



**Montana Synod**

**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

## **News of the Week, October 5, 2016**

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### **Follow Us!**



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## **Prayers for October 9, 2016 Twenty-First Week of Pentecost**

### **Please remember in your prayers this week:**

For Bishop Shelley Wickstrom (Alaska Synod), recovering from a head injury sustained at the Conference of Bishops meeting.

For Bishop-Elect Motsamai Manong, newly elected Bishop of the Cape Orange Diocese.



### **From the Montana Synod Prayer Calendar:**

New Hope Lutheran Church, Great Falls  
Our Savior's Lutheran, Great Falls

Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod

Bishop's Convocation, 10/14, Helena

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## **Words From the Bishop - Deepen Faith and Witness- Social Statement on Human Sexuality**

*Note: This is part of a series on the Social Statements adopted by the ELCA in Assembly. Previous reflections are available at [www.montanasynd.org](http://www.montanasynd.org), archived.*



Before 2009, few people in the ELCA paid much attention to our social statements. Then "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust" was adopted and suddenly became the center of attention in our church. Adopted by a 2/3 majority, the statement was the culmination of years of negation and work. At the same Assembly, although not part of the Social Statement, additional resolutions on allowing the church to call rostered leaders who are in committed same-gender relationships.

So what does this 37 page statement (not including footnotes) say? It begins, as do most of our social statements, with a heavy dose of Lutheran theology. This is helpful in establishing how we Lutherans do theology.

"Lutherans are not reluctant to live confidently within the difficult, complex and ambiguous realities of daily life... They are able to remain secure in Christ in the midst of the confusions, lack of clarity, and struggle that God's calling entails. "In terms of Lutheran social ethics, "we believe that the way we order our lives in matters of sexuality is important o faithful living, but not central to determining our salvation. "Trust is a big issue in the statement. It describes both God's intention for relationships of trust, and the brokenness that erodes trust.

"Christians believe that God's promised future includes the transformation of the whole creation."

In acknowledging the potential for both positive and negative experiences, the statement affirms, "Sexuality finds expression at the extreme ends of human experience: in love, care and security, or lust, cold indifference, and exploitation."

The statement reiterates trust, a recurring theme. "Trust is a critical element that holds tougher couples and relationships, households and families, social structures and institutions."

The statement posits characteristic of trustworthy relationships. The statement moves to sexuality and structures that enhance social trust. It describes three: marriage, family, and protecting children – clearly establishing the importance of all three. The statement makes a strong case for marriage and its many benefits to the individuals and to society as awhile. It addresses the failure of some marriages, as well.

It acknowledges the historic understanding of marriage as a covenant between a man and a woman, but stops short of limiting it to that. Three pages of the statement address same-gender relationships that are lifelong and monogamous. (Note: lifelong and monogamous are intended to be the standard for heterosexual couples as well.) The statement acknowledges that faithful ELCA members are not of one mind, and sets out four positions regarding what the church should do about recognizing same- gender relationships:

1. Call to repentance and celibacy. Pray.
2. Live and let live, but don't call it marriage.
3. Affirm by way of prayer and civil unions.
4. Recognize marriage.

At the time the social statement was adopted, legal options were all over the map. Some states had marriage, some civil unions, some had prohibitions. Now, just a few years later, the Supreme Court has effectively legalized same-sex marriage across the country.

The penultimate sections of the document address Sexuality and Trust in Relationships, including friendship, commitment and cohabitation, and Sexuality and Responsibility, including boundary issues for clergy and laity.

The statement ends as it begins, with a reaffirmation of Luther theology.

"This statement responds to this church's call for a foundational framework that will help it discern what it earns to follow faithfully God's law of love in the increasingly complex sphere of human sexuality. It does not offer once-and-for-all answers to contemporary questions. Rather

it seeks to tap the deep roots of Scripture and Lutheran theological tradition for specific Christian convictions, themes, and wisdom that will assist people of faith to discern what is responsible and faithful action in the midst of the complexity of daily life."

Jessica Crist, Bishop



ONLINE QUILT  
AND ART AUCTION  
SUNDAY OCTOBER 9TH  
4 TO 6PM  
Benefit for Freedom in Christ  
Prison Ministry

MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH, 2939 COLTON BLVD., BILLINGS  
(COFFEE & SNACKS)  
HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH, 2152 W GRAF ST., BOZEMAN  
(CHILI DINNER)  
ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH, 1000 HELENA AVE., HELENA  
(COFFEE & DESERTS)  
ATONEMENT LUTHERAN CHURCH, 2205 34TH ST SW, MISSOULA  
(COFFEE & SNACKS)  
PELLA LUTHERAN CHURCH, 418 W. MAIN ST., SIDNEY  
(SPAGHETTI DINNER & DESSERT)

Bid against others across the state and  
watch the excitement mount as bids  
update LIVE! New this year: Set up your own  
individual bidder account and enter your own bids!  
Auction items can be previewed on our website or Facebook page  
Watch for link to our auction site!

WWW.FICPRISONMINISTRY.COM

\*PLEASE SEE THE BACK FOR BIDDER  
ACCOUNT DETAILS



There will be no pre-bidding. Please do not create your bidder account until just before the bidding opens at 4:30pm. Bidding ends at 5:30pm. If you have questions, please contact me (Bea) at [bea@ficprisonministry.com](mailto:bea@ficprisonministry.com) or you can call me at 406.560.4993.

## Mobile Bidding Tips



### Getting Started:

1. Enter [www.BIDDINGOWL.com](http://www.BIDDINGOWL.com) into your browser's address field.
2. Click on BIDDER SIGN UP or the GEAR to sign up or sign into your account.
3. Once signed in, click on the MENU button in the left hand corner of the screen.
4. Click AUCTIONS and select your non-profit organization.



### Bidding:

1. Browse the Categories in your non-profit's auction.
2. Select the item you like to bid on.
3. Enter correct BID AMOUNT into the field provided.
4. Click BID and CONFIRM bid.
5. Congratulations, you are the High Bidder for the item!

### Good to Know:

- Click on the GEAR to access your ACCOUNT.
- In order to receive TEXT MESSAGE NOTIFICATIONS, enter your telephone number and cell phone carrier under ACCOUNT DETAILS. You will receive Text messages when you've been outbid.
- Quickly find your LOW BID items by checking the red RECENTLY OUT BID link.
- View your BID STATUS and BID HISTORY by clicking on MY BIDS.
- CHECKOUT: Click on MY BIDS. Only Items that you've WON can be checked out. Click on the item and follow the instructions on the screen.



[Click here to download the full poster](#)

Please check out our website Events page for more information. This is our biggest fundraiser of the year and is open to the public. Please share this information with friends and family and invite them to attend, too!

<http://ficprisonministry.com/Events>

## Kairos Workshop

Please find an [attached](#) brochure on the upcoming Kairos Workshops that will be held Oct. 17- Oct 20th at various locations throughout Montana. This workshop is titled,

### Israel/Palistine: Beyond the Headlines. Digging Deep for Justice & Peace in the Holy Land

Please download the brochure for more info and registration information.

If you have questions contact: The Christian Church in Montana 406-564-1887

Immanuel Lutheran  
— COMMUNITIES —



1957-2017

In 2017, Immanuel Lutheran Communities will reach a milestone of service to the elders in Montana.

You can help as we prepare to celebrate by sharing with us your memories and memorabilia from the past 60 years of history. Contact Ronalee in the Development Office if you have any questions.

*Your stories, photos, and memorabilia can be sent to:*

Immanuel Lutheran Communities  
Attn: Ronalee Skees  
185 Crestline Avenue  
Kalispell, MT 59901  
Email: [rskees@ilcorp.org](mailto:rskees@ilcorp.org)  
Phone: 406-752-9243

*We would be honored if you would share your memories with us.*

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## Rostered Leaders and LPAs - Mark your Calendars for the Convocation!

Theme: Meet the Future Boldly: Taking a Hard Look at Sustainability

When: Friday, October 14, 9-4

Where: Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Helena, MT

Who: Rostered Leaders and LPAs

Resource: Dr. Kenn Inskeep

Cost: \$10, Lunch provided, if you register before October 10th. **After that, registration will be \$25**

**Preregister: [cmccarty@montanasynod.org](mailto:cmccarty@montanasynod.org) by October 10**

The Quality Inn, 2300 North Oakes Street, Helena, Montana, has rooms set aside for our group on Thursday, October 13th. Single rooms will be \$69 per night plus tax and doubles will be \$79 per night plus tax. If you wish to have more than two people in your room, there will be an additional \$10 charge. Please make your own reservation by calling 406-442-3064. There is a free continental breakfast offered. This block will remain available until October 6th

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**NRIT News:**

*The following events require pre-registration:*

Our first digital offerings are now available on our website. When you purchase the classes, you will have access to them throughout 2016 so can offer the class as a multi-session adult study or watch on your personal computer at your convenience.

**Gospel Road Show - Provoking the Gospel of Matthew**  
Dr. Richard Swanson

From the genealogy to the resurrection, Matthew tells a unique story of the messiah. Matthew's story shares much with both Mark and Luke, but it is finally distinct and fascinating in its own right. In this course we will explore the story Matthew tells. We will look closely at key preaching texts, but we will examine these (and other) key texts in the context of Matthew's whole story. In particular, we will listen throughout the story for echoes of the Slaughter of the Innocents (which enters the story almost as soon as Jesus does). And, because biblical interpretation must always take place in, and for the sake of, the real world, we will listen also for the echoes of the cries of Rachel as she weeps for her children in every century. In all of this, we will aim to discover the kinds of provocations that are useful to preachers who live with this old story for yet another year.

Oct 24 in Havre - 9:30 - 3:30

Oct. 25 in Lewistown - 9:30 - 3:30

Oct. 26 in Billings - 9:30 - 3:30

\$75 clergy / \$50 new to ministry, LPA / \$20 retired clergy and lay persons

\*Our first digital offerings are now available on our website. When you purchase the classes, you will have access to them throughout 2016 so can offer the class as a multi-session adult study or watch on your personal computer at your convenience.

1. Learning Our Place: Wilderness and Wonder from a Biblical Perspective.
2. Syria in the Bible and in the Early Church: A Heritage at Risk

To purchase these classes, go to [www.nrit.org](http://www.nrit.org). Click on the NRIT logo on the upper left side of the page. This will bring you to the NRIT home page. Under the logo, to the right side, click on NRIT Digital Education Store. Then click on the class you would like to access. You will need to pay online with a credit or debit card. After purchasing, you will receive access information.

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## Transitions Pilot Project: Ending Well

### Calling all BBCR's (Baby Boomers Considering Retirement):

The Synod used to do Transitions Workshops through NRIT, and I had the good fortune of leading 3 of them with my husband Daniel. Following a successful pilot of the "Starting Strong" part of Transitions in a new format last spring, I am doing the same for those of you who are aiming at "Ending Well."

Using a group coaching and peer learning model, with some good research materials from the Alban Institute, I am offering a 4-session video conference pilot project for those of you who are planning to retire in the next year or two. While Portico leads us through the financial planning parts of retirement, there is so much more going on!

I had the good fortune of being coached all the way through my retirement planning, as I was receiving

coach training from Auburn Seminary. It was helpful. Issues of timing, leave-taking tasks, boundaries, and celebrating are some of the meat and potatoes of "ending well." The wisdom and support of peers is an essential and valued part of the project.

We'll gather for 4 90-minute online sessions this fall, scheduled at the convenience of those who sign on. Group size is limited to 5. Two individual coaching sessions will be included as part of the pilot project. \$200 covers the group and individual sessions. CE funds can be used, and the Synod has limited wellness grants available as well.

Please email or phone me if you have questions or would like to sign on. We can talk about it at the Bishop's Convocation as well.

Blessings and peace,  
Jean

Rev. Jean Larson, ACC (International Coach Federation)  
Leadership Coaching for People in Ministry  
[www.jeanlarsoncoaching.com](http://www.jeanlarsoncoaching.com)  
[jeanlarson@gmail.com](mailto:jeanlarson@gmail.com) 406-360-7058

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## "Take What You Need, Bring What You Can, Above All Be Blessed"

This was the message printed on the front of three refurbished newspaper vending machines that Messiah Lutheran Church in Billings put together for part of our God's Work, Our Hands Sunday activities. We decided we wanted a tangible way to reach out to a neighborhood that is primarily middle class but has plenty of local traffic through it as well. We place groceries of all sorts in the boxes to share with anyone.

The idea was not original, but the hope was that children with food needs on the way to or from school, people in the neighborhood who were "just a little short this month" or anyone in the community that has need can come help themselves without needing to come inside the church and ask unless they chose to do so. We get a surprising number of people with serious food needs even on the west end of Billings.

What we didn't expect was that a community member who saw the boxes and not knowing their origin posted about them on his Facebook page; by the next day, his post had received hundreds of likes and had been shared across the country. Both local television stations and the Gazette picked up the story about these mini pantries and the response from the community has been great. Many people have stopped to get items: young couples, college students walking home for supper, people driving up and taking a few items home for their family. Many folks, people that both give and take, we don't see.

People have also called and stopped by to talk about them and to drop off donations. Some mornings the food in them is entirely different than the food the night before. What a "mustard seed" sort of event this has been...a small step of faith has turned into something that hopefully will spread not only to other parts of our city but to communities across the country. I hope the Gazette gets rid of all those unused newspaper vending machines sitting in their warehouse!

- Pastor Kris Mitzman

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## Thank You!

A big thank you to all who have sent books to the Tribal Adult Correctional Facility! We have received around 100 + books and I think we have every Grisham Book ever written. Likewise a big thank you for the coloring books and pencils. The ladies love these.

There is a new request and that is for socks. You would not believe how pitiful the socks are that the ladies wear and I assume the men as well. If you could send size Medium and Large it would be greatly appreciated.

Some great news is that 5 ladies were baptized last Saturday. There would have been 7, but two were released, hopefully i will hear from them. One of the ladies after her baptism said she felt so at peace. We have Word and Sacrament every Saturday. Please pray for all in the facility.

Thanks so much for your support and prayers.

Salaam/shalom

Pr. Chris Holler-Dinsmore  
Spirit of Life  
400 Garfield Street  
Wolf Point, MT 59201  
choller-dinsmore@fpcc.edu  
406-650-1497

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# *Wyoming Association of Churches*

## *40th Anniversary Celebration*

*October 13-15, 2016*



*Appreciating Diversity*



*To be Held at*

*Saint Marks Episcopal Church*  
*701 S. Wollscot St. Casper*  
*For more information, or to register visit*  
*[www.WyoChurches.org](http://www.WyoChurches.org)*

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## Fair Labor Standards Webinar

**Webinar Title:**  
New Overtime Rules

**Date and Time:** October 18, 2016, 12 noon, CDT

**Hosts:** Steve Knowles, Senior Attorney, Davis & Kuelthau  
Thomas Cunniff, Associate General Counsel, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

**Cost:** Free

**Registration deadline:** October 14, 2016

**Description:** The U.S. Department of Labor has adopted new overtime regulations under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), which go into effect on December 1, 2016. Among other changes, these regulations increase the minimum salary for exempt employees from \$23,000 to \$47,476. Many congregations, synods, and other ministries of the church have questions about how this impacts their employees and ministries. Does it apply to churches? What about pastors? Youth workers? Sextons? How about schools? Or camps? Join us for a free webinar on how the new regulations will affect religious institutions, and try to answer many of these questions.

Register today for this free webinar: <https://community.elca.org/FLSAwebinar>  
Instructions for connecting to the webinar will be sent to all registrants prior to the event.

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## Looking for more information on the 2017 Portico Health Benefit Changes?



As your organization kicks off a new year of ministry, it's also time to look ahead to next year's benefits. Portico's 2017 Annual Enrollment starts soon, and now is the time to prepare. I encourage you to share these resources with the people who make your organization's benefit and budget decisions:

- [Custom Comparison Report and Spreadsheet](#)  
Use this PDF report and Excel spreadsheet to review your options and estimate your 2017 costs.
- [Webinar: A Closer Look at 2017 Health Benefits and Rates](#)  
Watch this 30-minute recording to learn about the cost drivers behind our 5% baseline health contribution rate increase, and to preview our innovative new approach to help plan members purchase care with an eye to both quality and cost.

Between Oct. 3 and Oct. 28, your organization will need to select one ELCA-Primary health benefit option to offer your plan members for 2017. After organizations complete 2017 Annual Enrollment, plan members will make their benefit selections between Oct. 31 and Nov. 16. We look forward to receiving your organization's selection on EmployerLink starting Oct. 3.

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## Save the Date!

Mark your calendars, the 2017 Synod Youth Event will be held, February 10-12 at Good Shepherd Lutheran in Billings.  
More information coming soon!

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## Mac Connect

**You are invited to MAC Connect 2016:**  
Oct. 20-21

All are welcome to come to MAC's Thursday evening meetings and Friday workshop, October 20-21. We are especially eager to invite members of St. James' "Outreach" committee and those passionate about "Social Justice." Come be inspired. Learn about how you can join with Christians across the state to advocate on behalf of the least and the lost.

MAC Connect 2016 will occur in Butte, MT, starting the evening of Thursday, October 20 through Friday, October 21. Register at [www.macmt.org](http://www.macmt.org)





FOR EVERY  
**HOUSE**  
IS BUILT BY  
SOMEONE,  
BUT THE  
**BUILDER**  
OF ALL  
THINGS IS  
**GOD.**  
H E B R E W S 3:4

The new address for the Synod Office is:  
**3125 5th Ave S**  
**Great Falls, MT 59405**

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**The Synod Office has a New Address!**

**3125 5th Ave S**  
**Great Falls, MT 59405**

**Montana Synod Opportunities:**

**The Luther 5** 

### **October Newsbrief: Martin Luther's View of Creation**

How to think about and relate to the world around us has probably been a challenge since the earliest times of the human race. And probably also since the beginning, people have done that relating and thinking in markedly different ways.

Just think of some of the words we may use: nature... the natural world... ecosystem... creation... Each seems to refer to something of the same realities; but of course, each bears its own constellation of meanings. And think of the long (and sometimes very unhappy) history of how people of faith have engaged the realities behind the words. For example, it sometimes feels like it's a long way from Gerard Manly Hopkins's sonnet that begins, "The world is charged with the grandeur of God," to concerns about pollution, climate change, and ecological collapse. Yet

people of faith might still find themselves wanting somehow to hold it all together as they find themselves called into the ongoing conversation - and action - about these realities and concerns.

Our forebears in the faith still offer us some useful resources in the conversation, even though they may not have had words like "ecology" in their vocabulary. In this month's Reformation Newsbrief, Tonya Eza, who serves as pastor of Hope Lutheran Church in Powell, Wyoming (among other roles), briefly cites some elements of Martin Luther's thought that can help us continue to develop a useable and faithful frame of reference for our own thinking about and relating to the world around us. Check it out at the Montana Synod web site.

-Bob Quam

## **Download it here**



### **Community Lecture Series**

If you are in or near Billings, check out the lecture series being put on by Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd. More information can be [found here](#).

## **Christikon Clips October 2016**

### **2017 Calendar!**

The calendar and sessions listing is on our website [www.christikon.org](http://www.christikon.org). It's not too soon to start planning for next summer's trip to camp!

### **Fall Retreats:**

We have retreats scheduled into October with dates still available. Bring your group and enjoy fall in the mountains!

### **Thank you for your prayers for Christikon**

this summer, for the summer staff as they transition back to "real life", and for all who have joined in the Christikon life.

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



## **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](http://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!*



## October 7-8: Delegate Retreat & Annual Meeting

Congregations, please submit the names of your delegates to the office at (406) 752-6602 to reserve your spaces.

This no cost Delegate Retreat will equip your delegates to serve your congregation as the FLBC connection. On October 8th the retreat concludes with the Annual Meeting/Celebration at 1:00 PM!

## November 11-13: Crazy About Quilting Retreat

New and experienced quilters alike are welcome at this great retreat! Gather your friends and go crazy with quilting this weekend with our quilter in residence, Susan Hedahl! [CLICK HERE](#) for more information and to register.

## December 2-4: Family Advent Retreat

You won't want to miss this retreat as we prepare for the coming of Jesus' birth! Give your family or friends the Christmas gift of this retreat by registering today! [CLICK HERE](#) for more information.

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

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## [News of the Week Archive](#)

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### Upcoming Events, etc.

#### October

14 Bishop's Convocation

#### November

7-9 First Call



**Please put these important dates on your calendar:**

**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](#)

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## Amazon Smile

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



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*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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