers are signed up to attend training later this month, and plans made to begin a Bible Study in February. Both Campus Ministry groups agreed to bring teams to lead worship once a year and we have a group of retired pastors who are pitch-

ing in as volunteers!

The Freedom in Christ Task Force is working to raise funds to call a full time pastor to develop a mission congregation at the prison. Until that happens we will minister in this place as volunteers through this service and through the Bible Study. Your prayers, your financial support and your willingness to let others know about this important ministry can help to make it happen. If you would like to help with worship or with Bible Study, we would welcome your participation.

For more information, contact Pr. Chris Flohr at chris-flohr202@hotmail.com or 549-4141. To volunteer for the worship service or Bible Study, contact Pr. Melanie Martin-Dent, mmartin-dent@yahoo.com or 563-7381.

Reminders

Rostered Leaders Report to the Bishop:

Please send in your 2009 Report to the Bishop. These are an invaluable tool for Bishop Crist. They can be found online [Click Here](#) You may fill these out online and then e-mail them to us. We are happy to mail you a hard copy if that option is not available. Due February 28.

Congregational Information

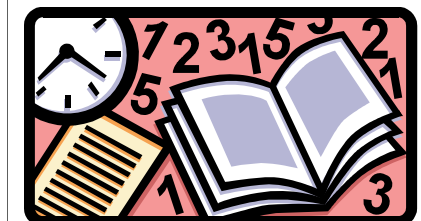
forms: This form lets us know your congregational officers. If they change with your annual meeting, please fill

out this form and send it in. It’s very useful to have this information in your congregational file. Congregational Information Form. This can be found on the Montana Synod’s website under resources/congregational info.

Parochials: These forms are sent directly to congregations from the ELCA in the last few weeks. You may go online to fill them out, or if that option isn’t available, fill them out by hand and mail them in to the synod

office. Due February 15th. Contact Susan Smith at the Synod office with questions.

Intents: Intent forms came in a packet from the Synod Office last fall. Please return these to the synod office



Lay Ministry Continuing Education

[Diploma in Lay Pastoral Ministry](#)

June 7-11 and June 14-18, 2010 Churches and religious organizations are looking for qualified men and women to serve in non-ordained positions of pastoral leadership in the church. Unfortunately, many otherwise qualified people are reluctant to pursue these positions because they do not feel adequately prepared biblically and theologically, or they find themselves lacking the practical skills they need to be successful in ministry. Others are already involved in ministry positions but feel limited by their

lack of training and ongoing opportunities for development and support.

[More...](#)

[Diploma in Worship, Theology and the Arts](#)

Whitworth's Diploma in Worship, Theology, and the Arts is designed to help train, equip, and support church musicians and other worship leaders to serve more effectively in paid and unpaid leadership positions in the Presbyterian Church (USA), as well as in other

denominations. The program balances courses in theology with study in the history, development and current issues in worship and arts ministry.

[More...](#)

Michelle L. Pace

Program Coordinator
Weyerhaeuser Center for Christian Faith and Learning
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Official notice—Assembly and Theological Conference

The annual Assembly and Theological Conference of the Montana Synod of the ELCA will be held June 4, 5, 6, 2010, at the Crowne Plaza, Billings, Mont.

Rev. Peggy Paugh Leuzinger, Synod Secretary, January 15, 2010

“Learning in Christ, Living in Faith”

The 2010 Montana Synod Assembly and Theological Conference will be held at the Crowne Plaza in Billings, Montana from June 4-6. We are going to be at a new venue this year, in downtown Billings. We are planning worship in a congregation and a concert on Saturday evening.

Our keynote speaker will be Rev. Jessicah Duckworth, Assistant Professor of Christian Formation and Teaching at Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington, D.C.

Our Churchwide Representative will be Beth Lewis, the President & CEO of Augsburg Fortress, the ministry of publishing for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).

All materials will be sent via e-mail to rostered leaders and congregations and will also be posted on the synod's website.

Stay tuned for more information and deadlines.

Announcements & Links

The Parish Paper

Stories of Faith in Action—Our Saviour's Lutheran, Rocky Boy Reservation, makes the Fall "Mission Partner Focus" bulletin insert.

Standards and Guidelines Approved for Youth and Family Ministry Professionals can be found at www.elcaymnet.org/standardsandguidelines.

The **delegation to South Africa** at the end of January are able to take CDs, but not DVDs. Send your CDs to the Synod Office before January 25th .

MARK AUGUST 6-7, 2010, FOR A GLOCAL MISSION GATHERING!! No, "Glocal" is not a typo. It stands for helping our local congregations take advantage of our global partnerships as a church so

that we can better understand and participate in global and domestic mission at a grassroots level.

Who? Three or four, or even more congregational leaders (including pastor if possible).

What? A day and a half of skill-building, congregational team-building, networking.

When? August 6-7

Where? Billings

More? See [What is a Glocal Mission Gathering?](#) for more information.

But plan ahead! This is a first-time event for the Montana Synod! Paul and Kay Hanson, Global Mission Coordinators

Haiti Earthquake

Financial gifts are urgently needed. Your gifts to ELCA International Disaster Response, designated for Haiti Earthquake Relief, will be used entirely-100 percent-

for immediate relief and ongoing recovery in Haiti. Please give today at

www.elca.org/haitiearthquake

The Concordia Band Tour Concordia College, Moorhead, MN

Monday, February 8, 2010, 7 p.m.
[Billings West High School](#), For Information call 406.655.1400

Tuesday, February 9, 2010, 7 p.m.
[Hope Lutheran Church](#), Bozeman

For Information call 586.5572 (Church) or 522.6200 (High School)

Wednesday, February 10, 2010, 7:30 p.m.

[St. John's Lutheran Church](#), Helena
For Information call 406.442.6270

Wednesday, February 11, 7:00 p.m.

C. M. Russell High School, Great Falls

To see complete schedule, go here:

<http://www.cord.edu/Music/Ensembles>

NRIT News

"Listen, God is Calling."

Dr. Kathryn Love will be coming to Great Falls to speak on Evangelism and Prayer. Consider gathering a group from your congregation and coming to take part in this one-day event Feb. 6th at Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Great Falls. We will begin at 10 a.m. to accommodate those who need to travel. There will be a \$5.00 lunch offered at Our Savior's and the program will end at 4 p.m.

We will sing hymns out of the ELW led by Julie Long, joining in old favorites and learning new songs as well. We will pray together and reflect on our prayers as ministry, and we will have the opportunity to hear Dr. Kathryn Love as she reminds us of God's call to tell our

story.

Cost: Clergy - \$75; Retired, New to Ministry, Lay - \$60
AND A CONGREGATIONAL DISCOUNT!

Bring anyone and everyone from your congregation for \$200.

Register by emailing Jenny Kunka at j.kunka@nrit.org or Susan Smith at ssmith@montanasynod.org or by calling (406)453-1461.

The following are educational resources suggested by the ELCA Lifelong Learning Partners organization:

-Have you visited the Lutheran Library site? Check out their electronic bookshelf at

www.elca.org/library

-Lifelong Learning Partners recommends this weekly e-newsletter that comes from the UK chock full of articles on Christian education. You can subscribe for free at: joanna.cox@c-of-e.org.uk

-From Select Multimedia Resources "Earthbound: Created + Called To Care for Creation." A 6 part DVD series that explores care of creation as Christian Vocation. For more info, go to www.selectlearning.org.

Jenny Kunka, Director NRIT
2415 13th Ave S.
Great Falls, MT
59405

j.kunka@nrit.org



Campus Ministry News



Rocky Boy Service-Learning Weekend: at Our Saviour's Lutheran Mission on the Rocky Boy Reservation. January 15-18th. All college age students or 20 something young adults are welcomed to join us for this Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. weekend of work projects, cross-culture emersion and dialog, and lots of laughs and fun. Cost will be minimal.

Ski/Snowboard Trip: February 26-28, we will head over to discovery

ski area and spend the weekend skiing and spending quality time with good people.

Spring Break Service-Learning-Exploring Trip to San Francisco: March 26-April 4 Cost is \$150. Any post-high school young adults or college students are welcome to join us.

Financial Note: The Lutheran Student Foundation of Montana,

which supports our synod campus ministries in Bozeman and Missoula, is running behind in donations and is struggling to make ends meet by the end of our fiscal year on Jan. 31. Any donations from congregations or individuals will be most helpful. Thank you for your support and prayers!

Pastor John Lund:
John@montanalc.org,
396-4974, www.ecm.org

Water for your Soul

Looking for a 2010 Lenten series theme to lead people deeper into the waters of grace and discipleship?

Mindful of Lent in the early church as a time of baptismal preparation, consider "Water for Your Soul: The Baptismal Plunge with Christ," a five-week series on living in baptism every day. The series utilizes

the book WATER FOR YOUR SOUL, with the option of daily readings for individuals and families.

The Lenten series is available without charge to pastors, as well as information on the book, on author Glenn Borreson's website, www.waterforyoursoul.com.

Recently retired ELCA Pastor Glenn L. Borreson
1006 Deerfield Street Holmen, WI 54636
Glenn's book website and blog: www.waterforyoursoul.com
<http://waterandword.wordpress.com>

Youth and Family Ministry Certification

Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp has partnered with Vibrant Faith Ministries and Wartburg Seminary to offer a Youth and Family Ministry Certification School on March 12-17, 2010. This school is the only one of its kind in the nation and offers the next best training to a masters degree. People from across the country seek out this training.

You can register through Vibrant Faith Ministries and find out more

information at their website, www.vibrantfaith.org.

The cost for the School is \$2,500 which includes the week at FLBC, the 5 weeks of on-line intensives, a final weekend at FLBC, all food and lodging, and certification. **Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp has received a \$6,000 grant from Vibrant Faith Ministries to share amongst congregations in Montana!** Simply let Brooke Ells

know when you have registered for the school and FLBC will give you a share of the grant money.

We hope that you will consider this exciting opportunity! Please contact Brooke if you have any questions.
Brooke@flbc.net 406-844-3201

Oh, what we could do with \$26,066

The opportunity for us to each earn a 2% discount on ELCA health contributions is available from the ELCA Board of Pensions again in 2010, with a few changes. This year, each congregation and organization in our synod will receive a 2% discount on health contributions if 65% of our eligible ELCA-primary plan members and spouses complete the confidential Mayo Clinic Health Assessment by April 30.

Our collective 2010 savings potential is \$26,066. Think of the mission this money could support!

So, do your part. Take the assessment on the EmbodyHealth web portal at www.elcaforwellness.org (and earn yourself \$150 to offset out-of-pocket medical costs by doing so). Then, let your spouse, co-workers and peers with ELCA-primary health coverage know you've done it and encourage them to take it too.

Instructions for how to register on EmbodyHealth and take the assessment are available in *Understand my benefits* at www.elcabop.org.



Anniversaries to Celebrate

Congregations

125	Melville Lutheran
100	Plentywood Lutheran
	Our Savior's, Chester
	St Paul Lutheran, Fairfield
	Galata Lutheran,
	First Lutheran, Glasgow
	Hingham Lutheran,
	Bethel Lutheran, Joplin
75	Messiah, Red Lodge
50	Grace Lutheran, Worland, WY
	Redeemer, Great Falls

Rostered Leaders

25	AiM Susan J Penn
	Rev Jerry R Olson
	Rev Aprille Jordan
35	Rev Martin E Dreyer
	Rev Joe R Haugestuen
	Rev David W Peters
	Rev Peter M Ramseth
40	Rev Gary W Cockrell
	Rev Michael B Aune
	Rev William C Spencer
	Rev Lawrence G Vinson

50	Rev Richard L Widerholdt
	Ralph L Holmlund
	Rev Raymond W Johnson II
	Rev Allen G Haugen
55	Rev Herbert E Strom
60	Rev Everett V Tande
65	Rev Olaf G Borge
	Rev Irvin C Gronneberg



Montana Synod Yearbook Corrections

P. 65: Monte Massar,
pslm121@midrivers.com
672-5115©

P.77: ELCSA website change:
www.elcsacod.ca.za/

P. 48: Robert Leaverton e-mail:
rkleaverton@nemont.net

P.64 Susan Leaverton e-mail: se-
leaverton@nemont.net

P. 40: Lindean and Grant Barnett

Christenson's mailing address should be 4383 Durston Road, not 4883. It is correct on the congregation page.

P. 48 Kathleen Larson Phillips' phone numbers have changed: study: 752-9612, x 278; home: 890-1299

P. 23: Peace Lutheran, Billings e-mail: peaceoffice@bresnan.net

P.53: add Larry Quanbeck, Interim, Redeemer Lutheran, 332 Riverview

3W, Great Falls, MT 59404, 453-2351,
lquanbeck001@luthersem.edu.

P.51: Les Nelson's correct address is 600 Parmenter Creek Rd, e-mail: lmnelson@kvis.net

Please let me know if you notice other errors or omissions.

Susan Hedahl,
shedahl@montanasynod.org

ELCA Church Council report

I would like to share a few impressions with you from my first meeting at the ELCA Church Council of November 13-15.

These were difficult days in our ELCA offices, as we decided to reduce the budget by 10%, and many positions were cut. Bishop Hanson spoke of how many who learned that their positions would be terminated, handled this news with humbling grace. In the new budget, we sought to be mindful of our strategic priorities. We have kept our commitments to new congregational starts, to churchwide staff assigned to synods for mission and stewardship work (our ELCA Director for Evangelical Mission: Dave Peters), to campus ministries, seminaries, companion churches and missionaries.

In reflecting on these decisions, Bishop Hanson said it well. "However one interprets the numbers, the consequences are the same, mission is diminished, lives are impacted and faith is tested." Concerning Ministry Policies, we passed a reinstatement process revision and considered drafts of ministry policy documents. You may read and comment on these at www.ELCA.org/ministryolicies

The time spent in Chicago was rich, and the schedule was full. Days began with breakfast meetings at 7 a.m. I met in a small group discussion with Beth Lewis, CEO of Augsburg Fortress. (Every congregation should, when possible, use Augsburg materials - consider it like "shopping locally.")

Much like a Synod Assembly, I

walked away from this weekend with a sense of gratitude for the varied and faithful ministries of our Church. I was glad to have met so many wonderful people who serve our church with passion and faith.

It crossed my mind that, part of my sadness in the face of some leaving our ELCA, is that these are people much like those I met on this weekend, passionate partners in the Gospel. May God guide us as we seek to minister together in the love which God has brought into our lives in the person of Jesus Christ.

Peace to you,
Pastor Phil Wold
Trinity, Sheridan, Wyoming

Montana Synod Hunger Networking Site

The Montana Synod Hunger Networking Site, **MT Hunger**, is up and running.

Here you can find news, commentary, pastor and hunger leader resources, congregational "best practices" and more. It is part of the ELCA "Table" the churchwide hunger and justice network site. MT Hunger presents a Montana focus and everyone can contribute, it is

our network. So join us at:

<http://elcaworldhunger.ning.com/group/mthunger>

Also checkout the "Table." A gathering place for those working with ELCA World Hunger to get ideas, get connected, and get inspired at:

<http://elcaworldhunger.ning.com>.

Mark Goetz, Montana Synod Hunger Coordinator

mgoetz@ceoexpress.com



LSTC's 2010 Youth in Mission programs will energize, inspire youth

"I am changed...I am empowered, inspired, energized, and loved," is how Grace Bodey describes her experience with *Serving Christ in the World*, one of Youth in Mission's (YIM) programs at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. The three-week exploration of vocation is designed for current high school sophomores and juniors who want

to learn about God, themselves, and ways they can use their gifts in service to others.

Youth spend two weeks in Chicago, including a three-day immigrant community immersion, and one week in Mexico.

YIM's next *Serving Christ in the World* program will be held June 13 - July 3, 2010. The application

deadline is February 17, 2010. To learn more about the program, visit www.lstc.edu/yim.

Kristin Johnson, Program Coordinator, Youth in Mission

773-256-0754

youthinmission@lstc.edu

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www.montanasynod.org

*Marked by the cross of Christ forever, abundantly
blessed, we faithfully serve God and neighbor.*

Calendar

January, 2010

18 Martin Luther King Day, Synod closed
31 Congregational Intentions due

February, 2010

5 Newsletter Deadline
6 NRIT Kathryn Love, Great Falls
17 Ash Wednesday
15 Lutheran Insert deadline
15 Parochials due
25-27 Synod Council, Great Falls
28 Bishop's Reports due

March, 2010

5 Newsletter deadline
12-16 Sabbath Reflections
14 Daylight Savings Time begins
15 Presidents' Day, Synod closed
15-17 NRIT Sabbath Reflections

April, 2010

16-18 LPA Great Falls & Epping, ND

January, 2010

Montana Synod Newsletter

+ The Montana Synod Newsletter is published monthly the 15th of each month. Articles for each publication are due in the synod office by the 5th of the month. E-mail your story ideas to Susan Hedahl, Newsletter Editor, at shedahl@montanasynod.org.

+ You are welcome to copy and use any part of this newsletter in your congregational announcements, bulletins, and/or newsletters. Consider forwarding it to your council members and other interested members.

+ The Montana Synod truly appreciates the assistance of the "Newsletter Ladies (and occasionally a husband)" from Redeemer Lutheran Church in Great Falls for assisting us in collating and mailing our newsletters, along with other mailings throughout the year. Thank you Ladies and Gents!

+ If you received the newsletter by USPS, you have either requested it in that format, or we don't have your e-mail. If you would prefer to receive it by e-mail, send us your e-mail address and we will send it to you next month in that format. (Send your e-mail address to shedahl@montanasynod.org)

+ You will need Adobe Reader to download the newsletter. For a free download of this software, go to:
<http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html?promoid=BONRM>