

Montana Synod Newsletter

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From the Bishop—“Freed in Christ to Serve.”

When you read this article, the Churchwide Assembly will be in session in Orlando, Florida. Twelve voting members, elected at the 2010 Montana Synod Assembly, will join approximately 1000 other voting members from around the Church to do the business of the Church. These volunteers are giving up a week of their summer to vote on resolutions and budgets, constitutional changes and a social statement. Please keep them in your prayers, and thank them if you get a chance. And feel free to invite them to your congregation and your fall cluster meetings, in order to hear from them di-

rectly. If you are reading this, pass it on. Pass on the newsletter, pass on the article, pass on the information about accessing the Churchwide Assembly. Here is our group: Pastor Carol Karres is a retired pastor living in Sidney and serving on the Synod’s Candidacy Committee. Jim Allen of Great Falls, is about to start his freshman year at Concordia College, Mike Young, newly-elected Synod Vice President, is a Billings-based health care consultant. Pastor Dan Heskett serves Northridge in Kalispell, and is Dean of the Flathead Cluster. Sandy Lange of Choteau, is on the Church-

wide Board of the Women of the ELCA. Wayne Saverud, of Kalispell, works for Immanuel Lutheran Corporation. Trudi Schmidt is a State Legislator from Great Falls, and a member of the Synodically Authorized Worshiping Community, New Hope. Tonia Fisher-Clark, is an LPA and a member of King of Glory in Billings. Lee Christianson is an active member of First Lutheran in Havre, and works for Thrivent. Pastor Tim Tostengard serves American Lutheran in Billings, and is Dean of the Shepherd Cluster. Amanda Gerber is a college student from Libby. As Bishop, I am the twelfth

member of the group. And Pastor Phil Wold, of Sheridan, Wyoming, will be there as a member of the ELCA Church Council.

You can keep track of what is going on at the Churchwide Assembly several ways. One way is to watch the streaming video feed at www.elca.org. You can watch in live time the presentations, debates, bible studies and more. Another way is to follow the blog that our synod group will have. Go to www.soulcafe.org, sign up, and go to the Montana Synod page, where you will

find a link to our blog. Soul Café is an experiment in communications we are engaged in in the synods of Region I (the Northwest). It is a great way to get information and make connections not only across the synod, but across all our synods in the northwest. Check it out.

So what will we do for five days at the Assembly? We’ll have daily worship and prayer. We’ll study scripture. We’ll listen to presentations from staff, from volunteers, from visiting dignitaries. We’ll grapple togeth-

er with the theme: “Freed in Christ to Serve.” We’ll look at the report of the LIFT Task Force, prayerfully consider what kinds of structure and governance will help us be effective witnesses to the Gospel of Jesus Christ in our complex world today and in the future. We’ll debate and vote on the genetics social statement, and discuss why we as a church have social statements. We’ll adopt a budget, look at constitutional changes, hear memorials from synods, elect people to churchwide boards.

The Churchwide Assem-

Watch streaming video of the 2011 Churchwide Assembly in Orlando [here](#)”

News Notes



Call Accepted

Will Sappington, from NW Wash. Synod, to Peace, Billings

Joel Skindlov, from Luther Seminary, to Christ, Big Sandy and Messiah, Havre, July, 2011

Death

Mark Lundquist, Chaplain, Benefis Hospital, Great Falls, in Austin, Texas, 7/21/11.

Barbara Hickel, AIM, Au-

gust 8, 2011, in Billings.

Install

Audrey Rydbom, Trinity in Cody, WY, 6/26/11, by Pr. Kim Wilker.

Joel Skindlov, Christ, Big Sandy and Messiah, Havre, 8/7/11, by Associate to the Bishop John Allen.

Jason Pollington, Grace and St. Paul, Fairfield, 7/17/11, by Bishop Crist

Interim

Val Metropoulos, from Big Sandy, Messiah, Havre, to First English, Great Falls, 7/7/11

Left the ELCA

Melville Lutheran Church, 7/24/11

Ordination

Jason Pollington, Grace and St. Paul Lutheran, Fairfield, 7/17/11, by Bishop Jessica Crist

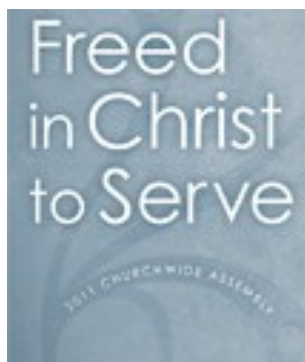
Joel Skindlov, Zion Lutheran, Spokane, Wash., 7/16/11, by Bishop Crist

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
Billings, Good Shepherd, V I
Billings, Messiah, V I
Bozeman, Hope, V I Lead
Broadus, V SAM
Columbus, V
Frenchtown, Valley of Christ, V
Great Falls, First English, V, I
Hardin, First, V SAM
Helena, Our Redeemer's Lead V C

Helena, St. John's V I
Missoula, Prince of Peace, V
Kalispell, Bethlehem, V I
Laurel, V I
White Sulphur Springs, V



From the Bishop (continued)

bly is people like you and me, clergy and laity from across the country, elected by their Synod Assemblies from congregations across the whole church. We are as diverse in our backgrounds and opinions and experiences as this whole church is. But we are united in our love

of the Church, the Body of Christ. We are united in our commitment to be faithful witnesses to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We are united in our desire to serve God and neighbor.

Your partner in ministry,

Bishop Jessica Crist

God's work. Our hands.

Freedom in Christ – Prison Congregation Update



The months of June and July were spent in the interview process for a pastor to serve the future prison congregation at the Montana State Prison in Deer Lodge. In June the Call Committee (a sub-committee of the Freedom in Christ Task Force which included the Religious Activity Coordinator from the prison) had phone interviews with four pastoral candidates. From the four the Call Committee chose

two candidates to have face-to-face interviews. This took place in late July. One was chosen to extend the Call for the prison congregation. Now we wait as the candidate discerns if he will accept the Call. Thank you for your prayers for the candidate and his family as they go through this process.

The Call Committee feels very good about the gifts, skills, experience and the

faith character of the candidate. He is familiar with the Prison Congregations of America model of a prison congregation which is the model we want to use at the prison.

While we wait we continue to conduct worship services through volunteers the first Sunday of each month for the inmates at the prison work dorm.

We thank you for your on-

going support of this special ministry through your prayers and financial gifts.

God's Work Our Hands,

Pastor Chris Flohr
Freedom in Christ Prison
Congregation Task Force

Margie P. Fiedler Named as New Executive Director

The Board of Directors is excited to announce that Margie P. Fiedler has accepted the call to be the next Executive Director of Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp. Margie will begin her new position on Sept. 1, 2011.

Margie grew up in South Dakota and worked at Lutheran summer Bible camps throughout high school and college. For the last seven

years, Margie has served as Associate Vice President of Marketing for the ELCA's Mission Investment Fund, serving six synods: All of Region 1 and Western North Dakota.

Stewardship, youth, camping, hospitality, and global mission are among her passions. She has also worked with the planning team for the ELCA National Youth

Gathering for over 20 years. Margie loves to write, and has written Augsburg Fortress curriculum for Sunday school, confirmation, and outdoor ministries.

Margie enjoys hiking, skiing, canoeing, reading, traveling, and baking. Son Jesse 19, daughter Mica, 12, and stay-at-home-dad Al, round out the family. For years, Margie has started the New Year

with a "Polar Bear Plunge," and her favorite food is ice-cream. She even takes dehydrated when she backpacks!

Please share your FLBC story with Margie! She would love to be invited to your congregation, women's group, etc. Please contact Margie after September 1 at margie@flbc.net or call her at 752-6602.

September 11 Worship Resources

The Worship Committee of the Metro D.C. Synod has developed a resource to commemorate the anniversary of September 11. See "Events" at www.metrodcelca.org

Karen Krueger, Communications Coordinator, Metro D.C. Synod, ELCA

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[Worship Resources](#) from the ELCA Worship Formation and Liturgical Resources Dept.

The [Delaware Maryland Synod](#) has given permission to share this link to resources found on their

website.

Additional resources may be added, so continue to check back on each site between now and September.



## Announcements & Links



- [August's Stories of Faith in Action Bulletin Insert](#) highlights a small but important gift that we as members of the ELCA have given to new congregations. Iglesia Luterana La Vela, a Spanish-speaking new start in North Carolina, received a communion vessel set commissioned for use at the 2009 ELCA Church-wide Assembly. As they use these hand-crafted vessels, the members of this new mission congregation feel welcomed and valued by their fellow members of our church. We are united in doing God's work. Please share this good news with your congregations.
- [The Parish Paper](#) is available for download. Find additional free resources from the Parish Paper website: [www.TheParishPaper.com](http://www.TheParishPaper.com)
- See the MTSWO special edition newsletter highlighting the 8th Triennial Convention and Gathering that was held in Spokane, Washington this July [here](#)

## Montana Synod Campus Ministries Awarded \$30,000 Thrivent Foundation Development Grant!

The Lutheran Student Foundation of Montana, with campus ministries in Bozeman and Missoula, was recently awarded a \$30,000 up front grant for a two-year project called **Building the Future Together** from the Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Foundation. The grant also includes the opportunity for the Lutheran Student Foundation to receive a 2-1 challenge grant

of \$25,000 if they are able to raise \$50,000 by August of 2013.

The **Building the Future Together** project will start this fall and has a dual purpose of both growing future leaders of the church and building partnerships between campus ministry and congregations and friends in the Montana Synod. The primary idea is to

have a team of students at both of our campus ministry sites who will be trained, rehearsed and eager to go out into congregations to lead campus ministry style worship events on Sunday mornings. They will also be trained and ready to lead youth events or classes as well. Already there are core groups of students at each site who are excited about this project and will be ready

to go this fall.

Through this project the Lutheran Student Foundation also plans to build stronger connections with congregations and build up its list of "friends" of campus ministry who are interested in supporting the mission and work of campus ministry. This will help secure the financial well-being of campus ministry in Montana for

years to come.

"We are excited about this project because it puts students in leadership roles and gives them great experience within congregational settings. It also gives church members a chance to experience the gifts and abilities of our young adults and helps all of us as a synod participate in the nurturing and growth of future church leaders," says Pastor John Lund,

campus pastor at Emmaus Campus Ministry in Missoula.

The grant is part of Thrivent Foundation's Lutheran Grant Program, designed to assist Lutheran organizations and those they serve in achieving economic security and sustainability. In 2010, the program distributed more than \$1.6 million through 42 separate grants.

"We are delighted to assist the Lutheran Student Foundation through this grant," said Tim Schwan, vice president of the Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Foundation. "We trust that this support will strengthen Lutheran Campus Ministries in Montana and its mission to those it serves."

Congregations who are interested in having a campus

ministry team of students come and lead worship and/or provide a youth event sometime in the next year should contact either Pastor John Lund in Missoula ([John@montanalc.org](mailto:John@montanalc.org)) or Pastor Tim Spring in Bozeman ([tspring@christuscollegium.org](mailto:tspring@christuscollegium.org)).

## 2012 ELCA Youth Gathering timeline

Here are some important dates to keep in mind as you plan for your congregation's participation in the 2012 ELCA Youth Gathering:

- **October 9, 2011:** Registration opens online at 2 p.m. EDT, and will close when we reach 39,000 participants.
- **January, 2012:** Start meeting with your group

and using the monthly Getting Ready curriculum.

**February, 2012:** Check your congregational account for your housing assignment so you can visit your hotel when you attend the ELCA Youth Ministry [Network Extravaganza](#).

- **March 18, 2012:** Print out your rooming list and send it to your hotel with the appropriate deposit.

- **May 26, 2012:** Paid in Full Deadline: **There will be no onsite payment option in 2012.**

**July 16-18, 2012:** Multi-cultural Youth Leadership event and Definitely Abled Youth Leadership event. The \$150 registration fee includes housing and meals for these events.

[Sign up](#) to receive gNews in your email box.



## A Journey of Renewal

*A Journey of Renewal* is an intensive, year-long wellness experience designed by the ELCA Board of Pensions to benefit rostered ELCA-primary health plan members for the sake of ministry.

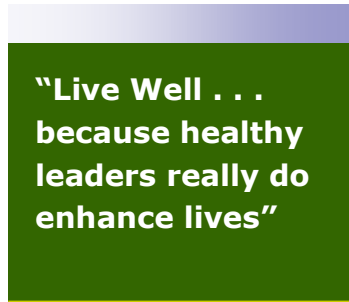
Over the course of one year, *A Journey of Renewal* combines retreats and small group telephonic coaching to

help leaders explore, reflect, take action and grow their ability to live well in Christ. Why? Because Healthy leaders enhance lives when they live — and serve — abundantly.

Registration is open for two *A Journey of Renewal* experiences beginning this fall at Spirit in the Desert and Lu-

theridge Conference Center. Are you ready for the journey? Learn more at <http://www.elcabop.org/renewal>.

Contact Tammy Devine at (800) 352-2876 ext. 4118 to learn more about the opportunity.



## Job Opening

Wanted: Full timed Director of Worship & Music and Christian Education at Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church in Missoula, Mont.

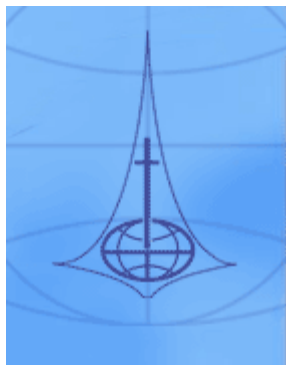
We are seeking a Spirit-led individual to join with our mid-size congregation to

share your musical and leadership gifts.

Missoula is a university town nestled in the mountains of beautiful western Montana. Please submit a letter of application, resume, and three professional references to Immanuel

Lutheran Church, Attn: Pastor Jordan, 830 South Ave W, Missoula MT 59801 or email [imluchurch@imluchurch.org](mailto:imluchurch@imluchurch.org)





The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) General Secretary Rev. Martin Junge has made an urgent appeal for prayer and financial support from the Lutheran communion to help deal with the impact of the current drought in the Horn of Africa.

In a letter to LWF member

### *Horn of Africa Appeal to the Lutheran Communion*

churches and national committees following an LWF delegation to the region last week, Junge said the world is facing a crisis in which more than 12 million lives in the region are at risk due to drought, said to be the worst in 60 years, and conflict.

He called on Lutherans worldwide to pray for refugees and displaced persons in the Horn of Africa, as well as those seeking to help them, including the staff of government, international and non-governmental organizations.

“They are providing a relevant response and saving many lives. I was particularly impressed by the 120 LWF staff at Dadaab (refugee camps), mainly young Kenyans, many of them women. They work long and hard with enormous dedication. Each person arriving at the camp was being met with dignity and treated as an equal,” Junge noted.

He called for financial support for the LWF’s work among refugees in the region and urged members to appeal to their governments to

respond to the United Nations appeal for the Horn of Africa, which has a USD1.3 billion shortfall.

To read this complete article and learn more about LWF or donate financially, go to their website at: <http://www.lutheranworld.org/lwf/>

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) is a global communion of Christian churches in the Lutheran tradition. Founded in 1947 in Lund, Sweden, the LWF now has 145 member churches in 79 countries all over the world representing over 70 million Christians.



**Mission Investment Fund**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

*My thanks to you.....*

To you who are either individual investors in the ELCA Mission Investment Fund, or your congregation has investment accounts, I want to say THANK YOU for your part in building the church by being faithful investors in the MIF Community. What an impact

the MIF community has on the mission of our church. And your part in that is not small: it’s HUGE!! So thank you!!!!

THANKS for the opportunity to be a part of your congregation’s ministry. At the end of August I will be leaving MIF to become the Executive Director for Flat-

head Lutheran Bible Camp, serving the ELCA congregations of the Montana synod. I am excited to begin this new position, but will miss being part of your events for MIF. May God bless you in your ministry, and if you get near Kalispell, MT, please do contact me!! Blessings and

THANKS Margie P. Fiedler

For applications and our current rates for loans and investments visit: [www.elca.org/mif](http://www.elca.org/mif) or call our care team toll free in Chicago at: 877-886-3522.

### *Disaster response: Your church at work around the world*



**Horn of Africa:** Extensive drought has caused a food shortage and resources have become scarce as many have fled to refugee camps. See [www.elca.org/disaster](http://www.elca.org/disaster).

**Sudan:** Fighting has broken out around the city of Kandugli with reports of

heavy civilian casualties causing many to flee. See [www.elca.org/disaster](http://www.elca.org/disaster).

**ACT Alliance:** Learn more about how the ELCA Disaster Response works around the world with partners in the ACT Alliance. See the 2010 Annual Report at <http://>

[blogs.elca.org/disasterresponse/](http://blogs.elca.org/disasterresponse/).

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## Here We Are 2

Last fall church councils were invited to take time during their October or November meeting to prayerfully and thoughtfully consider mission support (the financial support for ministry through the Montana Synod and the ELCA). The program was called **HERE WE ARE**. Once again our synod's Mission Table is asking congregations to deepen their understanding of mission support and how our financial resources enable ministry locally, nationally, and globally.

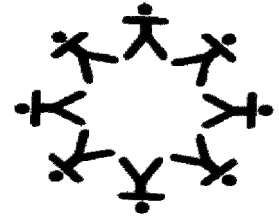
Watch for your congregation's special **HERE WE ARE 2** packet which will be sent out the end of September. The packets will include a short Bible Study, a DVD and a few other tools for information and discussion at your October or November council meeting. And, of course, these tools can be shared with the whole congregation as well.

Almost every letter of the Apostle Paul begins with a thanksgiving for the partnership and ministry of others. Paul knew that ministry was

never the accomplishment of a single individual or congregation or region. Ministry depends on a network of individuals, congregations (synods, churchwide, and beyond) to effectively proclaim and demonstrate the compassion and hope of God in Jesus Christ.

Thank you for your partnership in ministry. We of the Mission Table look forward to hearing from you about your October/November council conversations.

Pr. Dave Peters



## Get a Free Spark Starter Kit

Looking for Sunday School curriculum, new youth or adult ministry resources? Keep the following **Augsburg Fortress** websites in your "favorites" - [www.augsburgfortress.org](http://www.augsburgfortress.org); [www.wearesparkhouse.org](http://www.wearesparkhouse.org); and [www.fortresspress.com](http://www.fortresspress.com)

If you have specific questions, please contact our congregational resource representative:

Carrie Schuppenhauer  
(800) 426-0115 ext 265  
[carrie.schuppenhauer@augsbu.org](mailto:carrie.schuppenhauer@augsbu.org)  
[rgfortress.org](http://rgfortress.org)

Attend a webinar and receive a **FREE** Spark Starter Kit. It's a great opportunity to learn how Spark can create a lifelong relationship between the Bible and the

kids in your congregation! You will receive Spark Classroom, Lectionary and Rotation curriculum samples and both of the Spark Bibles at no charge!

To register, go [here](#)



## A Journey of Grace: The Formation of a Leader and a Church

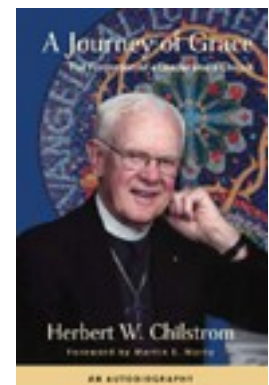
"Am I the kind of person who should be a bishop in this church? Am I so caught in the web that I've lost perspective? How much integrity is there in me? How pure are my motives? How fair? How courageous? How kind? How effective? I

need grace more than ever...."

Indeed God's grace is not only needed but essential as Herbert W Chilstrom addresses these profound questions and decisive moments in his life, career,

and his role as the first presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Go [here](#) to order.



# Montana Synod, ELCA



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## www.montanasynod.org

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

### Calendar

#### August, 2011

Montana Synod insert in The Lutheran  
14-20 ELCA Assembly, Orlando, FL  
12 Newsletter posted to website

#### September, 2011

5 Newsletter deadline  
15 Newsletter posted to website  
23-24 Synod Council meeting in Great Falls  
23-25 MTSWO Convention, Helena

#### October, 2011

5 Newsletter deadline  
15 Newsletter posted to website  
9-10 Retired Pastors' Retreat, Seeley Lake  
31-Nov.2 First Call Theological Education, Great Falls

#### November, 2011

5 Newsletter deadline  
15 Newsletter posted to website  
11 Bishop's Convocation, Lewistown  
11 Boundaries Workshop, Lewistown  
11-12 Board of Pensions Pre-Retirement Workshop

+ *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