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# Evening Worship

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Bishop Jessica Crist presided over this Opening Eucharist. Rev. Dr. Kathryn Schifferdecker delivered the sermon.

Church members participated in a parade of intents, bringing forward their estimations of giving for the coming year.

The Dixieland Jazz Band performed.

Synod Summary 1

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| Montana Synod, ELCA | **6/2/2017** | Friday  |

Montana

Synod Summary No. 1

Disaster Preparedness: 60% of people turn to their church leaders first after a natural disaster…the strength of your community will determine how well you recover from a disaster.

The 2017 Montana Synod Assembly began at 4pm on Friday.

**Bishop Jessica Crist** called the assembly to order. She introduced the synod council officers to the assembly. She also introduced **Dr. Michael Trice**, keynote speaker, **Dr.** **Kathryn Schifferdecker** and other important guests, including new pastors to the Montana Synod.

After the introduction, the assembly took care of initial business such as adoption of agenda and approval of the minutes from last years’ assembly and a hearing of the treasurer’s report.

**The Montana Synod disaster team**, Dick Deschamps and Amanda Liggett presented on the need for preparation for disasters. 60% of people who are faced with natural disasters turn to their church leaders first. Disasters start local and end local, the strength of your community will determine how well you recover from a disaster. Pr. Liggett said that through flood and fire, their community learned what a difference preparation can make. Think ahead what you will do when disaster strikes, not if disaster strikes. Churches can do humanitarian support really well. Preparing for disaster can go a long way toward mitigating the effects of disaster on a community. It’s important to assess risk and to have a plan. It may be hard to get motivated when skies are blue but Dick said he thinks about it like buying insurance. Tomorrow Dick and Amanda will be part of a workshop about disaster preparedness. It all starts with a conversation.

At this point, **Pastor Jason Asselstine** talked about the 2018 ELCA Youth Gathering which will be held in Houston. The point of the youth gathering is to renew the church through the faith of its youth. Pr. Jason will be coordinating a bus trip for Montana youth to take to and from Houston.

Next the assembly watched a video from Portico talking about healthy living. We need to attend to our wellbeing just as we attend to the other parts of God’s creation. Our financial, physical and emotional wellbeing is important to doing good work.

Pr. Kendra Wilde gave us a greeting from the Montana Association from Christians. MAC works on advocacy, working through the legislative process to advocate for issues that Christian churches can agree need our voices. She urged us to go to [MAC.org](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5CEXECUTIVEASSISTANT%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CMicrosoft%5CWindows%5CINetCache%5CContent.Outlook%5C3QI7R44V%5Cmac.org) and become a member to ensure that we become a voice, caring for the hungry, the imprisoned and the stranger.

**Jan Martin, the Montana Synod hunger coordinator** announced that today was the third Pedal for Peas and she is still able to take donations. Jan said as of March the individuals and congregations of the Montana Synod had given $39,000 to ELCA World Hunger.

**Pr. Karl Guhn brought greetings from St. John’s Ministries and Lutheran Social Services of Montana**. He updated on the assembly on some of the exciting things happening at St. Johns.

**Bishop Michael Warfel, Bishop of the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings**, greeted the assembly and welcomed everyone to Great Falls. Bishop Warfel serves on a national committee for ecumenism and mentioned a recent meeting at which the Bishops and others present stated a dedication to unity, and a renewed determination to be faithful heralds of God’s love for all humanity.

There will be a joint prayer service in Oct. in Helena with Lutherans and Catholics and a joint Lutheran Catholic convocation also in October in Lewistown.

Bishop Crist asked the assembly to learn more about Intermountain ministry for children. Our special offering on Sunday will go toward Intermountain.

Brenda Satrum led the assembly in prayer and the group adjourned for supper.

(After supper…)

The nominating committee gave its report on those who are nominated for positions within the synod. The names and biographies were on a sheet given to assembly participants. Further nominations were then taken from the assembly. All the nominations were unopposed and a vote was taken on the full ballot.

**Sue Ost gave a presentation of the budget**. When working on the budget, the synod council takes into account the synod benchmarks as a guide when determining use of synod funds.

Next the assembly addressed constitutional changes that came from the churchwide assembly, mostly focusing on changes in terminology.

**Margie Fiedler gave a greeting from FLBC and Christikon**. Our Montana Synod Bible Camps, this summer, will serve over 2,900 young children and youth in our synod and beyond. Margie read letters from parents and campers, talking about the impact that camp has had on the lives of kids and families. Over 70% of seminarians point to their camping experience as a factor when deciding to enter ordained ministry. Youth who attend church camp are three times more likely to be continued to be involved in the life of a congregation than those who don’t. Thank you on behalf of the campers and staff of FLBC and Christikon.

 This was followed by greetings from the **UM and MSU campus ministry** programs. These ministries cannot exist without the help of individuals and congregations in our synod. There is a new paradigm emerging with more and more emerging adults not sure what they believe and feeling disenfranchised. Campus ministry is more and more involved in the community and reaching out to others in conversation. Campus ministry is also involved in nurturing young people as leaders and in helping to build hope.

**Jason Cronk from Immanuel Lutheran Homes** in Kalispell. Immanuel Lutheran opened the doors 60 years ago. This continues to be a vital ministry, evolving with the changing needs of older adults. It is today the only full-service life plan facility in Western MT.

This was followed by a greeting from the **ELCA Church Council representative, John Lohrmann.** In 2019, the Montana Synod will need to nominate two persons to the ELCA Church Council which serves as a board of directors between the meetings of the churchwide assembly. They meet twice a year and try to discern God’s will for the church.

Our last greetings of the night were from **Paulina Dasse of ELCA Global Mission**. She thanked Bishop Crist for inviting her. She said she is a partner in ministry for the relationships between synods and heir companion synods and churches. The companion synod program is a concrete expression of the relationship we have in Jesus Christ. All ELCA synods except for one have at least one companion relationship.