



Montana Synod, ELCA

Volume 2010, Issue 7

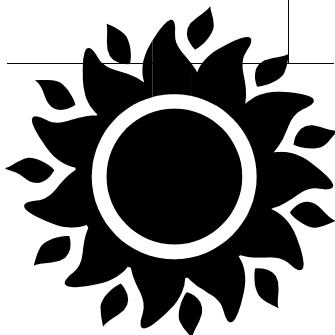
July 15, 2010



Words From the Bishop— “ I am the bread of life.”

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As Christians we are nourished and fed by our faith in the living God. We are strengthened and sustained by the one who lived and died for us and for all people, who fed the hungry and healed the sick, who knew what it was to suffer. Jesus. The Bread of Life. The one who fed the 5000, who was known to his friends in the breaking of the bread. The one who gave his body as bread, his blood as wine. Having tasted that bread, we are his forever.

Following Jesus means that we live for others.

inspiring.

And yet we can do more. And I am not talking about doubling our offerings (although we could). I am talking about multiplying our impact. Bread for the World, the Christian hunger advocacy group, was founded on the principle that no matter what resources the religious communities can come up with, the US government has far more. Across the US, religious and charitable groups contribute \$5 billion to hunger programs. The federal government has 16 times that much.

Following Jesus means that we feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the prisoners, speak out for the oppressed. In our church we have a highly reputable World Hunger program. Individual and congregational donations to our ELCA World Hunger program make an enormous difference in the lives of millions of people. One of the reasons that our hunger dollars are so effective is that our regular benevolence to the Church pays the overhead. So our world hunger dollars can go directly to feeding the

So, in addition to feeding our neighbors through our charitable donations, we can exercise our rights as citizens, and petition our government to direct resources to address hunger. Right now the Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act is stalled in Washington. Everybody is in favor of feeding hungry children. But the question is how much. The White House has requested \$10 billion extra over the next ten years. The House version of the Bill has trimmed that to \$8 billion. And the Senate bill has trimmed it to \$4.5 billion.

hungry, aiding the displaced, and providing relief and development.

For Christians, fed by the Bread of Life, feeding the hungry isn't optional. It is who we are, it is one of the ways that we respond to the Christ who gave his life so that all might live. Some of us run food pantries or soup kitchens in our congregations or communities. Some of us do fundraisers for World Hunger, organize CROP walks, make personal and congregational donations to World Hunger. All of that adds up to such an outpouring of love. It is

You can contact your Senators and Representative and ask them to support the bill at the \$10 billion level. Ten billion sounds staggering, doesn't it? But so does the cost of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. So does the cost of the Gulf cleanup. So does the cost of so many other programs that we pay for out of our tax dollars.

“As you did it for the least of these, my brothers and sisters, you did it for me.”

Bishop Jessica Crist

News Notes

Call Accepted

Charlane Lines, from PLTS to Pella, Sidney, Associate Pastor, 8/1/10

Disability

Louise Christensen, Froid-Ebenezer Parish, effective 3/20/10

Barbara Westhoff, Westby Parish, effective 7/4/10

Interim

Val Metropoulos, to Big Sandy, 5/30/10

Left the ELCA

Valier Lutheran Church, 6/20/10
American Lutheran, Winifred, 6/27/10

On Leave from Call

Loren Gustafson, 6/1/10

Michael Dahle, 5/21/10

Resigned from ELCA

Joel Walde, First Lutheran, Dillon, 6/13/10

Retire

Michael Borge, Gold Hill Evangelical Lutheran, Butte, 7/1/10

Synod Council Call

Tamara Bull, AiM, Interim Pastoral Ministry, 6/4/10

Transfer

Sarah Meckler, olfc to St. Paul Lutheran, Lodi, Calif., 6/13/10

Sara Beth Akre, from Interim, Pella, Sidney, to Good Shepherd, Bismarck, ND 5/15/10

Congregations in Transition

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

Big Sandy, V, I
Billings, King of Glory, V I
Billings, Peace, V
Butte, Gold Hill, V
Broadus, V
Chester, V
Cody, WY, Trinity, V I
Cut Bank, St. Paul's, V I
Galata, V
Fairfield Parish, V I
Hardin, First, V
Havre, Messiah, V
Helena, Our Redeemer's Senior V, I
Laurel, V
Missoula, Atonement, Senior & Associate, V I
White Sulphur Springs, V



Watch for your Ecumenical Survey!

Dear Friends in Christ,

I have a favor to ask of you and members of your congregation that will aid in my work as the ecumenical intern for our synod. In the coming months, I will be conducting an "ecumenical audit" of the synod, endeavoring to discover all the many ways in which congregations of the Montana Synod engage in ecumenical ministry.

In order to do this, I will be e-mailing a survey about ecumenical activities to all congregations and ministries. The favor I ask is that you consider who in your congregation or ministry would like to take charge of filling out the survey (pastor, church council president, Sunday school coordinator, secretary, or someone else that is looking for a way to participate in the leadership of the church). Having a point person to contact regarding the survey would be incredibly helpful for me as I work on this project.

Keep a lookout for the survey in your congregation's in-box in the coming weeks and feel free to contact me with any questions, comments, suggestions or concerns (406-750-3956; sylvia.c.bull@gmail.com). I'm looking forward to hearing all about your ecumenical connections and ministries!

Blessings,

Sylvia Bull

All the news from the Rocky Boy's Reservation is not bad these days!

Earlier this year Our Saviour's Lutheran Church applied for a 3-year grant from the ELCA Deaconess Community which would help fund the Servant Event Ministry done there during the months of June, July, and August of 2010, 2011, and 2012. The first year of the grant was funded for \$9,000 as of July 1, 2010. (The requested amount was \$9,100.) This grant will help pay for salaries and honorarium of members of the Chippewa Cree tribe who are working with the Servant Event participants, as well as the room, board, and salaries of camp counselors from Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp who will be bringing Vacation Bible School to the children of the Rocky Boy's Res-

ervation. Various other expenses associated with the Servant Events will also be met through this grant.

We are rejoicing at Our Saviour's that our request for flood disaster relief for the people of the Rocky Boy's Reservation has touched the hearts of so many people. Through the work of our Montana representative, Cliff Haaland, Our Saviour's has received funds from Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR). People across the country have responded to our appeal and donations have been coming in. So far we have used this money to help buy needed food and supplies for many people. The Tribe continues to be stretched almost to the breaking point finan-

cially to repair roads, bridges and culverts, and water lines. Some of the villages and individual homes on the Reservation continue to be without water because of broken lines. Many homes need to be cleaned out and sanitized.

If you are interested, we are trying to keep the pictures updated on our website (www.oslcrb.org) concerning the conditions and work going on here.

Please rejoice with us in our good news and pray with us through the rough times that continue.

God's peace to you and all your relatives.

Pastor Linda Webster

LPA Inquiry Meeting

LPA Inquiry Meeting
August 29, 2010, 3:00
Bethel Lutheran, Great Falls

A new LPA Class will be starting this fall. If you are interested and want to learn more about being an LPA in our Synod, you may want to attend this INQUIRY MEETING. You will have the opportunity to ask questions, find out about the commitments to this pro-

gram, and begin enrollment, if you so desire. This meeting could also be attended by clergy who have been asked to mentor an LPA.

The Synod Website has the Handbook and Guidelines for Clergy and Congregations.

www.montanasyndod.org/laytraining. Seeking out this document may provoke questions and also tell you about

the history of this important ministry.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact Susan Smith at the Synod office, ssmith@montanasynod.org or contact Kathy Johnson at kathy_johnson@bresnan.net.

THE WORLD IS COMING TO MONTANA!

MEET THEM IN BILLINGS AUGUST 6-7!

This is your last opportunity/notice to bring a group from your congregation to the Glocal Mission Gathering in Billings August 6-7. Several presenters are "international," real people coming from places in the news--like Haiti and Palestine! (access bios here.)

This event can help members get a

bigger picture of the great things the ELCA is doing around the world and locally, and help get new information and inspiration for doing mission!

Register: Online is easiest.

www.elca.org/globalevents

Or call: 1/800/638/3522

How much? \$35 each (includes 3 global meals!)

Block of Rooms: Riverstone Billings Inn 1/800/231-7782, or (406)

252-6800, rbiinfo@riverstone-inns.com

Paul & Kay Hanson, Global Mission Coordinators

If you prefer to register by snail mail, there is an attached group form here. Make checks out to "ELCA Billings Local Account" and mail to King of Glory.

Announcements & Links

+ **The Parish Paper** is available [here](#).

+ Rev. Bradn Buerkle's latest Missionary [newsletter](#) from Russia

+ Kari and Justin Eller's [Newsletter from Bolivia](#)

+ This month's [bulletin insert](#) "Planning for a Faithful Future" highlights Our Redeemer Oromo Evangelical Church, which has doubled its membership since 2001. Our Redeemer is one of the fastest growing congregations in the ELCA Minneapolis Area

Synod. The congregation is full of energy for outreach and evangelism.

+ ELCA Presiding Bishop Says **Time for Immigration Reform is Now**. To read the entire release, click here: <http://www.elca.org/News/Release.s.asp?a=4576>

+ **New to Select Learning** Bible Tutor is an award-winning interactive study tool that takes you on an engaging, comprehensive journey through the Bible. [Select Learning, ELCA](#)

+ **LWF ASSEMBLY BEGINS THIS MONTH** in Stuttgart, Germany. Join your thoughts and prayers with Lutherans from around the world. Find resources at www.elca.org/lwf and click the links under The Lutheran World Federation Eleventh Assembly in the middle of the page.

+ The new MAC-LMI (Montana Association of Churches—Lay Ministry Institute) brochure with new course offerings starting this fall is available [here](#).

LSS Adoption Services

We, at Lutheran Social Services feel blessed and honored to be involved in the miracle of adoption. One of the highlights of this work is seeing an adoptive family's dreams come true. The story that follows is an example of one couple's journey to build their family through adoption.

To say we are excited would be an understatement. Words cannot express the joy Ava has brought to our lives. We still watch over her as she sleeps

and wonder how "we" were blessed with such a healthy, beautiful baby. She is the center of our worlds. The past seven months have been filled with many visits from families and close friends. Just last week my closest friend visited from Texas just to see Ava! Ava has captured everyone's heart and we all just cannot get enough of her infectious smile and beautiful bright blue eyes! Our thoughts often go back to the birthmother and we pray she is doing well. We truly hope there is a day when

she is a part of our lives in some capacity. Ava turned eight months yesterday and is a busy, busy baby. Two weeks ago she got her first tooth and she is rolling and army crawling everywhere. She loves to throw her "binkie" then chase after it. She has learned how to clap her hands and loves to sing The Itsy Bitsy Spider. We are very proud parents.

Submitted by: Sheila Howe, LSS, Director of Adoption Services

Social Media and Boundaries Training

Barbara Keller, Consultant for Misconduct Prevention, Vocation and Education Unit, deployed Churchwide staff, will be coming to Montana in September, with two opportunities to hear her.

First, she will be presenting a **Social Media Workshop** to provide guidelines for congregations trying to stay current with all of the social

media changes we use to communicate quickly. September 9th in the evening at Our Savior's Lutheran in Great Falls.

On Friday, September 10, at Our Savior's, Barbara will be providing a **Boundaries Training** for Rostered and Lay Leaders. If you haven't taken a Boundaries training yet,

now's the time!

Check the NRIT website at www.nrit.org or watch for your Fall, 2010 Course Offerings brochure coming in the mail to you soon.

GROWING IN GOD'S FIELD 2010 "GOD'S STORY – GOING VIRAL"

Look around...SUNFLOWERS abound! SUNFLOWERS are everywhere this time of year - each one, reminding us to circle our calendars for October 8th and 9th. GROWING IN GOD'S FIELD "God's Story – Going Viral*" is our theme for 2010. (*Viral is an internet term for a story going everywhere at once.)

It's GROWING IN GOD'S FIELD time...time for the Montana Synod to gather again in Helena for a weekend of worship and workshops, evangelism and education, learning and listening and of course for GROWING.

Let the SUNFLOWERS of this season set the stage for your congregation's publicity and planning. Encourage attendance by offering a GIGF III Sign-Up Sunday. Imagine a sanctuary with SUNFLOWERS everywhere. Deck the halls with publicity posters of SUNFLOWERS created by the children. Who could resist a frosted SUNFLOWER cookie?

In both 2002 and 2008 congregations sent participants to Helena with great expectations. They were not disappointed. One participant said "It was like a family reunion." Another said, "I made so many new friends."

On Friday afternoon, October 8th, Registration and Welcome will take place in the lobby of Helena's Red

Lion Colonial Inn. Festive Opening Worship, at Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church, with Bishop Jessica Crist preaching, will set the tone for this all-synod event. Friday evening will conclude with a tasty reception and plenty of opportunity for fellowship following the service.

On Saturday, October 9th, our day will begin with a full breakfast followed by morning devotions of prayer and praise. All Saturday activities and meals will be conveniently held at the hotel. The Rev. Mark Gravrock will lead us in "Engaging the Scriptures" focused on John 15:1-17. A well balanced menu of workshops with a variety of topics and presenters will be offered both in the morning and afternoon.

Ministry Models relating to "God's Story – Going Viral" will provide opportunity to experience how new techniques and advanced technology have influenced our ability to communicate and "tell the old, old story of Jesus and his love".

The Rev. Dick Hardel, of Youth and Family Institute fame, will highlight our day and send us on our way with his special brand of inspiration and enthusiasm. Hardel will address the question "What is God up to?" in relation to all that we experienced in our

time together .

Saturday's speaker has been scheduled to allow participants to make their way home for Sunday if necessary. Others may wish to spend Saturday night and worship with local sister congregations. As some of you may remember, GIGF and snowflakes seem to attract each other. Come prepared.

Registration materials are available on line and through the synod office at www.montanasynd.org in the next few weeks. A mailing will be going out to Congregations soon. The larger the group registered from each congregation the better the discount. Best price Pre-registration deadline is September 15th, 2010.

The GIGF III Logo will be online for your use. We encourage you to be creative in the many ways you spread the word that another GROWING IN GOD'S FIELD is coming to the Montana Synod.

Look around...SUNFLOWERS abound!

Jeanne McCoskery, GIGFIII leader

If you missed it at assembly see the GIGF III crew in action on YouTube!
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FXscFg2Gu2o>

Circle of Trust Retreat for Clergy

What: Introductory Circle of Trust Retreat for Clergy and Leaders of all Faiths Based on the work of Parker J. Palmer.

Where: Mountain Top Retreat Center, Bozeman, MT

When: November 15 -17, 2010

"Renewing personal identity, professional integrity and vocational vitality are the heart of the unique Courage to Lead retreat program

created for pastors and other serving professionals by highly skilled facilitators under the guidance of Dr. Parker J. Palmer over the past decade.

A Courage to Lead *circle of trust retreat* is an opportunity for participants to engage "alone together" at a deep level with true self and unique calling. "Real lives" are not separate from what occurs in a circle of trust retreat, and most past participants say that the experience

has a great impact on their personal and professional lives.

An invitation along with complete retreat information is located on our Newsletter Webpage.

Courage
TO *Lead*®

Respond to a draft message on Disabilities

"The Draft of a message on disabilities is now posted for review and comment on the ELCA web site. It is available, along with additional information at

www.elca.org/disabilitiesmessageThe 2009 CWA authorized the development of this social message after being memorialized by 8 synods. We are encouraging the use of e-mail responses, but letters are welcome. The general comment period runs through August 15.

There are two ways of sending in your written response:

* E-mail: Send your written response no later than August 15, 2010, by e-mail to: Juli.Bev@elca.org

* Letter: Letters with written responses may be mailed by August 15 to:

Disabilities Message
ELCA Church in Society
8765 W Higgins Rd.
Chicago, IL 60631-4101

Tips for Respondents:

Include your name, address and other contact information in your response. If you are responding as, or on behalf of, a group, please include the names of members of the group and the name of your congregation, synod, or social ministry organization. Indicate what the strengths of the first draft are and what you like in it as well as what you do not like or what you

think is missing. Suggest ways in which you think the draft should be changed and strengthened.

When referring to specific passages or language in the draft, please note the line numbers whenever possible. Be as clear and concise as possible in expressing your thoughts and ideas. This will help the re-writing process.

If you can, suggest alternate language to the parts of the text you are commenting about. This helps to give a clear idea of how you think it could be changed and strengthened."

ELCA Office of Church and Society

NRIT Fall Schedule

Luther Lectures – Dr. Robert Jenson
Oct 14-15 at Chico Hot Springs

Old Testament Lessons for Year A – Dr. Tom Lee
Oct 18 at Redeemer in Great Falls
Oct 19 at First Lutheran in Havre
Oct 20 at First Lutheran in Wolf Point

Biblical Responses to Suffering and Evil – Dr. Kathryn Schifferdecker
Nov 5 at Trinity Lutheran in Choateau

The Gospel of Matthew – Dr. Ray Pickett
Nov 11 at Bethlehem in Kalispell
Nov 12 at Atonement in Missoula
Nov 13 at American in Billings

For more information, contact NRIT:

Jenny Kunka, Director
j.kunka@nrit.org

Watch for your Fall, 2010 Course Offerings coming in the mail to soon!

Facebook

Did you know the Montana Synod has a Facebook page? Yes, we do! Thanks to Pr. Adam Barnhart, (Gloria Dei, Butte) for setting it up. See it [here](#) or go to Facebook.com and search for Montana Synod. Become a fan and add your photos to our page.

St. Elizabeth's in Ekalaka has started building their new church. Check out the progress on Facebook [here](#).

"Millions of people use Facebook everyday to keep up with friends, upload an unlimited number of photos, share links and videos,

and learn more about the people they meet."



Wheat Ridge Ministries Offering Grants to Support Sabbatical Experiences for Pastors

Wheat Ridge Ministries is offering ministry sabbatical grants to Lutheran congregations to support and encourage the health and wellness of clergy in their congregation. The Ministry Sabbatical Grant Program aims to increase healthy ministry by promoting a sabbatical leave for rest and renewal to support the whole person health of the Lutheran ministry leader and the congregation.

Any Lutheran congregation developing a ministry sabbatical plan for its pastor(s) within the grant guidelines may apply. Matching grants of up to \$7,500 will be awarded to Lutheran congregations and clergy

planning their first sabbatical experience.

Grant funds may be invested in the following ways: salary and benefits for additional staff during the sabbatical period; costs related to assistance provided by a sabbatical interim worker; travel expenses related to the sabbatical experience; education expenses related to the sabbatical experience. The grant may not be used for general congregation operating expenses, purchase of equipment, academic sabbaticals or any other expenses not related to the sabbatical plan.

Congregations interested in apply-

ing can visit www.wheatridge.org to review the requirements and determine whether the grant is appropriate for their needs and to download a grant application. **The deadline for grant applications is January 15, 2011.** Awards will be made in March, 2011. Questions may be referred to the Wheat Ridge office by e-mail at grants@wheatridge.org or by phone at 800.762.6748.

Wheat Ridge is also pleased to provide many other valuable resources for sabbatical rest and renewal through its Ministry Sabbatical Resource Center online at www.wheatridge.org/sabbaticals.

Is your congregation a missionary church?

“MISSIONAL” is an adjective related to missionary. Is your congregation a missionary church?

Missional is about hope – growth and blossoming, where our faith leads us, new life, vision, future, where God urges us to go and grow. What’s the hope you are living out through your congregation?

If your congregation would like some assistance in focusing your vision (seeing where God might be leading you) or planning the steps to take you to God’s preferred future please contact me.

Pr. Dave Peters, Director for Evangelical Mission

406-655-7727

dpeters@montanasynod.org

“If you want to build a ship, don’t summon people to buy wood, prepare tools, distribute jobs, and organize the work, rather teach people the yearning for the wide boundless ocean.” Antoine de Saint-Exupery



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www.montanasynod.org

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

Calendar

July, 2010

Montana Synod Newsletter

July, 2010

26-29 NRIT Christikon CE Retreat

August, 2010

Montana Synod in The Lutheran Insert

5 Newsletter deadline

6-7 Glocal Mission Gathering, Billings

September, 2010

5 Newsletter deadline

6 Labor Day Holiday, office closed

9 Barbara Keller, Social Media

10 Barbara Keller, Boundaries

9-12 WELCA Immersion, Rocky Boy's

17-18 Synod Council, Great Falls

October, 2010

5 Newsletter deadline

8-10 Growing in God's Field III

14-15 NRIT, Luther Lectures, Chico

18-20 MAC assembly, Great Falls

November, 2010

5 Newsletter deadline

11-13 NRIT Gospel Road Show

12-13 MLYO Fall Gathering

+ **The Montana Synod Newsletter is published monthly on or about 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.**

+ **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=B>

ONRM