



News of the Week October 25, 2023

Prayers of the Week

Please remember in your prayers this week:

For the family and friends of Rev. Walter (Walt) J. Kirkegaard who died Monday, October 23, 2023. May God's comfort and peace be with them as they mourn his loss and celebrate his life. More information about services to come.

From the Montana Synod Prayer Calendar:

Bethel Lutheran Church, Grain
Hinsdale Lutheran Church, Hinsdale
First Lutheran Church, Glasgow

Sierra Pacific Synod



Words from the Bishop: Synod Ministries doing God's Work

*St. John's United, Immanuel Lutheran Homes,
Christikon and Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp:
Living Christ's Gospel, Loving the neighbor,
Being Church.*

Often when we hear the word "ministry" we think it only happens in congregations of the church. But the word "ministry" means "acting in service," and so ministry can and should happen so many ways beyond the church walls.



Some important communities where God's ministry happens in the Montana Synod are **St. John's United and Immanuel Lutheran Communities as well as the two**

Lutheran Bible Camps, Christikon and Flathead Lutheran Bible Camps. In so many ways – for example, through serving and supporting our elders, through providing family services, nursing support, and memory care, through inspiring and empowering our youth and young adults, through offering faith formation opportunities, and especially through creating welcoming, gospel-centered communities for all to live in Christ’s love through diverse experiences -- these four ministries do God’s work using their hands, hearts, voices, and spirit. You can read a little bit about each ministry below.

Over the next few months, you will hear more from these communities and others in this synod through our News of the Week on Wednesdays as they describe in their own words how they do God’s work in their contexts.

But today, on behalf the Montana Synod, I share my thanks and gratitude for the ministry of Christ that these communities and organizations offer to the people of this synod and beyond. Please support these ministries and the people who serve through them through your prayers, your presence and your activities as you feel called.

-Bishop Laurie

St. John’s United

For St. John’s United in Billings, MT, their mission statement guides everything they do: “To provide living opportunities within nurturing environments of hope, dignity and love.” Everything at St. John’s flows out of that mission statement,” said Tom Schlotterback, President of the St. Johns Foundation “It’s been a wonderful north star for us.”

Schlotterback said St. John’s is a ministry of the ELCA in the deepest sense. “Our home is with the ELCA. That is our theological rooting and the rooting of our vocation also.” Owned by 24 Lutheran congregations, St. John’s is called by these congregations to do the work they do.

Immanuel Lutheran Communities

Their mission statement reads, “At Immanuel Lutheran Communities, we enrich lives by providing Christian communities of support and loving care.”

Al Jenson, Director of Pastoral Care at Immanuel Lutheran Communities in Kalispell, MT said Immanuel Lutheran Communities was started by area Lutheran congregations and continues to work closely with local congregations to expand their services and reach into the community. A majority of board members are members of Lutheran congregations and the gifts and talents of the individuals on the Board help shape Immanuel’s present day and future ministries.

Christikon and Flathead Lutheran Bible Camps

Both of the Lutheran Bible camps were started by Montana churches and continue to be a ministry of these churches and the ELCA. They see themselves as a partner to congregations.

“This is your outreach ministry,” Margie Fiedler, Director of FLBC said. “How can we help as part of the life and mission of your congregation? How can we help you do evangelism and outreach?”

Mark Donald, Director of Christikon, said camping ministry helps kids think about their faith and ask the bigger questions. “We get kids for a whole week and we can help them think how you connect faith to life. They are coming to have a mountain top experience that is unique. But hopefully we are also connecting to their experiences in their own churches and communities.”

Director for Evangelical Mission - Montana Synod

As we announced several weeks ago, Rev. Peggy Paugh Leuzinger is retiring in mid-December. So it is now time to begin the search for a new Director for Evangelical

Mission for the Montana Synod, ELCA. If you are interested in serving in the DEM position for the Montana Synod or know of someone who might be interested, please click here for the position announcement and application which is offered through the ELCA Churchwide Office (CWO). All applications must be done through the CWO so please do not contact the synod office to apply. Once applications have been received, then selected qualified candidates will be contacted for an interview.

If you have any questions about this position, please read through the job description first and then you may contact Bishop Laurie Jungling through her synod email address. (ljungling@montanasynod.org) The application deadline is mid-November for a January 2024 start date.

[Click here to see the application and to apply](#)

Montana Synod Zoom for Congregations Involved in Feeding Ministries

The Synod Hunger team would like to invite those from congregations who are involved in a feeding ministry to join in a Zoom conversation on Thurs. Nov. 9th from 7 - 8:30. There are several congregations around the synod who host food pantries, serve meals or engage in other ministries to address the needs of people in our communities. Plan to attend (and encourage a team from your congregation to join with you) to hear about what others are doing, to be encouraged to collaborate and partner with others in your community to address needs and to join in conversation about other ways to respond to meet the needs in your area. The reality of hungry people in our Synod is deeply disturbing. The need is great! By joining together in conversation and collaboration, the Hunger Team hopes that you will be equipped to meet the needs of those in your area.

We will also be discussing the grant process that the Hunger Team is putting in place using funds from the Montana Synod Hunger Fund.

Here is link to register for the Zoom. <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZclce-vqTsiEgwF6lpiodXkDLT6sRDLude->

Sermon Manuscripts Available

Montana Synod leaders have been providing manuscripts for use in congregations through the Lent and Easter seasons. We are happy to announce that these manuscripts will be provided throughout the entire year! Thank you to the leaders in the Montana Synod who are providing these manuscripts every week. They can be found and downloaded on the [Montana Synod website here](#).

[Click here to give to the Montana Synod](#)

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