



Montana Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

News of the Week, November 2, 2016

In this issue

[Words from the Bishop](#)

[NRIT News](#)

[Transitions Pilot Project](#)

[2017 Youth Event](#)

[October Newsbrief](#)

[News of the Week Archive](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

[Amazon Smile](#)

Follow Us!



Prayers for November 6, 2016

All Saints Sunday

Please remember in your prayers this week:

For Pastor Scott Hedegaard, whose father, Jim, passed away last week.

For Pastor Steve VanGilder, having vocal cord surgery November 2

For the First Call Theological Education gathering in Great Falls, November 7-9

The Installation of Jean Hay at Bethlehem Lutheran, Billings

For Pastor Seth and Jennifer Nelson on the birth of their daughter Freja Elizabeth Nelson!



From the Montana Synod Prayer Calendar:

American Lutheran, Billings
Atonement Lutheran, Billings

Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod

Words From the Bishop - Deepen Faith and Witness- *All Saints Matter*

You only have to read the Gospel for All Saints to know that Jesus would never get elected to anything. He'd get banished as a crazy person, locked up for being a troublemaker. And that is exactly what did happen to him 2 millennia ago. He was locked up and sentenced to death as a troublemaker. Leymah Gbowee, a Liberian woman who spoke at the Churchwide Assembly said, "People say to me, 'Leymah, you must not be such a troublemaker' And I say to them, "I got a Nobel Peace Prize for being a troublemaker. You should try it, too."



Jesus was considered a troublemaker because he challenged the status quo. He challenged the cultural assumptions of the Roman Empire of his day, and his words continue to challenge us today. Particularly in this contentious election year, Jesus' words in the Gospel of Luke stand as a jarring contrast to the rhetoric that inundates us and tells us what to long for and what to fear. Jesus would never get elected with a platform like the beatitudes, regardless of whether you go with this year's Luke, or the more familiar Matthew.

Focus groups have documented that people do not want to hear "Blessed are you who are poor" or "Blessed are you who are hungry now," or "Blessed are you when people hate you." And they certainly do not want to hear "Woe to you who are rich," or "Woe to you who are full now," or "Woe to you when all speak well of you."

And as for "Love your enemies," "bless those who curse you," "don't fight back against a person who hits you," "give to everyone who begs from you," this is not considered good policy. But it is the ethic that Jesus taught, the ethic that we affirm as Christians, even if it makes us uncomfortable.

It is the ethic, ultimately, that connects us with all the saints, those living and those who have died in the faith. On All Saints we remember the heroes and the martyrs, and we also remember our grandmothers and grandfathers, our mentors and teachers who helped us grow in the faith by their words and by their example. And we remember Christians across the globe—our ecumenical full communion partners with whom we share ministry; our companion synods whom we accompany in ministry and service; Roman Catholics with whom we are exploring the meaning of the Reformation five centuries ago; Orthodox; Pentecostal; large denominations and individual congregations—we acknowledge that despite our differences in expression and emphasis, we are one in Christ.

On Monday of this last week an historic event took place. On the 499th anniversary of the reformation, Pope Francis joined Lutherans from around the globe at a spectacular service of worship, commemorating the Reformation. What a hopeful sign to cling to as we celebrate All Saints this year, and as we finish up this divisive election season. Next year, on October 30, I invite you to join the 2 Montana Catholic Bishops and me for our joint service of Christian Unity.

Such is the Kingdom of God

Jessica Crist, Bishop

2017 Salary Guidelines

The new Salary guidelines are now available on our website under the Resources tab. They can also be downloaded [here](#).

Leadership Program for Musicians

The Leadership Program for Musicians is a teaching ministry that gives church musicians an increased awareness, along with the tools and resources to enable congregations to sing well and participate actively in worship. This is a joint ELCA/Episcopal music learning venture.

[More information can be found here www.lpm-online.org](http://www.lpm-online.org)

Dear Congregational Leaders,

Your Mission Support helps to fund ministries of the church that no one congregation can do alone. Through it, your congregation is part of all that our church does in Montana and northern Wyoming through the Montana Synod. In addition, the Montana Synod passes on 40% of what it receives to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for its work nationally and throughout the world. Thank you for your partnership in making all the ministries of our church possible!

Watch for the large envelope from the Montana Synod with the bright pink label on it. Discuss at your next Council meeting. Return your 2017 Mission Support Intent Form by February 1, 2017 in the self-addressed envelope.

For the coming year 2017 we will be emphasizing the fourth of our Montana Synod's Benchmarks: "Promote Unity". With God's help, we do this in our congregations and also in the ministries of the Montana Synod and the ELCA. In all the expressions of our church, we do God's work together! Thank you for your partnership in our shared ministries through your Mission Support!

Yours in Christ,
Pastor George Karres
Director for Evangelical Mission - Montana Synod



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.

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 letter to the Philippians with Dr. David Fredrickson.

Conference starts with supper Monday at 5pm and ends at noon on Wednesday. 11 Contact hours available.

For more information or to sign up: <http://www.montanasynod.org/nrit>

***Adult Study Opportunity**

Syria in the Bible and in the Early Church: A Heritage at Risk

We 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.

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

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)



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
Phone: 406-752-9243

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

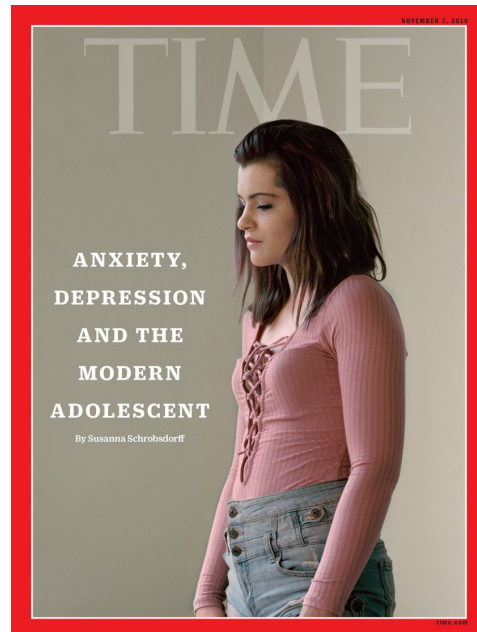
Intermountain Featured

[Look for this issue, coming out soon](#), online and in newsstands, and thank you, as always, for your kind support of Intermountain and your generosity to children, teens, and families in need.

From the Article:

"Daniel Champer, the director of school-based services for Intermountain in Helena, Mont., says the one word he'd use to describe the kids in his state is overexposed. Montana's kids may be in a big, sparsely populated state, but they are not isolated anymore. A suicide might happen on the other side of the state and the kids often know before the adults, says Champer. This makes it hard for counselors to help.

"And nearly 30% of the state's teens said they felt sad and hopeless almost every day for at least two weeks in a row, according to the 2015 Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey. To address what they consider a cry for help from the state's teens, officials in Montana are working on expanding access to school-based and tele-based counseling."



Looking for more
information on the 2017

PORTICO®

Benefit Services | A Ministry of the ELCA

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.



Montana Synod Winter Youth Gathering 2017

When: February 10-12, 2017

Where: Lutheran Church of
the Good Shepherd, Billings,
MT.

Cost : \$50 (before January
13) (\$60 after January 13)
Adult Leaders Free.



With Special Guest

[Click here for the pdf version of the poster](#)

[Click here for the Microsoft Publisher version](#)



intermountain

Caring Solutions ■ Strong Families ■ Healthy Communities

Perhaps it is still a little early to be thinking of Christmas... BUT, we want to make sure to get these materials into your hands well in advance so you can be prepared for Advent and a special resource provided to us by Intermountain's chaplain, Chris Haughee.

Have you ever seen an Advent devotional based on Chrismons? What's a Chrismon, you say?! A Chrismon is a type of symbol. Chrismons, or "Christ Monograms" are all hung on a tree, the Chrismon Tree. The tree itself is also a symbol for the Christmas season, a reminder of the truths we celebrate as we recall Jesus' birth. Many churches use the Chrismon Tree as a way of reminding their congregations about the truths celebrated this coming holiday season. They were first used as a way to celebrate Advent by Ascension Lutheran Church in Danville, Virginia!

Perhaps your congregation has a Chrismon Tree? It really is a wonderful way to celebrate Advent, and now it's a great way to connect with Intermountain's Residential Services and their chaplain, Chris Haughee, too.

Chaplain Chris has written an Advent devotional based on the Chrismon symbols, based on lessons he has used in chapel services at Intermountain. Intermountain would like to pass these on to the churches of the Montana Synod of the ELCA as a way of saying thank you for a wonderful year of mission together bringing healing through healthy relationships.

Click [HERE](#) to download a copy of the free resource for your church!

Montana Synod House Build

Thank you for your interest in partnering with the synod on this project. By utilizing volunteer labor, we will be able to save upwards of 15% of the building costs. With congregations from across the state participating it will truly be "our house!"

Here is what the project will look like;

We will be working with the ELCA Mission Builders. They have worked on a number of projects in our synod including Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp, Bethel Great Falls and Our Redeemers Helena. You can go to their elcamissionbuilders.org to find out more about them.

We will be seeking crews to start on June 6th and **expect to finish in early September.**

Make up of crews

We will be looking for teams of 4 builders and 2 cooks to work each week. The build team will be working under the supervision of the Mission Builder manager and foreman. There will be four mission builders joining the project. The cook team will provide snacks for the crew. Note that safety is key on the jobsite so hardhats and the use of safety equipment will be required.

Work Week

The work week will begin on Tuesday and end on Saturday. Mission builders works from 7:30am - 4:30 pm. with a morning break and devotions, lunch at noon and an afternoon break.

Housing

It appears that it would be more cost effective for the volunteers to stay in hotels. RV's and campers could be utilized, the cost at KOA is \$65 per night. It would be great if the congregations of Great Falls could provide some housing for volunteers during the project.

Food

Each team member will contribute to the food kitty. There will be 4 breakfast and dinner meals, 5 lunches as well as morning and afternoon snacks. The last evening is usually a celebration night where the teams go out together. The suggested contribution is \$40.

It would be helpful if once a week a congregation or congregation members could host a meal either in homes or at the church.

Equipment

When you have registered we will provide you with a list of items you might bring with you.

Expertise

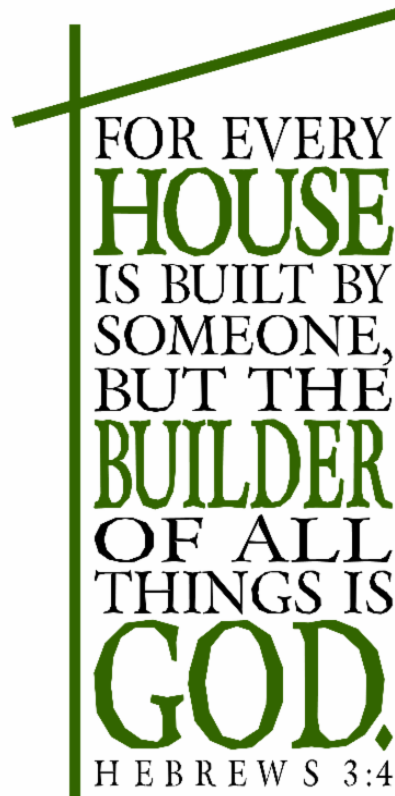
Through all phases of the build we will be able to utilize the skill level of each member of your

team. If there are specific skills needed that will be communicated once we have the building schedule.

Questions?

Rev. Arne Bergland arne@ourredeemerlives.org

[Click here to download the full signup sheet!](#)



The new address for the Synod Office is:

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

The Synod Office has a New Address!

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

Montana Synod Opportunities:

The Luther 5 

November Newsbrief: Martin Luther's View of Creation

Our society today has paradoxical views of the devil. On the one hand, we think that we are rational creatures who can explain away any Biblical references to the devil or demon

possession by referring to them as a guilty conscience, or physical or mental illness that people in previous centuries did not know how to properly diagnose, and therefore blamed on the devil. On the other hand, we like to scare ourselves with horror movies, and there are legitimately some things that happen in life that we simply can't explain away rationally. In this month's newsbrief, Paul Seastrand takes a look at what Luther thought about the devil. Contrary to the idea of the devil in a red suit with horns and a tail, Luther thought of the devil as a real spiritual presence that worked to tear people away from the true Gospel by using such tools as doubt and temptation. If you've ever had doubts about the baptismal questions which ask us to renounce the devil and all his works and all his ways, then this newsbrief is for you.

Rev. Tonya Eza
Hope Lutheran, Powell, WY

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!

The Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday November 13th at Big Timber Lutheran Church beginning at 3:30pm.

Your appointed Delegates and Pastors will be hearing about this past summer and the plans for the 2017 season, cabin renovation, and much more.

Thank you to Big Timber Lutheran Church for hosting!

We look forward to seeing you all there!

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 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.

January 13-15: Jr. & Sr. High Youth Ski Retreat

Come for an awesome time of food, fellowship, snow games, worship, skiing, and FUN! [CLICK HERE](#) for more information. 1 adult attends for free for every 10 youth!

[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.

November
7-9 First Call



Please put these important dates on your calendar:

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

~~~~~  
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)

Join Our Mailing List!