



Montana Synod Weekly Announcements October 30, 2023



Israel-Hamas War resources and statements

In the past weeks we have borne witness to the horrors of the escalating crisis between Israel and Hamas. In response to the Hamas attacks in southern Israel on Oct. 7 and Israel's declaration of war against Hamas, including the ongoing siege of Gaza, the ELCA offers statements from some of our Lutheran and global partners in the region. Included are ELCA resources for a deeper understanding of the context, the humanitarian crises of the current war, and the ELCA's work for a just peace in Palestine and Israel. [Learn](#)



Draft social message on gun trauma

What is a faithful Lutheran response when considering U.S. gun culture? The draft of a social message on gun-related violence and trauma probes that question, and your feedback is requested. The draft focuses on trauma, public health and an ethic of shared responsibility for peacemaking, seeking to move beyond the strict polarization of gun rights versus gun control. This is an issue that affects everyone in the United States — let your voice in this process be heard! To participate in the public feedback period, [read the draft and use the response form](#)

Augustana University Announcement

Augustana University is elated to announce it has received a historic \$13.8 million gift to help support students who are active and engaged members of ELCA congregations throughout the Midwest. Thanks to a generous gift from Rosemarie and Dean Buntrock, the university has established the Buntrock Scholars Program.

Over the course of the next decade, the Buntrock Scholars Program will benefit a minimum of 30 students beginning in Fall 2024, and as many as 120 students by Fall 2028. The scholarship will cover half the net price of a selected student's attendance at Augustana up to \$12,000 and be renewable for up to an additional three years to help students cover the cost of a 4-year degree. Interested students must provide a personal statement in applying for this unique and exciting scholarship at Augustana and present a letter of recommendation from their senior pastor or youth pastor. In the event of a pastoral vacancy, the recommendation may come from an elected leader of the congregation.

Throughout its 163-year history, Augustana has been blessed with students who enter to learn and leave to serve in South Dakota, the Midwest and beyond. Many of our alumni have been called to ministry, and countless others are serving as lay leaders within their congregations. This new scholarship opportunity builds on this important foundation.

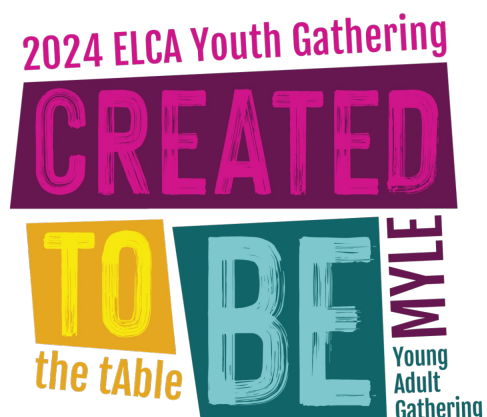
Pastors are invited to learn more about the Buntrock Scholars Program through a virtual information session to be held on Wednesday, Nov. 8, at 4 p.m. To join the session, visit augie.edu/BuntrockScholarship.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Herseth Sandlin
President

Registration is open for the 2024 Youth Gathering, Young Adult Gathering, MYLE and tAble. If you have a small group that wishes to attend and would like to travel with others from the Montana Synod, contact Gretchen Munding at stjohns@stjohnshelena.org. She has already registered a group made up of several congregations, and can add more to the group. She also has the name of a young adult who would like to attend and would like to go with other young adults from Montana, if possible. The Young Adult Gathering is a new thing this year, added because of the number of youth who did not get to attend a Youth Gathering due to Covid. The Young Adult Gathering is being held at the same time as the Youth Gathering, but at different hotels and has a different agenda. Just prior to the Youth Gathering are 2 other options for youth. MYLE is open to youth of color or whose primary language is other than English. Attendees must be in eighth to 12th grade at registration (fall 2023). A congregational group may attend MYLE if at least half the group are people of color or whose primary language is other than English. If that is not the case, eligible attendees (see previous paragraph) are encouraged to attend with an adult leader and then join their congregational group at the beginning of the Gathering.

tAble: Youth who are 14 to 18 (or are engaged in a high school youth group or enrolled in high school or the vocational education equivalent) and who live with a wide range of



physical, cognitive and emotional disabilities) are encouraged to attend the tAble. Youth who attend must be accompanied by an adult companion. One companion will receive waived registration fees to attend the Gathering following the tAble.

The ELCA Youth Gathering has three different brackets for registration:

Priority Registration (Sept. 15–Nov. 1, 2023): \$375

Regular Registration (Nov. 2, 2023–Feb. 14, 2024): \$425

Late Registration (Feb. 15–April 15, 2024): \$475

Dates and costs for the Young Adult Gathering are;

Priority Registration (Sept. 15–Nov. 1, 2023): \$260

Regular Registration (Nov. 2, 2023–Feb. 14, 2024): \$310

Late Registration (Feb. 15–April 15, 2024): \$360

MYLE and the tAble have a registration fee of \$190; however, thanks to a generous donor, that fee will be waived for the first 1,000 people to register for MYLE and the first 200 people to register for the tAble.

A \$150 nonrefundable, per-person deposit is due at time of registration for the Gathering and Young Adult Gathering and must be paid within the registration rate you expect to pay.

Please note that hotel, meals and travel costs are not included in this registration fee.

For more information, go to ELCA.org/Gathering

Invitation for Partners of Rostered Ministers

Spouses & partners of ELCA

Pastors and Deacons are invited to join this free, 12-session, online sacred place to take a deep breath, slow down, and create space to notice God's presence among us. Our goal is to foster community and be refreshed by God and one another. Each week our cohort leader - and fellow pastor's spouse - Susan Berg, will lead us through a curriculum of spiritual practices.

We will meet via Zoom twice-monthly on the second and fourth Mondays of the month, beginning November 13, 7pm-8:30pm. We will skip over a few of the busy weeks - Easter and Christmas for example - and conclude in June.

If your partner/spouse has questions - or is interested in participating - please have them reach out to Susan@lutheransnw.org - soon as space is limited to a maximum of twelve participants.

This is a FREE opportunity!

In 2018, California Lutheran

University received a nearly \$1 million, five-year grant from the Lilly

Endowment to create [Thriving Leadership Formation \(TLF\)](#) in

partnership with its own Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary and the 11 ELCA

synods of Regions 1 and 2. This FREE spiritual practice cohort is one aspect of

their larger grant goal of fostering spiritual and contemplative practices in order to enrich life and ministry, and help the church and its leaders thrive.

OTHER Cohorts

While this small group is

specifically for those who are in the unique - and often challenging - role of being partnered with a deacon or pastor, there will be additional cohorts for rostered and lay leaders in our synod forming in the coming weeks – info will be posted here: <https://thrivingleadershipformation.org/cohorts/>



Words of Wonder: Using Writing to Nurture our Relationships with the Bible, our Congregations, and God

The NRIT theological retreat at Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp. January 29 – 31. Starts after lunch on Monday, January 29th and ends after breakfast on Wednesday, January 31st. Retreat schedule includes learning, discussion, small group activities, games, prayer and shorter periods throughout the day for rest and renewal. Total cost of the retreat is \$265
Scholarships are available to cover up to half the cost. Contact Jenny Kunka at j.kunka@nrit.org to inquire about scholarship funding.



<https://www.montanasynod.org/nrit.html>

*Do you love to write? This retreat is for you!
Are you unsure about writing but you love a good story? This retreat is for you!
Would you appreciate time to nurture and appreciate creativity? Or could you simply just use a quiet retreat in the mountains? This retreat is for you!*



November 2023
Information for our Congregations

Our summer calendar is set and on our website (christikon.org). If you have questions about the 2024 season or would like to register, give us a call or do so online. It was a powerful summer of ministry this year, and we look forward to welcoming you to camp in the new year.

The 2023 Annual Meeting will be on Sunday November 12th at 3:30pm. We'll tell stories from the summer and share plans for the 2024 season, construction, and much more. We will be meeting in person at Big Timber Lutheran Church.

We continue to hold you in prayer as together we navigate these uncertain times. We also trust in, and give thanks for, a God who promises to never let us go, no matter what life throws our way. May God bless you and yours as we move through fall and towards the holiday season and the new year.

Thank you as always for all the ways you support Christikon.

It is the mission of Christikon to awaken and nurture faith in Christ—exploring God’s creation and the adventure of life together.

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Bring FLBC to Your Town! FLBC staff is excited to be beginning our **Outreach Program** for the 2023-24 year! Up to once each month, October 2023-April, 2024, FLBC staff will come to your congregation to help with an outreach event. Youth programming, lock-ins, holiday events, and many more can be coordinated through FLBC. Contact amanda@flbc.net for more information and to sign up!!

Sign-ups are also open for our **2024 Day Camp** program! We still have many weeks available, and would love to send counselors to your congregation to bring all the fun of a week at camp to you! Please contact Amanda at amanda@flbc.net for more information or to sign up!



Staff applications will be open for summer 2024, beginning **Nov 1st, 2023**. Know of someone who might benefit from a summer at FLBC? They will learn leadership skills galore! Minimum age to apply is 18.



Summer registration opens Nov 10th, 2023 – send us an email or call the office if you would like a copy of the brochure sent to you. Adults of former campers can watch their email for a message with reminders of your login information and notes on registering for a new year of camp. New climbing equipment for 2024! Thanks to a grant from Round Up for Safety! Climb to new heights at FLBC in '24!! Please feel free to contact the camp office with any questions!

Volunteer Application opens November 10! Pastors and volunteers-get your first choice of weeks for summer 2024! Go to www.flbc.net, beginning Nov 10th, for the application. We are excited for this summer’s theme "Created to Be," a curriculum based on the same verses as this summer’s ELCA Youth Gathering.

FLBC is exploring the possibility of offering an **online and retreat based confirmation program** for students in congregations around Montana. Right now we are looking for pastors and leaders who would be interested in this program to help us consider what the program should look like and what topics to cover. We are also offering a confirmation retreat for those interested in a possible FLBC facilitated confirmation program and congregations that would like to bring their confirmation class to camp. Contact amanda@flbc.net for more information!

FLBC’s annual **Quilting and Crafting Retreat** will be on **November 9-12, 2023!** Bring all your supplies and join other crafters as we quilt, knit, crochet,

scrapbook, and do a variety of other special crafts! You can register online, or call the office to get signed up.

Looking for a fun way to get ready for Christmas? **The FLBC Advent Retreat will be held December 8-10, 2023.** Come with your family, or a group of friends or fellow church members to camp for a time of crafts, baking, singing, and time to explore our faith and the true reason for celebration during the Christmas season. There will be fun for young and old alike, and you will even have the opportunity to cut and take home a Christmas tree from FLBC! Call the camp office for more information or to get signed up!

Young Adults! Plan now to attend the **Young Adult Retreat, Dec 27-29** at FLBC. Ski, play, enjoy the new sauna, with a dip in the lake! Join Baird Linke, and the FLBC staff who will lead the sessions, on the theme: "Spiritual Wilderness" \$100 per person; 18-35 year olds. Registration deadline Dec. 13th.

FLBC Ski and Snowboard Retreat will be held **January 12-15, 2024.** What better way to appreciate all the beauty God has gifted us with during a Montana winter than by getting out and hitting the slopes! Spend the nights at camp, share in worship and Christian community in the evenings and spend your days skiing at either Blacktail Mountain or in Whitefish. Contact the camp office for more information!

For questions and more details, or if you would like the schedule of these retreats: call FLBC at 406-752-6602. (leave a voice message, as many of our staff work remotely) or email Registraion@flbc.net

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