



Montana Synod Weekly Announcements November 20, 2023

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2024

The theme for the 2024 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity will be “You Shall Love the Lord Your God ... and Your Neighbor As Yourself” (Luke 10:27). Resources for the week, January 18-25, 2024 or whenever you choose, have been jointly prepared and published by the Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity and the World Council of Churches’ Commission on Faith and Order, and they can be downloaded [here](#).



Dear friend,

Thank you for your outpouring of prayers and generosity for our siblings impacted by the conflict in the Holy Land. The humanitarian crisis continues to worsen — almost 70% of Gazan residents are displaced, and resources such as food, water and medical supplies are in short supply. The death toll has far surpassed those of previous conflicts in the region in recent decades.

[Gifts to Lutheran Disaster Response have equipped us to respond to this and other disasters whenever and wherever they strike. Gifts designated for “Middle East Crisis” will be restricted to and used in full \(100%\) for those affected by this crisis and others in the region.](#)

I’d like to tell you some of the ways Lutheran Disaster Response already accompanies our partners in the Holy Land. Lutheran Disaster Response supports:

- Augusta Victoria Hospital. The hospital procures medical supplies and provides accommodations for patients and staff unable to return to their homes in Gaza.
- The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land. The church provides emergency education support for families who have lost income due to the

- war and are unable to pay school fees.
- ACT Alliance. Through implementing partners Lutheran World Federation and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, ACT Alliance responds to immediate needs for psychosocial support, shelter, household items, public health centers and direct cash assistance, focusing on the Palestinian communities in Gaza, East Jerusalem and the West Bank.

These are just the first steps of what will be a long-term response. Our accompaniment of and solidarity with our partners endures, and we will work together to address other emerging needs. We continue to pray for peace with justice in the region. I encourage you to visit the ELCA's "[Conflict in the Holy Land](#)" resource page, where you'll find worship resources, advocacy opportunities, statements from the ELCA and our partners, and more.

Give Now

With gratitude,
The Rev. Daniel Rift
Director, ELCA World Hunger and Lutheran Disaster Response Fund
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

If you would like to thank retiring Region 1 Gift Planner Beth Adams for all of her work over the years you can submit to a [Kudoboard for her here!](#)



For information about available classes through NRIT click below!

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

Join the Truth and Healing Movement

The ELCA's Truth and Healing Movement gives the people of this church an opportunity to enlarge their understanding of our colonizing impact on Indigenous people in the past and present.

The movement began this spring and

will continue until Advent — and there's still time to get involved! In observance of Native American Heritage Month in November, consider [attending a class](#) or [browsing articles and resources](#) on Indigenous Ministries and Tribal Relations. [Explore learning opportunities.](#)



"Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:21).

The Hearth and the Heart

What is at the center of your activity in these increasingly shadowy days?

In the summer months many of us find ourselves occupied with outdoor sports, yardwork or leisure activities to take advantage of the warmer weather. But as the weather cools, even if just so slightly, what takes up space in our lives?

Our ancient forebears saw two centers of light in their lives: the sun and the hearth. The sun took center stage in the warmer months of the year, but as the sun started to turn in earlier, the other warm center, the hearth, came more into focus as outdoor competitions were replaced by quiet hobbies and as leisure in the sun was traded for lounging by the fire.

And it was around that hearth, that fire — what they called the "heart of the home" — that stories were shared, especially in these colder months. These stories were meant to shape not only the hearer but also the teller, keeping alive the history of the family and the importance of community, and reminding everyone of what their common purpose was.

Around the hearth they would open their hearts and stories of life would pour forth.

While most of our society is singing "It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas," those of us in the stewardship world are singing "It's beginning to look a lot like year-end appeal letters." As well we should! This is the time of year to imagine how you're going to set your mission up with strength to start next year's work!

But instead of simply asking for year-end gifts, let's take a page from the ancient wisdom of our ancestors and tell a story or two of how these gifts have changed lives this year, by God. Get to the heart of the matter, as if you were sharing these stories by that ancient heart of the home: the hearth.

It is not too late to invite people to be generous in their year-end intentions, but

invite them to do so through story and imagination, not just as a response to shortfalls or unmatched expectations.

God has invited your community to do wonderful and purposeful things in this world! Share how you're doing them and why you're being called to do them next year too.

That life-changing work is, after all, the heart of the matter.

Pax,

Tim Brown
Director of Congregational Stewardship Support

To read more, click here!

Synod updates from FLBC, Nov 20th, 2023

There are still openings for the **Advent Retreat** Dec 8-10, **Young adult retreat**, Dec 27-29, and for the **Ski and Board** retreat, January 12-15. All retreats include great fun, games, Bible Study, worship, playing in the snow, relaxing, and great food. For more information and to register. Go to www.flbc.net



Join NRIT at FLBC for the educational retreat with Dr Kaethe Schwehn, professor at St Olaf, Jan 29-31. Our theme is "Words of Wonder" using writing to nurture our relationships with the Bible, our congregations, and God. Besides wonderful Educations sessions and worship, with Dr. Schwehn, and continuing ed credits, there will be time for relaxing, enjoying FLBC's new sauna, hiking, reading, and just catching your breath before Lent. Open to all pastors, spouses, LPA's and interested adults. To register go to: www.montanasynod.org/nrit/html

Registration for week long Family camp opens Jan 15th, 2024, at 10am. Please call the office, 406-752-6602 or email office@flbc.net Or registration@flbc.net Family means "family of God" Single adults, couples, single parent families, and couples with children are all welcome. This week fills fast.... first come first serve. Make memories with your loved ones at FLBC this summer as we explore God's creation under the theme, "Created to Be."

Remember to use your **Thrivent Choice** distribution for the good of ministry, at your camp, campus ministry or church, Thrivent Choice makes a big difference! THANKS for Choosing Ministry!!

Our staff are enjoying meeting people and working with congregations in our **Outreach Ministry**. We have been to Polson, Sunburst, Helena and Jacko Valley. If you are interested in staff coming to your



congregation on a monthly basis, or for a one-time lock in.... contact: Amanda@flbc.net

Mark your calendars for the Confirmation/Campfire Retra

at FLBC, March 15-16. Only 1-2 students in confirmation? come.... a chance for them to build relationships with others around the state; Whether you have 2 students or 20...we guarantee growth, learning and FUN at camp.

The **Shalom Home** (for staff and guest housing) is coming along GREAT. THANKS to all who contributed to make this needed home a reality. We hope (and pray) to have it done by this summer. THANKS Tim Rogge Construction!

Blessed THANKSGIVING to each

of you! THANKS for your care!



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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