



Montana Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

News of the Week, October 12, 2016

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Prayers for October 16, 2016 Twenty-First Week of Pentecost

Please remember in your prayers this week:

For Prastor Arne Bergland (Our Redeemer's Helena) on the death of his mother.



From the Montana Synod Prayer Calendar:

Bethel Lutheran, Great Falls
First English Lutheran, Great Falls
Redeemer Lutheran, Great Falls

Slovak Zion Synod

Words From the Bishop - I am going to Standing Rock



Standing Rock, photo credit: Linda Webster

On October 24-25 I will be at Standing Rock, in solidarity with the tribes. I will be there because our Synod's Apology pledged us to stand with the tribes, and I will be there because the Repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery did the same. You can find an interfaith statement signed by the ELCA on our web page. Below is a presentation I did for the Conference of Bishops on St. Francis Day, last week.

Langston Hughes wrote:

I've known rivers:

*I've known rivers ancient as the world and older than the flow of human blood in human veins
My soul has grown deep like the rivers.*

I bathed in the Euphrates when dawns were young.

I built my hut near the Congo and it lulled me to sleep.

I looked upon the Nile and raised the pyramids above it.

*I heard the singing on the Mississippi when Abe Lincoln went down to New Orleans, and I've
Seen its muddy bosom turn all golden in the sunset.*

I've known rivers:

Ancient, dusky rivers.

My soul has grown deep like the rivers.

I grew up along the Susquehanna River in Pennsylvania. I spent my twenties by the Charles River in Massachusetts. Now I live 2 blocks from the mighty Missouri River, the river that starts in the mountains, eventually joins the Mississippi, and forms the longest water way in North America. The synod where I am privileged to serve has the backbone of the continent. Waters flow to the east to make up the Missouri and the Mississippi. And waters flow to the west to make up the Columbia River.

In 2001 the Catholic Bishops of the Columbia watershed in both the US and Canada wrote an International pastoral letter about the Columbia, care of creation, and respect for indigenous people's rights along the river. In the last several years there has been a move to re-negotiate some of the agreements, to be more fair to the native peoples. Listen to parts of Riversong, a poetic reflection on the pastoral letter.

In the beginning was the Word, who brought forth the cosmos,

Creating the stars and the worlds and the waters,

A universe wondrous, dynamic and blessed.

The Spirit breathed spirit enlivening the cosmos:

Over eons in waters the first life was born,

*Then evolved yet new creatures, sent to air, onto land:
The finned ones and winged ones, the rooted ones and legged ones
All that had life emerged on the earth
To give life in turn, passing through generations,
Diverse forms of beauty spread over the world.
God said all creation was now "very good."*

*Then the Word who created the worlds and the waters
And the wondrous lives in them, came into this world;
Was immersed in womb waters, was born among people;
In the Jordan was baptized, living waters poured on him;
Came to teach us as Word by his words and life
Came to tell us that we among creatures were called
-as images, dreamers, aware of creation-
To drink living waters of earth and the Spirit
To care for each other, all life and our home.
The Word spoke of water as living and flowing;
The grace of the Spirit called all to be one:
A sharing of goods and a life of compassion
A way to see all as our neighbors to love.*

Two weeks ago today the Chippewa Cree tribes had a gathering on the banks of the Missouri River close to where I live. The name of the gathering was "Nipiy Oma Pimahtisiwin", Water is Life. The event was in support of the Standing Rock Sioux, in support of the river. I went, and invited others to join me, because our Synod has pledged to stand with the tribes. I went because we repudiated the Doctrine of Discovery and this was a concrete way to live that out. I was asked to pray, along with tribal elders and spiritual leaders. We sent our prayers and good wishes downstream to the brothers and sisters at Standing Rock, along with the tobacco. You could say we were being church for the sake of the world.

The Anglicans in Canada-both the Archbishop and the National Indigenous Bishop have issued a letter of support. They call for prayer, writing:

"Water is sacred and one of the four primal elements that sustain life on Mother Earth. We have not respected water, and consequently many lakes, streams, rivers and creeks are polluted. It is an element on the verge of scarcity. We must protect water. "

They conclude:

"We call the Church to pray for Standing Rock, for Good Minds to prevail, and for peaceful settlement. We also call the Church to pray for water, that is taken for granted in many of our communities but good water is getting scarce in our communities. We call upon the Church to pray for our governments, both Indigenous and Settler, that they may work together to protect our fragile Mother Earth. Flowing waters are the arteries of our Creator, precious and life giving. Without water there is no life here on Mother Earth. Pray that our Creator, God, will help us to live in balance and harmony with each other and with Earth, Fire, Air and Water."

For more than 5 centuries, Europeans have infiltrated the Americas, attempting to conquer the people who were already there, and taking their land and destroying their way of life. Five hundred years-that's longer than the Israelites were slaves in Egypt. And was all justified by a religious doctrine-one which we formally repudiated. In many of our synods. And at the Churchwide Assembly. Not even 2 months ago.

Robert Allen Warrior, in his article "Canaanites, Cowboys and Indians," (Deliverance, Conquest and Liberation Theology Today) writes: "First, the Canaanites should be at the center of Christian theological reflection and political action. They are the last remaining ignored voice in the text, except perhaps for the land itself."

He goes on:

"No matter what we do, the conquest narratives will remain. As long as people believe in the Yahweh of deliverance, the world will not be safe from Yahweh the conqueror. But perhaps, if they are true to their struggle, people will be able to achieve what Yahweh's chosen people in the past have not: a society of people delivered from oppression who are not so afraid of becoming victims again that they become oppressors themselves, a society where the original inhabitants can become something other than subjects to be converted to a better way of life or adversaries who provide cannon fodder for a nation's militaristic pride."

The Columbia River statement sets out 10 considerations for caring for the earth and the River.

Number 4 is "Respect the dignity and traditions of the Region's Indigenous Peoples."

" The indigenous peoples have a wealth of spirituality, culture and traditions that call forth a need for appropriate respect and preservation. We are brothers and sisters in God's creation, and we are grateful to the First Nations and the Native Americans for the lessons they teach about respect for nature. We apologize for cultural insensitivity do lack of Justice both past and present."

" Today we extend an offer of peace and friendship to native peoples of our region. We pledge to work with them to seek equitable resolutions of conflicts over treaty rights, to work with them to enhance their engagement with other cultures , to foster their economic development and to participate with them to care for creation. We call upon members of our parish communities, government officials, those with economic interests and the general public to join in these efforts."

This is not just about the Columbia. It's not just about the Pacific Northwest tribes. It's about all of God's creation, and all of God's people. It's about the Missouri, and the Standing Rock Sioux. To whom we made a promise.

Nipiy Oma Pimahtisiwin. Water is life.

*God saw living waters and peoples who cared for them,
Sharing the life of the cosmos and commons
-the tree of life gave the its fruits for their food
Its leaves were their medicine, healing for all-
The Riversong soared, then on wind, over waves
God blessed them, saying to them, "You are all very good."*

Nipiy Oma Pimahtisiwin . Water is life.

Amen.

Interfaith Statement of Support for the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe

Hurricane Relief

Sisters and Brothers,

If people wish to donate to Haiti relief have them send donations to the ELCA marked "Haiti Relief" or "Hurricane Matthew".

The ELCA is working through the Lutheran World Federation and through Church World Service in Haiti. We will also be working in Cuba.

Bishop Eaton

Firewood for Standing Rock

I'd like to take a load of firewood to Standing Rock around the 19th. Problems is I'm having difficulty finding wood in Sidney. If anyone can provide wood to support the Protectors I will pick up and deliver. Thinking of 1 1/2-2 cords. Does not have to be cut or split as long as I can fit it in our horse trailer. Thanks.

Pr. Ron Martin-Dent, ronmartindent@yahoo.com

More tickets released for Joint Catholic-Lutheran Commemoration in Malmö Arena, Sweden

LUND, Sweden/ GENEVA, 12 October 2016 - (LWI) More tickets have been released for the joint Catholic-Lutheran Commemoration of the Reformation on 31 October in Lund and Malmö, Sweden, co-hosted by The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and the Catholic Church.

A first round of tickets for the celebrations at the Malmö arena released a month ago quickly sold out. The new round of tickets can be purchased from Ticketmaster for 100 Swedish krona (10 Euros) with revenues earmarked for strife-torn Syria.

At the Malmö arena, the LWF, which serves more than 2.3 million refugees globally, will sign a cooperation agreement with the Catholic relief agency Caritas Internationalis, which works in 164 countries. (Read More)

Visit the [Lund 2016 web site](#)

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

[October Newsletter from our Russian Correspondent - Bradn Buerkle](#)

Rostered Leaders and LPAs - The Convocation is this Friday!

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: Lunch provided, **Late registration will now be \$25**

Register: cmccarty@montanasynod.org

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



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

Take advantage of this opportunity to study preaching texts for next year. It will be a time set apart to look at the Gospel of Matthew anew. (5 continuing ed credits)

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 / \$10 retired clergy and lay persons (lowered price for lay people- please personally invite anyone from your congregation who might be interested.)

Midwinter Theological Conference - Izaak Walton Inn Jan 30-Feb 1

A wonderful time to gather with colleagues, relax in the hot tub or around the lobby fire, ski or snowshoe in a winter wonderland and to delve into Paul's writings with Dr. David Fredrickson.

***Adult Study Opportunity**

Syria in the Bible and in the Early Church: A Heritage at RiskWe hear about the war in Syria almost every day, but many of us don't know a lot about the history of this country and especially how it relates to the early church. Pr. Tom Lee, a retired pastor and Old Testament Scholar spent time on archeological sites in the middle east and for one summer in Syria. He agreed to sit down with Colter McCarty and record this class on the antiquities in Syria and what they can tell us about our history as Christians.You can access this digital/online hour long class for \$25 and continue to have access for a year. A great opportunity for an ongoing adult study. (Pr. Lee shares reading resources as well.)

To purchase these classes, go to 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.

Sabbath Center Retreat

Watchful Waiting:

Attending to the Holy Spirit Inside Us and in the World

St. Thomas the Apostle Retreat Center
Cody, Wyoming
Cost: \$190

Presbytery of Wyoming

Speaker: Rev. Christopher Brown

Thursday, Nov. 3rd 6:00pm
- Saturday, Nov. 5th (Lunch)



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.

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
jeanlarson@gmail.com 406-360-7058

Wyoming Association of Churches

40th Anniversary Celebration

October 13-15, 2016



Appreciating Diversity



To be Held at

Saint Marks Episcopal Church

701 S. Wollcot St. Casper

For more information, or to register visit

www.WyoChurches.org



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
Phone: 406-752-9243

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

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.

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.

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!

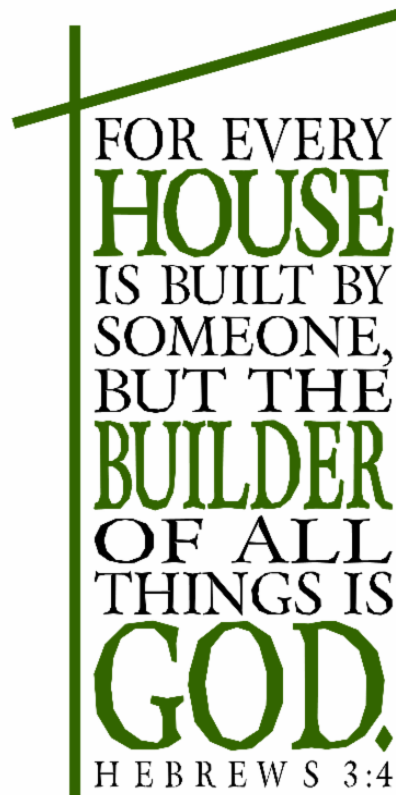
Mac Connect

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





The new address for the Synod Office is:

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

**The Synod office will be closed on
Friday, October 14th.**

The staff will be at the Bishop's convocation.

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. 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 • 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! Also, watch for our 2016 Summer Brochure around Christmas! Be sure to register early for your first choice of weeks and programs!



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

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 \(cell\)](#)

[News of the Week Archive](#)

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.montanasynd.org](http://www.montanasynd.org)

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)



