



Montana Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

News of the Week, January 13, 2016

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Prayers for January 17, 2016 Second Sunday after Epiphany

Please remember in your prayers this week:

For the installation of Miriam Schmidt at All Saints Big Sky this Sunday.

For Pr. Dan Heskett (Northridge, Kalispell) as his mother and step-father, Berdine and Carroll Sawin, face significant health challenges.



From the Montana Synod Prayer Calendar:

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
Montana Association of Christians
Wyoming Association of Churches
All of our ecumenically yoked ministries

Words From the Bishop - What's Race Got to do With It?

Tomorrow night, January 14, Presiding Bishop Eaton is hosting a town meeting on the criminal justice system, called "Confronting Racism: A Holy Yearning." Joining her will be an ELCA member who is a judge in Baltimore, an ELCA pastor who used to be a police officer, and an ELCA member who has been on the other side of the criminal justice system. They will talk about race and racism, and I intend to be watching. I hope you will, too. If you cannot watch on Thursday night, you can watch it later. Look for details below in this News of the Week. What's race got to do with it? A lot. People of color are disproportionately represented in our nation's prisons and jails. And people of color are much more likely to be stopped, frisked and detained. People of color are over represented on death row in states across the country. We can do better.

Monday, January 18 is Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. It is a federal holiday and a state holiday in most states. It is a time to honor civil rights activist and Baptist pastor, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. It is a time to look back at our history, beginning with slavery, through the abolition movement of the 19th century, and the civil rights movement of the 20th century. It is a time to remember historic events, like the march on Selma, the Birmingham bombings, the "I have a dream" speech, the Memphis garbage strike, the assassination that ended the life of Martin Luther King, Jr., but not his vision, not his dream. What's race got to do with it? A lot. Although slavery ended in the 19th century, racism did not. Injustice did not. The Voting Rights Act in the 1960s made it possible, for the first time, for African Americans to vote unimpeded, by eliminating the barriers set up by states. In 2013 the US Supreme Court did away with part of the Voting Rights Act, and immediately some states began to set up barriers again. In Montana, tribes have sued to get county election offices to make same day registration available not just in the county seat, but also on



reservation locations that are accessible to the majority of the people. We can do better.

In Great Falls, a former Ku Klux Klan advocate has publicly proclaimed that he has repented of his racist ways, and is organizing a tribute to Dr. King at a local Methodist church. The public is confused-is this for real? Has he really changed? Time will tell.

As Christians we believe in the reality of sin. And racism is a sin. It is not believing and acting as if God created us all in God's image. Racism is living as if one race is better than others, and entitled to all the privileges, none of the hardships. But as Christians we also believe in repentance, conversion, *metanoia*. Paul went from persecuting Christians to embracing the living Christ. Is it possible to be a recovering racist? I think so.

Bishop Eaton's webcast and the materials that go with it challenge us to look deep within ourselves, to acknowledge the racism that pervades our society, and to repent. What's race got to do with it? A lot.

"But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian, for in Christ Jesus you are all subject to a disciplinarian, for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus."

This is our hope.

Jessica Crist, Bishop

Click [this link](#) to go to the livestream page. This is also where you can find the recorded session.

Companionship Sunday January 24th

Mark your calendars, and watch for information and resources in the new year.

On January 24, the Montana Synod will celebrate our relationship with the Cape Orange Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Southern Africa, and our relationship with the Bolivian Evangelical Lutheran Church, our two companion synods.

We will provide worship resources celebrating both companion churches. And we will provide a list of speakers who could preach, do a children's sermon or temple talk, do an adult class or youth group on one or both of our companion synods. You could also use this Sunday to highlight other aspects of global mission, like the missionaries we sponsor, the Young Adults in Global Mission, and more.

Another possibility is to arrange to Skype with companions in Bolivia or South Africa. If you want assistance with that, Colter McCarty will help you set that up.

January is the season of Epiphany, when the light of Christ shines on the entire globe. We'd like to celebrate with lifting up our companion synods. And if January 24 doesn't work for you, you can always designate another Sunday.

[Click here for both Litanies.](#)

Resources for Companionship Sunday

As you prepare for Companionship Sunday, January 24, you may want to be in contact with one of these persons who have been part of companionship visits to our companion synods in Bolivia and/or South Africa. Some may be available by Skype. Some may be available at a time other than January 24.

[Click here to download the list.](#)

New Fair Trade Leader Guide from Lutheran World Relief Makes Planning Easy

If your congregation is thinking about starting a Fair Trade ministry (or if you'd like to help out your "FTP"-Fair Trade Person), Lutheran World Relief has a great, free resource for you called the Fair Trade Leader Guide.

This beautiful booklet takes you inside the process of setting up your congregation's Fair Trade Ministry and includes:

- Guidance on how to set up a Fair Trade ministry unique to your congregation's needs;
- A year-long calendar of events you can use to plan out your annual Fair Trade activities;
- Stories of the people and communities your congregation reaches through Fair Trade;
- Special prayers to use throughout your program year;



Lutheran World Relief
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. LASTING PROMISE.

We hope that this resource will make the experience of planning and carrying out a Fair Trade ministry even more enjoyable and meaningful.

Order your copy in the Resources section of the LWR website, or at this link:

http://lwr.org/site/apps/ka/ec/product.asp?c=dmJXKIOYJgl6G&b=8297945&en=bulLJOHJaLULaMKJ9KRL6MUKIJO4NSImLSKaO1lulbG&ProductID=2176017#_ga=1.62515433.496743524.1442437920

Women's Spring Retreat

April 22-24, 2016

Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp

SAVE THE DATE! Plan now to attend the WOMEN'S WOMEN'S RETREAT. Motivating speaker, Fun, Fellowship, Service projects, Music, Great food (no cooking!)... Bring your friends, daughters, mothers, granddaughters (14 and up) along for a fun, restful, spirit-filled weekend on beautiful Flathead Lake. Check out www.Impluchurch.org/womensretreat for more details, to get on our mailing list and to register! Hope to see you there. Sponsored by the Five Valleys Women and Great Divide Clusters.

Two phone calls can make a difference.

On Tuesday evening President Obama will include the bi-partisan comprehensive criminal justice reform bill in his State of the Union address. On Wednesday, faith based advocates will be joining the civil rights community, and building on the significance of this moment. Let us pull together and get this bill passed. Please call your Senators to let them know you want them to support the Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act (SRCA).

the first comprehensive criminal justice reform bill in over 30 years. This is a step in the right direction towards turning the tide on the mass incarceration



National Council of Churches
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN THE USA

crisis plaguing our country. For more information on SRCA, [click here](#).

Guide for making calls to your Senators

- Call the Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121 and ask for your Senator's office
- Introduce yourself as a constituent and a person of faith to the person who answers the phone and tell them you would like to leave a message for the Senator on legislation.
- "Please tell Senator _____ that as a person of faith I support the Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act and urge the Senator to support it as well."
- Ask for an email or written response to your call.

On Wednesday, make the call for justice.

Directory Updates

Changes to 2016 directory:

- p. 13: Mitch and Mary Jones' address should be 400 W. Broadway, not 40.
- p. 27: Karen Sethre, not Karin.
- p. 31: Joe Wahlin e-mail: jwahlin@blackfoot.net
- p. 31: Barbara Westhoff e-mail: barbaraj.westhoff@gmail.com
- p. 60: New Hope Lutheran Church (not Ministry)
- p. 77: LPA Pam Carter, delete home phone, add cell: 406-855-0364

Please let us know of corrections to the directory. The roster will continue to be updated on our website under the Resources/Directories section. A pdf of the entire directory is [available here](#).

A Chico Heads Up

Do not delay in making your room reservations.

The Pastors' Conference at Chico from Mar. 29-Apr. 1 will be hosting the presiding bishops of the ELCA and the Episcopal churches, as well as, the Montana bishops of each of church body. Because we are anticipating a larger the usual registration for this event, please consider making your room reservations now. There is still plenty of space available at Chico as we have reserved almost the entire facility. But, we are expecting that some event participants will have to stay in places other than at Chico Hot Springs. So, if you have not made arrangements yet, I urge you to do so soon. The information for registration for the event itself will not be going out until early February (Fat Tuesday, which is our "usual" target date, unless, of course, plans change between now and then!).

Blessings!

Pastor Linda Webster
Logistics Chair for the Pastors' Conference

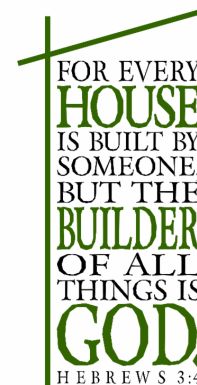
P.S. Chico Hot Springs Resort and Day Spa phone: (406) 333-4933

Reference the MT Synod Pastors' Conference when you make your reservations to get our 35% discount on your room costs.

Synod House

Everyone is busy cleaning up from Christmas, getting ready for annual meetings, and the regular routine of busyness. And then comes Ash Wednesday - all of that in four short weeks. How are your Lenten plans coming? Will we have a theme or a series? Who is making the soup? Will we do a pulpit exchange? Who will provide music? And the list goes on.

Now is the time to consider dedicating at least a portion of your mid-week offerings during this season to the Synod House Campaign. During this season we will be again reminded that "...the builder of all things is God." His work...our hands. To Him we give our thanks.



Previous news and notes:

[Click here to download the 2016 Annual Meeting Letter from Bishop Crist](#)

Starting Strong:

Opportunity for Clergy who have started a new call in the last 12 months.

Have you started a new call in the last 12 months? Maybe it is a first call, maybe it is a second or third or fourth or fifth. We are re-designing the Transitions seminar to reach people sooner in the process of beginning a new call. The new design features a small group of pastors (up to 6) meeting with a coach by video conference to learn from one another and from the coach about the issues common to transitions.

The cost is \$200 for 6 sessions. The first 6 who sign up will receive a scholarship of \$100. For more information, contact Pastor Jean Larson jeanlarson@gmail.com or 406 360 7658, or the Montana Synod Office. Or go to the website: www.jeanlarsoncoaching.com

The group will start in early February.

On Epiphany Christians celebrate the coming of the Magi to Christ child, bearing royal gifts to the one they believed to be the Messiah.



Cherish All Children

We learn that God's love, as seen through the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, is meant for all the world, even those from faraway places.

Pray + Educate + Connect + Act

And what kind of Messiah will Jesus be? Psalm 72 provides an answer to that question. What amazing words of hope to those who suffer the oppression and violence of sex trafficking! Their lives are precious! God is at work to redeem them!

Jesus calls us to be light for those victims. January 11 is International Human Trafficking Awareness Day.

Between today and January 11, I invite you to:

1. Sign an [online petition](#), asking the Associated Press to stop using the phrase "child prostitute."

The words of a young woman who was trafficked:

I was not a child prostitute or child sex worker. I was a victim and survivor of child rape. And so are the other kids out there now who are being bought and sold for sex. They are victims and survivors of child rape. But, too often, when the media reports on child sex trafficking, or attempts to tell our stories, the ways we are described mislead the public about what is happening to trafficked children.

2. Share this link on your Facebook page and other ways you connect with your friends.

3. Share this link on your church's Facebook page, website, bulletin, or newsletter.

Over the rest of January, track the language used in the news you read or hear when there is an article or report about child sex trafficking. Is the language appropriate, according to what is said in this petition? If not, contact the news editor to share your concerns and request that improvements be made.

Gracious and merciful God, we thank you for caring about the needy, the weak, and the poor. Help us to be your hands and feet of service to those in need. We thank you for seeing victims of trafficking as precious and redeeming their lives. Help us to share your love for them in creative, effective ways, so the oppression and violence may end. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Today's *Wednesday Prayer* was written by Diaconal Minister Amy Hartman, National Director of Cherish All Children.

Calling All Coaches!

As the new coaching coordinator for the Montana Synod, I am compiling a list of everyone who is trained in some form of coaching, who might be interested in coaching for the church. Every coach - ordained and lay-is invited to sign in. The ELCA is revamping its approach to coaching, and we want to be prepared for however the Montana Synod decides to make use of this good and helpful tool.

If you are interested, please email me the following information:

Your name and contact info, including your coaching website, if you have one. Please also include the congregation to which you belong.

Your training and experience. Please specify the type of coaching you do - leadership, executive, or life coaching on the one hand and programmatic coaching (Natural Church Development or other church-based program) on the other. Or both. Specify the provider and dates of training, the number of hours of instruction, and any mentoring hours you have received (or provided). Regarding experience, please be specific - if you do leadership/life/executive coaching, note how many individual and group client hours you have in, and any professional credentialing you have achieved. If you do programmatic coaching, please specify how many congregations you have worked with, approximate dates of service, and with which programs. Also please specify if you are a volunteer or professional coach - that is, if you work on a pro bono or fee basis.

All these specifics will help our database be as complete and useful as possible. Please email your information to: jeanklarson@gmail.com Thank you!

Pr. Jean Larson, Montana Synod Coaching Coordinator



NRIT News:

The following events require pre-registration:

Midwinter Theological Conference - Spiritual Pilgrimages - Following a Migrant God: Pilgrimages, Chosen and Unchosen with Dr. Marty Stortz

All over the world people are on the move. This past year 237,000 pilgrims made the journey to Santiago de Compostela in northwestern Spain. At least that number of refugees and asylum seekers sought entry into the European Union. Add to these numbers people in this country who find themselves temporarily or chronically without a permanent address. All over the world people are on the move.

On the surface, pilgrimage, trans-national migration, and homelessness seem to have little in common. But these experiences come together in Jesus, who observed to disciples then and now: "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head" (Luke 9:58, Matthew 8:20). What do these experiences tell us about a migrant God?

Feb. 1-3, 2016 at Izaak Walton Inn, Essex, MT (11 CEUs)

SCHOLARSHIPS!

We realize that new pastors can carry heavy educational debt. We also know that some churches are not able to provide the recommended amount of continuing education assistance and what is offered doesn't always go far enough. At the same time, we strongly believe in the importance of continuing education for our synod and we support the ELCA expectation of 50 hours of continuing education credits a year.

- Scholarships are now available to cover half the cost of NRIT events.
- Apply online or by leaving a message for Jenny at 406-453-1461.

*NRIT is grateful for financial gifts in support of this scholarship fund. Designate by writing "Jessica Crist Scholarship Fund" in the memo line.

The Luther 500

The Reformation 500 Task Force is looking for people to serve with our group. The only requirement is an interest in Reformation history and how the church is continually reforming. Many of our meetings are held via Google Hangouts so that very little lengthy travel is necessary, also helping to fulfill the first benchmark of the Montana Synod, "Meet the future boldly." If you would like to join our fun group, please contact Rev. Tonya Eza.

In conjunction with the Montana Synod's third strategic benchmark, "Deepen faith and witness," the 2016 Synod Assembly and Theological Conference theme will be the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation. Yes, it's a year early, but this is part of how we meet the future boldly, so that when 2017 comes along, we will all be prepared! In conjunction with the Synod Assembly, the Reformation 500 Task Force is sponsoring a Reformation stole and banner contest. We invite the member congregations of the Montana Synod to bring original stoles and/or banners with them to the Synod Assembly in June. Following are the rules that we ask you to follow:

If you are making a stole:

- Stoles must be able to be worn while presiding over worship, and should be able to withstand 10 worship services (feel free to experiment with materials!).
 - Stoles should be between 3" and 6" wide at the shoulder, and between 48" and 54" long.
 - o Be sure also to consider weight of stole and range of motion for the pastor in your design.
- Stoles need to be appropriate for a liturgically red service*
- o Red doesn't need to be the only color in the stole, but it should play a prominent role in the color palette of the stole.
 - The stole should be your own original design - it is fine to use established patterns (provided they are not copy-written) as long as they are put together in your own way.

If you are submitting a banner:

- Banners should be appropriate for display in a worship context
 - o The size of the banner should be able to fit comfortably within the dimensions of your sanctuary.
- Banners should be of an original design. You may use established patterns (provided they are not copy-written) as long as they are put together in your own way.

Please bring the stoles and banners with you to the Synod Assembly, and they will be displayed in a place where everyone can see. Assembly attendees will vote on their favorites.

Questions? Please contact Rev. Tonya Eza, chair of the Reformation 500 Task Force, or any of the other members of the group.

Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp

Retreats, Events, and Updates:

For additional information about these great upcoming retreats and events, check out our website at www.flbc.net! Also, watch for our 2016 Summer Brochure around Christmas! Be sure to register early for your first choice of weeks and programs!

January 21-22: Camp Songs & Liturgy Review Retreat

FLBC will be reviewing camp songs and liturgies in preparation for the 2016 summer camping season! You are invited to join Pr. Roberta Smythe, Pastor Grant Applehans, Jeremy Duprey, and others for an overnight retreat at camp, from Thursday noon until Friday noon. Call [406-453-1461](tel:4064531461) the camp office for more information!



January 22-24: Junior & Senior High Youth Ski Retreat

Come with your youth group to ski or snowboard at Whitefish Ski Resort or Blacktail Mountain. Enjoy excellent food, fellowship, worship back at camp! [CLICK HERE](#) for more information!

March 13: Outdoor Ministry Sunday

Celebrate camp on Sunday, March 13th at your congregation (or pick a Sunday that works for you)! [CLICK HERE](#) for more information!

March 18-19: Middle School Retreat

A one-night overnight retreat to bring your youth group to camp, filled with fun, games, Bible study, craziness, and an introduction to our 2016 summer theme, "Living

Like Jesus." [CLICK HERE](#) for more information!

March 18-20: Cross Country Ski Retreat

Whether you are brand new to cross country skiing or an expert, this retreat is for you! Participants must be 13 years of age or older. [CLICK HERE](#) for more information!

[Rev. Nathan Clements, Associate Director](#)
[Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp](#)
[603 S Main St](#)
[Kalispell, MT 59901](#)
[\(406\) 890-5104 \(cell\)](#)

Upcoming Events, etc.

January

18 Executive Committee Meeting, Great Falls
24 Companionship Sunday



Please put these important dates on your calendar:

2016 Montana Synod Assembly and Theological Conference: June 2-5, 2016, Holiday Inn Grand, Billings

2016 Bishop's Convocation, October 14, 2016, Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Helena, Montana
2016 First Call Theological Education: November 7-9, 2016, Great Falls

2017 Montana Synod Assembly: June 1-4, 2017, Best Western Heritage Inn, Great Falls

2017 First Call Theological Education: November 6-8, 2017, Great Falls

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Find upcoming issues of **The Parish Paper** [here](#)

To see what's coming up on the Montana Synod Calendar, go [here](#)

To download or view our Clergy Roster, Congregational and LPA Directories, find them [here](#)

Roster Transitions are updated mid-month and may be found [here](#)

## Amazon Smile

Shop at <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/36-3514273> in support of the Montana Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America.



*This e-letter is intended to convey information from synod staff, ministries and congregations, and we reserve the right to edit all submissions. All items must be received by the Monday before publication on Wednesday. Send submissions to [Colter McCarty](#).*

## Contact Information

phone: (406) 453-1461  
[www.montanasynod.org](http://www.montanasynod.org)

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