



# Montana Synod, ELCA

## Words from the Bishop: “God’s Work. Our Hands”



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In less than a month, pastors and lay people from across the Synod will be converging on Great Falls for the Montana Synod Assembly. Our theme this year is the ELCA’s tagline, “God’s work. Our hands.” And we mean it.

Our keynote speaker is the Rev. John Nunes, President and CEO of Lutheran World Relief. For over 60 years LWR has reached across the globe to help needy and suffering people. Beginning as an outreach of

sleeves and get to work!

This is the year in which we do business at the assembly. So we will consider resolutions on a variety of topics from human sexuality to financial wellness to bullying. We will elect a Synod Treasurer and Synod Vice President, and several other positions. We will also adopt a budget for 2012, and hear about the state of the synod from the synod bishop, and the state of the wider church from the churchwide representative. Bishop Richard Graham, of the Metropolitan Washington DC Synod, will bring the churchwide

U.S. Lutherans to European Lutherans displaced by World War II, the inter-Lutheran agency now provides relief and development in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Most of our congregations are involved in LWR hands-on projects, including quilt-making, assembling health and school kits, and selling Fair Trade coffee and chocolate. Our Synod’s own Kattie Sommerfield, who grew up at First English in Great Falls, coordinates Fair Trade for LWR, and will

report. Following the Assembly, he will be visiting various places in the Montana Synod to get a better sense of the church in the west. (He has invited me to do the same in their synod.)

Worship is always a highlight of our gatherings. Friday evening’s worship will feature a “Procession of Intentions” in which each congregation will bring forward its pledge for Mission Support for 2011. The Ugandan Orphans’ Choir will be singing for us, and we will welcome a new Synodically Authorized Worshipping Community,

be accompanying John Nunes to the Assembly. Our Sunday offering from congregations and individuals will go to Lutheran World Relief.

At the Assembly we are not just going to talk the talk of “God’s Work. Our hands.” We are going to walk the walk with hands-on service projects on Saturday afternoon, including making quilts, restocking food pantry shelves and assembling kits and more. Come prepared to roll up your

New Hope Lutheran Ministry of Great Falls. Morning devotions will feature Bishop Graham and Dr. Phyllis Anderson, President of Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary. At our closing Eucharist the preacher will be the Rt. Rev. C. Franklin Brookhart, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Montana, a full communion partner.

I hope to see you at the Synod Assembly!

In Christ,

The Rev. Jessica Crist,  
Bishop

# News Notes

## *Install*

**Rev. Roberta Smythe**, Galata Parish, 4/17/11 by Rev. John Allen, Associate to the Bishop

**Tim Christensen**, Gold Hill, Butte, 4/17/11, by Bishop Jessica Crist

## *Interim*

**Val Metropoulos**, Christ, Big Sandy and Messiah, Havre

## *Resigned Call*

**Cheryl Hoops**, American Parish, Harlem, Hogelund, Turner

## Congregations in Transition

**Key = V – Vacancy, I – Interim Assigned, S – Served by Seminary Intern, L – Served by LPA or SAM, C-Call Process Active (Interviewing Candidates)**

Arlee, V  
Big Sandy, V I C  
Billings, Good Shepherd, V I  
Billings, Peace, V I C  
Bozeman, Hope, V I Lead  
Broadus, V SAM  
Fairfield Parish, V, I C  
Great Falls, First English, V, I  
Hardin, First, V SAM

Havre, Messiah, V I  
Helena, Our Redeemer's Lead V I C  
Helena, St. John's V I  
Missoula, Prince of Peace, V  
Kalispell, Bethlehem, V I  
Laurel, V I C  
Missoula, Atonement, V I C  
White Sulphur Springs, V C



## Book of Faith Jubilee Report

Submitted by Lorie Hughes

The Book of Faith Jubilee was held from April 29 – May 1 at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, MN. I wish to thank the Montana Synod for covering my registration fee for the Jubilee. I had planned to be at Luther Seminary for the national board meeting for the Lutheran Associa-

tion of Christian Educators (LACE) from April 26-28, so it was wonderful to include the Jubilee in my trip.

Our LACE board meeting was very fruitful. I encourage all to look into LACE and consider membership for the Christian education leaders in your congregation. LACE is the

trusted voice in Christian education and faith formation in the ELCA. [www.faithfulteaching.org](http://www.faithfulteaching.org). You can also join online.

The Book of Faith Jubilee was subtitled, "Inspiring Everyday People to Engage the Bible." The 2½ days were full of inspirational worship

Continued on p. 7

## "Let's Talk"

You want to talk? We want to listen! The Montana Synod Mission Table is well into our "Let's Talk" emphasis and is committed to listening to and learning from your personal stewardship stories. "Let's Talk..." found it's voice, first with Synod Council members, then cluster deans and several others. The process continues.

To help us reach our ambitious goal of speaking to ALL those rostered in our synod (Yes! All!), "Let's Talk..." is on its way to the synod assembly. Our plan is to engage each of you where you gather and then if necessary to make our way "to the ends of the earth" to visit the rest in person.

Our goal is to talk to as many as possible at the assembly, then travel to all others. Please help to lighten our summer travel by setting up an appointment time at the assembly!

If you are one of those who have shared this experience with us...we loved listening to your stories! To those of you who have already committed to meeting with us at the assembly...we thank you for your willingness to participate. If you are one of those contemplating setting up an appointment...we say...there's no time like the present.

Please email Jeanne McCoskery at

[mcjeanne@bigsky.net](mailto:mcjeanne@bigsky.net). Questions are available to help you choose the focus for our conversation. Questions like: Who would you credit with your understanding of giving and the kind of giver you have become? How did you feel when you realized you were blessed to be a giver? Do you have a memorable stewardship illustration that you would like to share? What do you remember about your parent's giving practices?

We thank you for your participation.

The Montana Mission Table

## GiveBack/FeedBack



When someone says, "Let's talk stewardship!" what is your reaction? Someone once said, "You can't spell stewardship without the word 'stew!'" That's what many believe stewardship talk creates – A BIG STEW!

The Mission Table would like to talk stewardship with everyone in the Montana Synod. We'd like to hear what you have to say about mission and ministry, faith and hope, generosity and service. The only stew we want to stir up is a

through email, church bulletins, newsletters, etc. A request might look something like: **"What color should Bishop Crist dye her hair for Pentecost? Text "bishophair" to 84700 to answer!"**

Of course you want to text your opinion so you put in the number 84700 and in the message the keyword "bishophair" and receive back a message that includes the question and possible ways to answer, for example:

mixture of useful resources for all of us to use.

To do that we've created several methods to "talk" with one another – we call it "GiveBack/FeedBack." Here's how it works.

1) We'll ask a question (through email, your church's Sunday bulletin or newsletter, etc.). We want to take your creative thoughts and bright ideas and develop effective tools for enriching the lives of individuals and congregations.

**A) Fire red, B) Blood Red, C) Skittles Red, or D)Burnt umber."** If you decided the answer was, say, "C) Skittles Red" you will text back "C" and receive an interesting response. Your response will go into a data base to be tallied with others. This is going to be fun! In fact try it now! Let's see what a Pentecost "do" looks like! (please note standard text rates do apply).

Throughout the next 6 months we

2) There will be several ways for you to answer a question. One will be to call a 1-800 number and leave a reply. Another will be to text from your cell phone.

Here's what the texting portion will look like:

You, Average-Montana-Synod-Lutheran, will come into contact with a question and a text request from the Mission Table

will all have lots of opportunities to contribute ideas, imaginings, feedback, opinions, and more. Our sharing via text or 1-800# will help strengthen and renew our mission and ministry together. Watch for the first question and please "GiveBackFeedBack!"

**CUL8TR ;> )**

Pr. Dave Peters, DEM

## Worship Resources

### [Evangelical Lutheran Worship Simplified Keyboard Accompaniment: Liturgies](#)

Similar to the Simplified Keyboard Edition: Service Music and Hymns, this edition presents all ten settings of Holy Communion, the Service of the Word, and Morning and Evening Prayer from [Evangelical Lutheran Worship](#) in easier-to-play versions, especially suitable at the piano but useful also as a simpler organ version. Chord symbols for all the musical items are included with the keyboard score.

In oblong format with soft cover and spiral binding, this edition presents the simplified musical versions embedded into the complete orders of

service, including liturgical texts and notes, just as they appear in the standard liturgies accompaniment edition.

### [Evangelical Lutheran Worship Graphics CD-ROM](#)

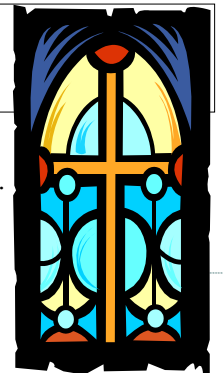
This CD-ROM includes more than 100 graphic images that appear in the Evangelical Lutheran Worship family of resources, including the assembly (pew) edition, Pastoral Care, and Occasional Services for the Assembly. Seasonal images from the Revised Common Lectionary ritual editions and images from Luther's Small Catechism gift edition are also included.

Color images are provided as both TIFF and JPG files; black and white

versions are provided as TIFF files. The Evangelical Lutheran Worship symbol font for both PC and Mac is also included. The enclosed User Guide provides a visual reference for each color image, making browsing and selection easy.

Pr. Gregory Villalon  
Congregational and Synodical Mission

[Gregory.Villalon@elca.org](mailto:Gregory.Villalon@elca.org)



## Announcements & Links

➡ This month's **Stories of Faith in Action** bulletin insert takes us to New City Parish, a coalition of nine ELCA congregations in inner-city Los Angeles. We, as members of the ELCA, are doing God's work in areas suffering from poverty, racism, injustice, and violence.

➡ **Summer Conference on Faith Formation, Discipleship, and Baptismal Living**

August 1-3, pastors, worship leaders, and educators will gather at the Mercy Center in Burlingame, CA (south of San Francisco International Airport) for the Annual Gathering of the North American Association for the Catechumenate. Featured speakers are **Mark Stamm** (SMU/Perkins School of Theology) and **Jessica Duckworth** (joining the faculty at Luther Seminary in July). More information and online registration available on the NAAC website at [www.catechumenate.org](http://www.catechumenate.org)

➡ **Way to go Montana Synod! WE MADE IT!**

Yet again, you've helped us reach the goal of 65% participation in the ELCA Board of Pensions' Health Risk Assessment. The Montana Synod made it to 78.4% with 124 people taking it, saving the synod, its congregations and ministries \$24,700 collectively.

➡ **Wanted: Fulltime Director of Worship & Music and Christian Education at Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church in Missoula, MT.** We are seeking a Spirit led individual to join with our mid-size congregation to share your musical and leadership gifts. Please submit a letter of application, resume, and three profession references to Immanuel Lutheran Church, Attn: Pastor Jordan, 830 South Ave W, Missoula MT 59801 or email [imlurchurch@imlurchurch.org](mailto:imlurchurch@imlurchurch.org).

➡ **PLTS Week of Renewal 2011: June 20-24, 2011,** with classes, worship, stimulating

conversation and restorative time at PLTS. Enjoy the company of old and new colleagues in ministry and lay people interested in theology in the beautiful setting between the Bay and Tilden Park. **Registration closes on May 31.** For additional information about fees for tuition, room and board, and to register, click [here](#).

➡ **The 2012 Domestic Hunger Grants application** and criteria will become available from May 16 to May 30 at [www.elca.org/domestic hunger grants](http://www.elca.org/domestic hunger grants)



## Our Redeemer of Nashua helps to fulfill one little boy's wish

The Sunday School children of Our Redeemer Lutheran of Nashua decided to use their offering to support the Heifer International Project. This project gives productive domestic animals to needy families both in other countries and our own. The recipients can build a herd or flock and get resources from the animals to help make their living easier.

The children were shown the animals available in the project. They then discussed what could be produced from the animals and they were given the prices of each during the first part of the Sunday School year last fall.

By the end of the fall session, their

collection showed a little over \$60.00. The children liked the "10 chickens for \$20.00" so the \$60.00 was sent in for three sets of chickens.

One little boy was upset. "But I want to buy a cow" he said. He was told that a cow costs \$500.00 and he just shrugged his shoulders.

So, throughout the long winter session, the collection plate was passed, but this time, adults were included. The Lenten offerings were added. The monthly fundraising taco feed was added. When the Fort Peck WELCA Spring Gathering heard of the story, they contributed.

The whole congregation was excited about one little boy's big dream, and now not only are they buying a cow, the children have decided to buy two goats, a llama and a pig.

By Mrs. Helen Robbins.





## What does it mean to live Lutheran Video Contest

A new ELCA video contest for 2011: **What does it mean to "live Lutheran"?** Entries accepted **May 17-June 30**.

We're so grateful for the positive response to "God's work. Our hands," our first ELCA video contest in 2009. Videos from that contest were seen and heard by members throughout this church. Thanks for your support!

We're delighted to host this new contest and give the members and congregations in your synod another opportunity to share their faith sto-

ries in video. ELCA members are everyday evangelists who bring the gospel message with them wherever they go. The ELCA is Christ's church with a place for each one of us. What does this mean for the members of your synod? How do they **live Lutheran** in today's world?

Congregations and individuals could win a **\$3,000 ministry grant** or a **\$1,500 cash prize**. There are also prizes for the congregation and individual entries receiving the most popular vote. **Plus, a selection of videos will be shown at**

**the 2011 ELCA Churchwide Assembly this August.**

Visit <http://www.livinglutheran.com/contest> starting May 3 to get the information you need, including tips to help everyone get started. **The contest will launch on May 17.**

**Scott J. Hendrickson**  
Director for Marketing Communications, ELCA  
[www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org)  
[www.livinglutheran.com](http://www.livinglutheran.com)

## HERE WE ARE – Praise...Procession...

It is always a privilege to worship together during our annual Synod Assembly. This year at Friday night's opening worship during the offering voting members will process to the altar with copies of their congregation's "Here We Are" estimate of giving form.

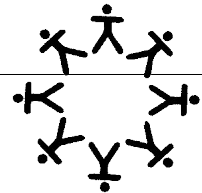
Every congregation in our synod is asked in the fall of the year to prayerfully consider what percentage of their income they will share with the wider church for ministries such as Global Mission, Congregational development and renewal,

Campus Ministry, Colleges and Seminaries, and much more. This "estimate of giving" helps our synod and churchwide to budget in a wise and faithful manner.

A copy of your congregation's "estimate of giving" form will be distributed to voting members at the registration table. Please be sure to pick one up and bring this to our opening worship. This year 45% of our congregations returned a form to the synod office. The total giving estimated from those is nearly \$700,000. Another 26% of our

congregations indicated on annual reports an amount they intend to give. That means 72% of our congregations have promised to share over \$915,000 for mission support. You might check to see what your congregation hopes to share with God's work throughout our synod, region, and world.

Pr. Dave Peters  
Director for Evangelical Mission



## Potlucks to end hunger

There is a grassroots movement led by two ELCA pastors that is sweeping the nation. ELCA members are whipping up Jell-O, cookies and casseroles -- not just for food and good company, but to end hunger. In 2009, 27 congregations across the country held potlucks to end hunger. In 2010, 137 congregations participated, raising more than

\$10,000. More than a dozen ELCA congregations are already registered for 2011. Will you join them? The idea is simple. Host a potluck at your congregation any time of the year and take a collection to benefit ELCA World Hunger. More information is available at <http://www.amonthofpotlucks.org/>

[resourcesconnections.com](http://resourcesconnections.com)  
Mark Goetz, Montana Synod Hunger Coordinator



## Assembly Items

+ We're e-mailed all assembly voting members last week with information concerning the upcoming Montana Synod Assembly. Voting members without e-mails will be required to gather all necessary information from their pastor. The pastor will be notified who those e-mail-less voting members are.

+ The **Pre-Assembly Reports Book** is available online at <http://www.montanasynd.org/synodAssembly.html>. All voting members should review these materials prior to the assembly. Items indicated with an \* should be printed and brought with you to the assembly (or, in the alternative, downloaded to your desktop). Wifi is

Fair Trade gifts, chocolate and coffee.

+ Friday evening's worship will include the **Ugandan Orphans Choir**. A bulletin insert is included to invite members of your congregation to listen to this choir Friday evening.

+ Service Projects are scheduled for Saturday afternoon. You will sign up after you register at the assem-

available throughout the Best Western Heritage Inn.

+ **Nominations for elections** are also posted on the website.

+ Once the **Resolutions** Committee has examined all resolutions and Memorials, they will be posted on the website.

+ Let us know how your **health kit and baby care kit** collections are coming along. Work with other congregations in your cluster to bring these items to the assembly. Let's try to make 100 Health Kits and 100 baby kits.

+ Since the hotel is providing a free breakfast buffet each day with your

bly. All options will be available on the website in the coming weeks.

+ All documents are on the synod website at: <http://www.montanasynd.org/synodAssembly.html>

Stay tuned for another e-mail soon for more exciting assembly news!

Susan Hedahl  
Assembly Coordinator

room reservation, the two Lutheran colleges, PLU and Concordia, along with the two seminaries, PLTS and Luther, are sponsoring a **FREE lunch** to all voting members on Saturday, June 4 at noon. Please e-mail Susan Smith at [ssmith@montanasynod.org](mailto:ssmith@montanasynod.org) or Susan Hedahl at [shedahl@montanasynod.org](mailto:shedahl@montanasynod.org) if you are interested in attending that **FREE lunch** so that we can have accurate numbers available for the chef.

+ **A LWR Fair Trade Fair** will be at the assembly, along with crocheted handbags and resources from Pr. Dick Hardel. Support Lutheran World Relief by purchasing

### God's Work. Our Hands.



## What is MartinsList.org?

It's About Resource Sharing...

We believe that there is an amazing amount of talent within our Network community. And all of us have developed resources to use within our ministry.

[MartinsList.org](http://MartinsList.org) is a web site for Network members. So you've written a Bible study that you think others might benefit from? You're probably right. Or you're looking

for something for a jr. high retreat on the Book of John?

[MartinsList.org](http://MartinsList.org) is a place to look! People within our community will upload things they've written that they're willing to share, and these items will be sortable by category. You'll probably have to do some adapting to make it fit your context, but it will be a great head-start!

It's open-source youth ministry! It's MartinsList

ELCA  
Youth Ministry Network

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



## Family Members of Prisoners

Not only does a prison congregation benefit the inmates who belong, it also provides their family members a sense of serenity. They can rest assured that their loved ones are being cared for by fellow sisters and brothers in Christ! Furthermore there is a trained professional who is providing pastoral care, Biblical and spiritual counsel, and teaching them to be disciples of the Lord. The loving, caring community of a prison congregation provides the spiritual support that can make a big difference in the coping and hoping ability for an inmate. Eighty three percent of those who belong to these congregations stay out of prison once they are released!

Knowing that their loved ones will have congregations outside prison to welcome them rather than shun them may be even more assur-

ing. These “returning citizens” need all the support and encouragement they can get as they work hard to be honest, positive, and productive. Finding a good paying job, securing a place to live, and earning the trust of others are just a few of the many challenges that a returning citizen faces.

Those who have loved ones serving time in prison can probably be found in every congregation whether they are known or acknowledged. When they are acknowledged and supported by the pastor and by others in the congregation, their concern for their loved one is shared; and their burden is lessened. The quilting ladies in a congregation I served several years ago made two kite quilts and gave them to the parents who had sons in prison. (The kite symbol is used by Prison Congregations of America to represent the ministry of

Christ among the incarcerated). The parents were touched and appreciative that their congregation supported them as their sons continued serving out their sentences.

I am looking forward to establishing this new ministry in the Montana Synod. From the stories I hear from other states that have prison congregations we are in for some wonderful spiritual adventures! When congregations become involved in meaningful, needed ministry, many transformations occur and Christ is glorified in the process.

Please visit our website for more information and updates:  
[www.ficprisonministry.com](http://www.ficprisonministry.com).

Rev. Greg Karlsgodt

## Congregation Observers at the Churchwide Assembly

Each congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is invited to register with the secretary of this church one congregation observer prior to May 31, 2011. Such individuals have reserved seating in the observers section of the plenary hall and receive a copy of the report of recommendations for assembly ac-

tion and materials distributed on the plenary floor to voting members, advisory members, and non-voting members during the assembly. Observers have neither voice nor vote in plenary sessions of the assembly. A registration fee of \$150 has been established by the secretary of this church for administrative costs and materials. Observers may purchase

the same meals as are provided for voting members. Transportation costs, housing, and related expenses shall be the responsibility of the registered observer or sending congregation.

Call 800-638-3522, ext. 2840 for more information.

## Book of Faith Jubilee Report

Continued from p. 2

services, Bible studies, keynote speakers, workshops, and a resource fair. Networking galore was a highlight for many participants.

My favorite part of the Jubilee was the session led by John Roberto on “The Future of Faith Formation and the Bible.” He also led a bonus session sponsored by LACE following the Jubilee. John is the president

and founder of LifelongFaith Associates. He introduced the Faith Formation 2020 Initiative that guides churches to envision and design faith formation in this second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century – to imagine the possibilities for 2020. The presentation and handouts are available on his website: [www.LifelongFaith.com](http://www.LifelongFaith.com). This session offered a fascinating way to

help churches look at faith formation.

Lorie Hughes  
LACE Secretary/Historian  
Christian Education Coordinator  
King of Glory Lutheran Church  
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**[www.montanasynod.org](http://www.montanasynod.org)**

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

## Calendar

May, 2011

## Montana Synod Newsletter

### May, 2011

16 Newsletter posted to website  
18 Heritage Inn Reservation Deadline  
20-22 Clergy Spouses Retreat  
22 LSS-MT Sunday  
30 Memorial Day Holiday

### June, 2011

2 ReFirement-BOP, Bethel, Great Falls  
3 Montana Synod Council, Great Falls  
3-5 Montana Synod Assembly, Heritage Inn,  
Great Falls  
5 Newsletter deadline  
6 Synod office closed  
15 Newsletter posted to website

### July, 2011

4 July 4th Holiday  
5 Newsletter deadline  
12-16 WELCA Triennial in Spokane

### August, 2011

Montana Synod insert in The Lutheran  
5 Newsletter Deadline  
5-6 Come and Worship, 1st Lutheran, Havre

**+ The Montana Synod Newsletter is published on the 15th of each month. Articles are due in the synod office by the 5th. E-mail your story ideas to Susan Hedahl, Newsletter Editor, at [shedahl@montanasynod.org](mailto:shedahl@montanasynod.org).**

**+ Please use any part of this newsletter in your congregational announcements, bulletins, and/or newsletters. Consider forwarding the newsletter to your council members and others.**

### Montana Synod, ELCA

Rev. Jessica Crist, Bishop

Rev. John Allen, Associate to the Bishop

Rev. Dave Peters, Associate to the Bishop, Director for Evangelical Mission

Susan Hedahl, Executive Assistant  
Communications, Assembly, Roster, Financial

Susan Smith, Administrative Assistant  
Mobility, Candidacy, LPA Programs