



# Montana Synod Weekly Announcements November 13, 2023

## **An Announcement from the Churchwide Office of the ELCA**

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's Church Council Executive Committee approved Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton's request for a 4-to-6-month leave of absence. Her leave starts Nov. 17, 2023.

The Church Council appointed the Rev. Michael Burk, former bishop of the Southeastern Iowa Synod, as Presiding Bishop Pro Tem to care for the responsibilities of the presiding bishop during her leave of absence. We give thanks for Bishop Eaton's tireless dedication and leadership and pray for her during this time of rest and rejuvenation.

## **Retirement Announcement—Beth Adams, Region 1 Gift Planner**

After a decade of working with you all in support of the mission and ministries of synods, congregations, organizations, and wonderfully generous people, I am announcing my retirement, effective November 30, 2023.

This is a decision not made lightly, as these 10 years have been so blessed:

- traveling across this broad and beautiful region.
- meeting awesome lay and rostered people whose call is to make this world a better place (in their context, of course!);
- enjoying hospitality that presented in a variety of ways—delectable vegetable, barley and moose-meat soup; tromping the Missouri River paths with excellent, local commentary; meeting the horses at the barn; worshipping in sanctuaries of grandeur, and profoundly moving services in gentle and humble churches; being in community over ever-present mugs of coffee, and breaking bread (or enjoying burritos) with committees as we worked together.

Thank you for allowing me the privilege to be a resource from the ELCA Foundation to you, your ministries, and your vision. May the endowments we together have established serve you well into the future, and may your understanding of the importance of Planned

Giving be honored, and acted upon, to preserve the future of this church and its role in making this world a better place for all!

Your contact for future needs at this time is Josh Kerney, Interim Director of Gift Planning, ELCA Foundation.

[Josh.kerney@elca.org](mailto:Josh.kerney@elca.org)

Peace and blessings~  
Beth



## **Seeking in the Company of Others: The Wisdom of Group Spiritual Direction**

In Partnership with Congregation Beth Shalom  
Facilitated by Roslyn Weiner

Wednesday, November 29th, 6:30-8:00pm MT on Zoom  
Register (at no cost) [here](#)

You are invited to cultivate awareness of the sacred stirrings in your everyday life in the company of other seekers. This is an opportunity to sit companionably with other seekers and go on an adventure in contemplation, listening and reflection. Come and participate in a spiritual conversation designed to encourage self-discovery, sharing, and deep listening.

### **Format:**

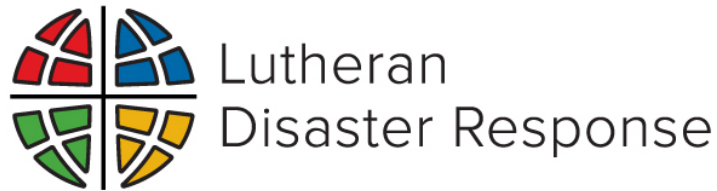
The gathering will begin with a brief presentation of the process of spiritual direction, which has taken creative root in the Jewish community. Next, you will be invited into an experience of spiritual direction using poetry, brief quotes and questions as structure and prompt for our conversation. Finally, you will be invited to ask questions and reflect on your experience.

Spiritual Direction is a process that welcomes curiosity and requires no background in particular religious texts or traditional Jewish religious practice. Instead,

respectful and gentle prompts, periods of quiet contemplation and the invitation to share personal discoveries about faith, God (however God is named or experienced or even if not acknowledged), doubt, joy, suffering, and unanticipated spiritual experiences—seeing what it is like to be deeply witnessed and to be able to offer that gift to others.

**Presenter:**

Roslyn G. Weiner is an experienced spiritual director who has been leading spiritual direction groups for nearly two decades with many organizations, including the Central Conference of American Rabbis, Hebrew College Rabbinical School, and Spiritual Directors International. She received a Master of Sacred Theology Degree degree (STM) from the School of Theology, Boston University, June 2003. Her book *Seeking in the Company of Others: The Wisdom of Group Spiritual Direction* was published by Spiritual Directors International Press in November 2021.



**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 more.](#)



**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](#). Responses are due by Jan. 31, 2024.

# Young Adults in Global Mission



An international service year for  
young adults ages 21-35

Apply today at [ELCA.ORG/YAGM](https://elca.org/yagm)

DEADLINES: Priority – JAN. 15, Final – FEB. 1



Evangelical  
Lutheran Church  
in America

The ELCA's Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) program is ready for new volunteers! The YAGM team must find the next cohort of young Christians ready to step out into the future. Do you know one? If you know such a young adult, aged 21 to 35, this is the time to reach out. Applications are now accepted on a rolling basis, year-round. Those who apply by Feb. 1 will be considered for the service year beginning the following August. Priority will be given to those who apply before Jan. 15.

Talk personally to these young people about what this opportunity will mean for their faith, identity, career and understanding of God's work in the world.

## [Download Poster](#)

YAGM volunteers who apply by Feb. 1, 2024, will begin their service in August 2024.

Through YAGM young adults learn what it means to serve in a spirit of accompaniment as they walk alongside global church companions. They'll become immersed in a new community and form deep relationships. And they'll confront poverty, racial privilege, gender privilege, globalization and economic disparity, all through the lens of faith. Learn more at [ELCA.org/YAGM](https://elca.org/yagm).

Young adults will find relevant opportunities for professional experience, including work in:

- Health and human rights: health care, HIV and AIDS, homelessness, immigration and refugees.
- Education: fine arts, youth education, childhood education, working with people living with disabilities.
  - Environmental justice: agriculture and farming, development, environment.
- Professional support: office work, communication, technology, finance.
- Congregational ministry: children's ministry, Christian education, youth ministry, congregational ministry, camp ministry.

Around the world, host families, churches, workplaces and communities are ready to welcome YAGM volunteers.

Don't wait — spread the word and forward this email now! Those who apply by Feb. 1, 2024, will be considered for the service year beginning the following August. Priority will be given to those who apply by Jan. 15, 2024.

## LUTEFISK & NORWEGIAN MEATBALL DINNER

**Sunday, December 3 • Noon - 3:30 p.m.**

Bethany Lutheran Church, Dutton



**Adults \$20 • Ages 8-17 \$15  
Under 8 Free**

**Bazaar & Crafts**

*Reservations Only:*

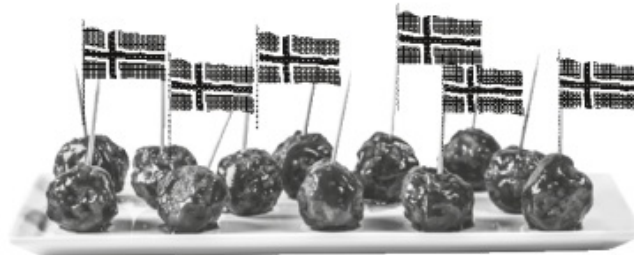
**Times 12:00 • 1:00**

**2:00 • 3:00**

**Call Dana Reeve at**

**406-788-3177**

*Bethany Lutheran is a handicap accessible facility*



### **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](mailto: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 29<sup>th</sup> and ends after breakfast on Wednesday, January 31<sup>st</sup>.

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! Contact Jenny Kunka at [j.kunka@nrit.org](mailto: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!*

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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](mailto: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](mailto:amanda@flbc.net) for more information or to sign up!



**Staff applications are OPEN** for summer 2024. 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 is OPEN!** – 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. Please feel free to contact the camp office with any questions.



**Volunteer Application is OPEN!** Pastors and volunteers- get your first choice of weeks for summer 2024! Go to our website at [www.flbc.net](http://www.flbc.net) 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's is offering a **Confirmation Retreat on March 15-17, 2023** titled, "Guides for the Way: Three

Biblical figures and what their stories can teach us about God, life, and everything!" This will be a kick-off for the "campfirmation" program that FLBC is forming, which will launch in September of 2024. Call the camp office for more information or to register today!

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 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](mailto:Registraion@flbc.net)



**November 2023**  
*Information for our Congregations*

**Our summer calendar** is set and on our website ([christikon.org](http://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 12<sup>th</sup> 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.**

**CHRISTIKON • 1108 24<sup>th</sup> Street West • Billings, MT 59102**  
406 656-1969 • [secretary@christikon.org](mailto:secretary@christikon.org) • [www.christikon.org](http://www.christikon.org)

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