



**Montana Synod**

**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

## **News of the Week, December 14, 2016**

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## **Prayers for December 18, 2016 Fourth Sunday of Advent**

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

For Pastor Rob Nedbalek's daughter Danyelle who is undergoing medical tests.

For Pastor Karl Guhn who is undergoing knee replacement surgery.

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

Pella Lutheran, Sidney  
Zion Lutheran, Glendive  
Our Savior's Lutheran, Broadus  
Hope Lutheran, Fallon

Southeastern Synod



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## **Words From the Bishop: Deepen Faith and Witness - Advent: Suffering into Compassion**

Advent isn't just about the preparation for Christmas. It is about the waiting in the in-between time for the coming of the Lord. And so the texts that we read are challenging-challenging to the status quo. We do not really know what the coming of the Lord will be like. They didn't know the first time, and we don't know now.

Despite my theological training and my years as a pastor, I carry deep within me an expectation that Advent will be an orderly and predictable progression from Advent 1 to Christmas Eve. In my mind, the candles in the Advent wreath are burned in nice uniform steps.

But life isn't that way, is it? And neither is Advent. Advent is as full of the unexpected, the disruptive, as any other time of year. During Advent in my first call, my grandfather died. An unanticipated trip to Pennsylvania to be with family and speak at the funeral meant that the Advent candle for that week didn't get to burn down the way I had expected. Another year our first child was born. Another year my husband was diagnosed with a brain tumor. Another year a friend's son was nearly killed in a motorcycle accident. Another year my brother found out that his cancer had come back.



Probably our most meaningful Christmas as a family was when we had to cancel a week in Bermuda with extended family because of a dubious MRI that looked like the return of a brain tumor. We had no commitments, no parties to attend, no gifts to wrap. We just had ourselves, and we experienced Christmas in a way more profound than we ever had before.

The Advent texts we read are not particularly comforting. They tell of divisions and upheavals. That may not be what we expect to hear in Advent. We want to hear about the coming of the Christ child-peace on earth, good will towards all.

In my experience, Advent shows us why we need peace on earth, good will towards all.

Jessica Crist, Bishop

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# Attention: Congregations and Pastors in Transition

We have been informed that the ELCA portal for pastors' RLPs and congregations' MSPs will be unavailable December 15 through January 17.

That means that nobody will be able to post or download. Please be aware of this.

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## New Book by Bishop Brookhart

Bishop Franklin Bookhart of the Episcopal Church, our full communion partner, has published a new book,

[Journey with Jesus: Encountering Christ in his Birth, Death, and Resurrection.](#)

[From the publisher website:](#)

### About

Do you want your life to be a vigorous, purposeful, and liberated journey? That is exactly what an encounter with Jesus Christ offers. This book presents a way to engage Christ through a detailed yet accessible look at the four major events of his life and provides suggestions about living out the implications of those events on a daily and practical level.

### Bio

The Right Rev. C. Franklin Brookhart Jr. has been the Episcopal Bishop of Montana since 2003. He is the Easter and is co-editor of and author of *Living the Resurrection: Reflections after contributor to That They May Be One?* The Episcopal-United Methodist Dialogue.

[Read an excerpt here!](#)



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## 2017 Salary Guidelines

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

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## Concordia College Christmas Concert

The Concordia Christmas concert will be rebroadcast on Montana PBS stations this year!



Broadcast times are:  
December 24th 8pm  
December 25th 1pm

Concordia College of Minnesota re-imagines the Christmas message with new music embracing peace and reconciliation under the artistic leadership of composer and conductor Rene Clausen. This concert production marks the 125th Anniversary of the College's founding by Norwegian immigrants. 400 student musicians perform in front of an original mural measuring nearly 200 feet wide.

For more info [click here](#)

Any questions should be directed to Doug Brekke of Big Timber Lutheran. 406-932-5400

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## 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

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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.

**Midwinter Theological Conference: Desire and Deconstruction in Paul's Letter to the Philippians**  
with Dr. David Fredrickson

Izaak Walton Inn, Jan 30-Feb 1

Come join us for a time of learning, discussion, outdoor recreation, fellowship and renewal.  
For more information or to sign up: <http://www.montanasynod.org/nrit.html>

**And on the Eastern Side of the State:**  
**Spiritual Accompaniment in Disaster: A Training Session**

Led by Mr. Dick Deschamp (Synod Liason to Lutheran Disaster Response) and Pr. Amanda Liggett (serving Zion Lutheran in Roundup and American Lutheran in Lavina.)

March 6th at 9am - 3pm Messiah Lutheran in Billings  
March 7th at 9am - 3pm Zion Lutheran in Glendive

**While on the Western Side:**  
**Preaching as a Ministry of the Whole Congregation**  
With Dr. Shauna Hannan

Wednesday, March 8th, Bethlehem Lutheran in Kalispell  
Thursday, March 9th in Atonement Lutheran in Missoula  
Friday, March 10th Our Redeemer Lutheran in Helena

\*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](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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## WELCA News

[Click here for the full fall newsletter](#)

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# Montana Synod Winter Youth Gathering 2017

**When:** February 10-13, 2017

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

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

**What:** A youth Gathering for Jr. & Sr. High youth

**Why:** To Grow as Disciples of Jesus through togetherness, service, music and fun.

To register your group or for more information Contact Pastor Jason Asselstine at [jasselstine@montanasynod.org](mailto:jasselstine@montanasynod.org) #(406) 453-1461



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

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

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## 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](http://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](mailto:arne@ourredeemerlives.org)

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

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**  

**December Newsbrief: Luther Porpourri for Facts and Fun**

**[Download it here](#)**

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**Christikon Clips  
December 2016**

During this holiday season we celebrate the Christikon family, spread across the country and world. Our community continues to grow both in numbers and in faithfulness to our God. Bring your family to Christikon next summer and experience its rich tradition and strength of connection to one another.

Blessings to you and yours this Advent and Christmas.

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



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## 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!*



Merry Christmas from your FLBC family!

### 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!

### March 17-19: Middle School Retreat

A one or two night retreat to bring your youth group to camp for fellowship, craziness, games, and Bible studies introducing our 2017 theme, "Just Add Water." [CLICK HERE](#) for more information. 1 adult attends for free for every 10 youth!

### April 2: Outdoor Ministry Sunday & Give Flathead Day

One day with two ways to celebrate and support FLBC! [CLICK HERE](#) for information about Outdoor Ministry Sunday; [CLICK HERE](#) for information about Give Flathead Day!

### April 23-25: Adult Spirituality Retreat

An inspiring retreat co-led by Dr. Jim and Julie Aageson. You don't want to miss this opportunity to enjoy fellowship and grow in your faith! [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.

February  
10-12 Synod Youth Gathering

Please put these important dates on your calendar:

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