



Serve the World,
Especially the
Poor and Those in
Need

Montana Synod
Assembly

June 5-7, 2015

Best Western Heritage Inn

Great Falls, Montana

Reports Book

ASSEMBLY REPORTS – 2015

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Montana Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Dear Friends in Christ,

Welcome to the 2015 Montana Synod Assembly! Our theme this year is “Serve the World, Especially the Poor and Those in Need,” from our Synod Benchmarks. We are focusing on the world. We’ll have global music, global workshops, global keynotes, global worship. You’ll be able to learn more about our Companion Synods, and about how our Church is engaged in countries across the globe.

We’ll also be honoring our long-time Treasurer, Harold Spilde, who is retiring as Synod Treasurer. We’re asking everyone to bring along a box or can of non-perishable food, to give to the FISH food program that is this year’s recipient of the Spirit of Hope Award, and which Harold Spilde directs.

We’ll be receiving a new congregation into the Synod—New Hope in Great Falls, formed from a group of people who wanted to stay in the ELCA when their congregation left. We’ll also be voting on going into partnership with Intermountain Children’s Home. And we will recognize the 20th anniversary of the historic agreement between the Montana Synod ELCA and the Montana Association of Jewish Communities.

Of course we will consider a budget, vote on constitutional changes, elect voting members to the 2016 Churchwide Assembly, and elect a nominating committee and a treasurer. And we’ll hear an update on the campaign for a new Synod House. We are hoping that people will make gifts to the campaign in honor of Harold Spilde, who has long been a champion for the new Synod House.

We will bracket every day with worship. On Friday night we will have a “Procession of Promise,” with everyone coming forward during the offering with their congregation’s statement of intent. (Don’t worry, copies of what you have already sent in will be provided.) And on Sunday, the Assembly Offering will go to fund a water project in Bolivia that helps a church farm support children in Cobija.

I look forward to seeing you in Great Falls.

In Christ,

Jessica Crist, Bishop



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Spring 2015

“Oh, to grace how great a debtor daily I’m constrained to be; let that grace now like a fetter bind my wand’ring heart to thee. Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it; prone to leave the God I love. Here’s my heart, oh, take and seal it; seal it for thy courts above.”

– Evangelical Lutheran Worship 807, verse 3

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We are church. As members in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), we are found by and abiding in Christ; we are God’s beloved people gathered around word and sacrament. Every week you gather in your congregations to hear God’s word and to share in the Lord’s Supper, to know Christ crucified and Christ risen. My hope and prayer is that through our spiritual practices and our worship we are drawn closer to and are more aware of the love of God shown through Jesus’ death and resurrection.

As we gather in Christ’s name at our synod assemblies, I invite you to pray, with me, for one another and the work we do together across this church. Remembering the words of the apostle Paul: “So we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another” (Romans 12:5).

In my international travels earlier this year, it became clear to me that the ELCA is part of the body of Christ that spans the globe and the centuries. When we consider issues such as the ecclesiology of a global church, or a unified Word and Service roster, or ministry to and with same-gender families, it is never, nor can it ever be, a conversation just among us.

This past fall, we entered the season of celebrating five years of our full communion partnership with the United Methodist Church. In late May, we join our Catholic sisters and brothers in Washington, D.C., to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the beginning of the U.S. Lutheran-Catholic Dialogue, which over the years has produced 11 substantial reports. We continue our work in strengthening all of our ecumenical and inter-religious partnerships.

We also are accompanying our brothers and sisters globally. We have visited with unaccompanied migrant children and families fleeing their homes in the Northern Triangle countries of Central America. Companions in the region have shared about their struggles, root causes of this migration and avenues for ELCA response. ELCA members, synod bishops and churchwide staff have borne witness to and talked about ELCA plans for strategic engagement.

Through The Lutheran World Federation, we work with refugees and internally displaced people in Syria, Cameroon, South Sudan, Central African Republic, Kenya, Jordan, Ukraine, Iraq and many other places. We have made significant progress in controlling malaria and treating Ebola. We are developing a social statement on the social issue of women and justice. These are just a few of the ways that we are church for the sake of the world.

This summer brings two wonderful events. Both the ELCA Youth Gathering in Detroit and the Worship Jubilee in Atlanta will give us an opportunity to ask: How is God calling the church

today, and what does God’s work mean for our service to our community and the world? These events will be a time for rich conversation, faith formation and renewal of worship for the sake of the gospel and for the life of the world.

Good progress continues to be made on the ELCA’s observance of the 500th Anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation. Two communication platforms recently debuted: www.ELCA500.org and the “ELCA Reformation 500” Facebook page. The theme for the 500th anniversary observance is “Freed and Renewed in Christ,” with the tagline, “500 Years of God’s Grace in Action.” This will also be the theme for the 2016 ELCA Churchwide Assembly. You are invited to come to the “Grace Gathering” in New Orleans, which will be held concurrently with the Churchwide Assembly on its last four days, Aug. 10-13, 2016. The goals of the Grace Gathering are for personal renewal in faith, to be equipped for meaningful observances of the 500th anniversary, and to increase the number of ELCA members who will take part in service-learning activities in New Orleans as part of the Churchwide Assembly. Please come!

Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA is off to a good start with more than \$48.4 million in generous gifts and commitments toward the campaign priorities. This year we are seeking support for new and renewed congregations in *The Campaign for the ELCA*. The impact of the campaign will go far beyond the nearly \$200 million goal. It will establish a strong culture of stewardship in which this church will be well-positioned to do God’s work in Jesus’ name throughout the world for decades to come. Thank you for your support and prayers for this good work.

This coming Sept. 13, we will continue our tradition of a dedicated day of service. “God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday is an opportunity to celebrate who we are as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America – one church, freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor.

God’s blessings to you as you meet, discern, pray, vote, worship and sing together. This is a wonderful church, and I am honored to serve in it with you. Thank you for your faithful witness to the gospel.

God’s peace,



Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



Rev. Justin Eller

Keynote Speaker

Justin Eller is a missionary and ordained pastor of the ELCA since 2009. From 2009 to 2013 he served in Bolivia as a Pastoral Team Educator alongside his wife, Kari, in the Iglesia Evangélica Luterana Boliviana (IELB) and as a professor of Church History, Worship & Liturgy, and Greek at the Instituto Superior Ecuéménico Andino de Teología (ISEAT) in La Paz. Since 2013 to the present Justin serves as the ELCA Global Mission Regional Representative in Southern South America. As a Regional Representative, he accompanies the companion Lutheran churches in Argentina-Uruguay, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, and Peru; assists, advises, and supports the ELCA-supported projects in the region; and is a regional resource person for the ELCA global mission personnel.

Justin lives with his family in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Tammy Jackson

Global Mission, ELCA

Tammy Jackson completed a Master of Science degree in Public Service Management at De Paul University in Chicago, Illinois, and is currently attending the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago in the Master of Arts in Theological Studies program. She has worked on the churchwide staff of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in a variety of roles since 1987. Tammy currently serves as the program director for the International Leaders Program in the Global Mission unit of the ELCA. In this role she works with ELCA global churches and institutions in supporting the development of emerging and current leaders through education and training grants, in providing Horizon International Internships and Global Sabbaticals. Additionally, Tammy oversees a new ELCA initiative, "International Women Leaders," a project of Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA, through which international scholarships and leadership development opportunities will be provided for women endorsed by our global companions.



Tammy is an active member of Holy Family Lutheran Church in Chicago and in her spare time, she enjoys running and spending time with family and friends.

2015 Spirit of Hope Award

The 2015 Spirit of Hope Award recipient is FISH, a volunteer food program in Great Falls. Operating for over three decades, FISH provides groceries, toiletries and paper goods to individuals and families in need. Recipients receive five days' worth of food, three meals a day, for every family member. They are eligible bi-monthly.

FISH is an ecumenical ministry, comprised of 13 congregations and one service group. Over 150 volunteers staff the program five days a week. The program is entirely dependent on volunteers and donations. Founded in a Lutheran church basement, FISH has expanded its vision and capacity as needs have changed, and volunteers have signed on.

In the last five years FISH has served 8,639 families and provided 588,742 pounds of food. No one is denied on the basis of race, sex, or religious affiliation. All of the families served are at 150% below poverty level. Each bag of food contains a note that says:

“The person or persons who have served you belong to a Christian Community known as FISH. The letters of the word FISH in the Greek language mean, ‘Jesus Christ, son of God, Savior.’”

FISH is governed by a board of directors from each of the participating congregations, and is endorsed by the Great Falls Ministerial Association. FISH works cooperatively with other assistance programs in the community. Harold Spilde is the volunteer Director. The members include:

Central Christian Church (DOC)
Church of the Incarnation (Episcopal)
First Presbyterian Church
First Congregational Church, UCC
Bethel Lutheran Church (ELCA)
Faith Lutheran Church (LCMC)
St. John's Lutheran Church (ELCA)
Christ United Methodist Church
Our Savior's Lutheran Church (ELCA)
Redeemer Lutheran Church (ELCA)
Vineyard Christian Fellowship
First Southern Baptist Church
Sunrise Presbyterian Church
Great Falls Y's Men

2015 MONTANA SYNOD SECRETARY'S REPORT

The Montana Synod Council met four times in the past year; in May just prior to the 2014 Synod Assembly, in September, in February and via an electronic meeting in December. The Synod Council is commissioned to conduct the business of the Synod between Synod Assemblies, as well as set the direction for the Synod. The Council conducted the following business:

- Accepted the Mission Outreach Plan and Timeline
- Affirmed the establishment of the proposed Synod Council Committee structure
- Appointed Sue Ost and Harold Spilde to the Finance Committee
- Approved On Leave From Call Status: Brook Ells, AiM, Kathy Slehofer, AiM Pastor Kathie Larson Aasheim, Rev. Martin Russell, Pastor John Rohwer
- Approved Retirement Roster Status to: Pastor Rich Omland, Pastor Chuck Sider, Pastor Mike O'Hearn, Pastor Jean Larson, Pastor Ken Duvall, Pastor Darius Larsen, Pastor Janet Young, Pastor Lorin Sanden, Pastor Paul Seastrand
- Approved New Synod Council Calls: Pastor Linda Rose, Pastor Melanie Martin-Dent, Pastor Tom Schlotterback, Pastor Larry Stappler, Pastor Elizabeth Zant Daniels, Pastor Catherine Card
- Received the report of Synod Council Calls as of May, 2014
- Appointed: Hunger Coordinator, Jan Martin, Candidacy Committee, John Munding, NRIT Committee, Pastor Grant Barnett-Christensen, Mission Table, Pam Koterba, Valorie Putt
- Approved the Email election of the Nominating Committee
- Approved the proposal to further explore a Partnership Agreement With Intermountain Children's Home Services (PCUSA, UMC, UCC)
- Approved the 2015 Revised Budget
- Approved the Proposed 2016 Budget as presented
- Nominated Sue Ost for Synod Treasurer
- Approved the renewal of the Sexual Misconduct Policy
- Appointed the 2015 Synod Assembly Resolutions Committee: Amanda Liggett, John Munding, Eric Nord, Karen Sloan, Phil Wold and Lowell Anderson, Advisor
- Designated 2015 Synod Assembly Offering for the Bolivia Water Project
- Approved the Spirit Of Hope to FISH
- Heard reports from Bishop Crist, Associate to the Bishop Jason Asselstine, Tech Advisor to the Synod: Colter McCarty, Synod Office Building Fundraising Coordinator: Jeanne McCoskery, and welcomed several guest to Synod Council meetings
- Each Synod Council member committed to support the fundraising campaign for the new Synod Office Building

At the September and February Synod Council meetings, Council members shared a brief perspective on one of the Synod Council Benchmarks, allowing the Council to continue to examine the implications of the Benchmarks in our work as the Synod Council and as members in congregations.

I wish to again thank the whole Synod Council for their work. It is a privilege to serve the Synod in this way.

Pastor Peggy Paugh Leuzinger, Secretary, Montana Synod

PROGRAM BUDGET PRIMER 2015

Montana Synod

	2014 Actual	%	2015 Budget (Adjusted)	%	2016 Proposed	%
Income						
Mission Income From Congregations	1,048,435.22		1,045,000.00		1,050,000.00	
Support from Churchwide	30,000.00		15,000.00		15,000.00	
Gifts	2,298.26		2,000.00		2,000.00	
Interest Earnings	2,674.55		2,500.00		2,500.00	
Miscellaneous Income	-		500.00		500.00	
Other Income	6,844.71		-		-	
Restricted Income	-		10,500.00		10,500.00	
Total Income	<u>1,090,252.74</u>		<u>1,075,500.00</u>		<u>1,080,500.00</u>	
Expenditures						
Churchwide Mission Support	429,821.56	41.00%	415,000.00	39.71%	420,000.00	40.00%
Synod Agency & Social Ministry						
Montana Synod Ministries	198,350.01	18.19%	208,350.00	19.37%	176,671.45	16.35%
<i>Lutheran Social Services</i>						
<i>Montana Association of Churches</i>						
<i>Wyoming Association of Churches</i>						
<i>Colleges and Seminaries</i>						
<i>Lutheran Campus Ministry</i>						
<i>Northern Rockies Institute of Theology</i>						
<i>Kogodus Ministry</i>						
<i>Our Saviour's Rocky Boy</i>						
Shared Missions	47,042.00	4.31%	49,183.00	4.57%	50,637.00	4.69%
<i>Region 1 Ministry</i>						
<i>ELCA Shared Missions Fund</i>						
Program Delivery	37,894.37	3.48%	27,100.00	2.52%	27,100.00	2.51%
<i>Assembly</i>						
<i>Montana Lutheran Youth Organization</i>						
<i>Assistance to Congregations</i>						
<i>Care of Clergy and Families</i>						
<i>Evangelism Ministry</i>						
<i>Stewardship Ministry</i>						
<i>Other Programs and Committees</i>						
Montana Synod Compensation & Allowances	280,716.28	25.75%	311,303.02	28.94%	317,804.46	29.41%
Montana Synod Travel	54,641.48	5.012%	50,000.00	4.65%	52,000.00	4.81%
Montana Synod Office and Operation	<u>34,016.31</u>	<u>3.120%</u>	<u>35,287.09</u>	<u>3.28%</u>	<u>36,287.09</u>	<u>3.36%</u>
Other Revenues	-					
TOTALS	1,082,482.01	99.29%	1,096,223.11	101.93%	1,080,500.00	100.00%

2014 Giving per Baptized Member

Congregation	Physical City	2014 Baptized	2014 Confirmed	2014 Giving	% per Baptized Member
Immanuel Lutheran	Absarokee	194	114	\$4,700.04	4%
Hope Lutheran	Anaconda	194	0	\$1,085.50	18%
Jocko Valley Lutheran	Arlee	50	40	\$2,118.90	2%
First English Lutheran	Bainville			\$235.00	0%
American Lutheran	Baker	785	549	\$6,000.00	13%
Grace Lutheran	Barber			\$1,600.00	0%
Peace Lutheran	Basin	78	0	\$0.00	0%
Christ Lutheran	Big Sandy			\$0.00	0%
All Saints Lutheran	Big Sky	89	89	\$18,914.94	0%
Big Timber Lutheran	Big Timber	410	311	\$6,465.81	6%
Bethlehem Lutheran	Billings	156	0	\$7,401.80	2%
First English Lutheran	Billings	269	0	\$13,000.00	2%
Messiah Lutheran	Billings			\$6,622.34	0%
American Lutheran	Billings	953	750	\$55,599.96	2%
Atonement Lutheran	Billings	725	575	\$26,434.70	3%
Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd	Billings			\$48,058.68	0%
Peace Lutheran	Billings			\$11,553.00	0%
King of Glory Lutheran	Billings	876	674	\$44,100.00	2%
Our Savior's Lutheran	Bonner	222	170	\$9,031.19	2%
Our Saviour's Lutheran	Box Elder	79	75	\$900.00	9%
Christ the King Lutheran	Bozeman	282	258	\$12,449.60	2%
Hope Lutheran	Bozeman	838	586	\$16,500.00	5%
Our Savior's Lutheran	Broadus	104	102	\$1,200.00	9%
Broadview Lutheran	Broadview			\$0.00	0%
Our Savior's Lutheran	Brockton			\$0.00	0%
Zion Lutheran	Brockton			\$1,080.00	0%
Gloria Dei Lutheran	Butte	220	200	\$6,000.00	4%
Gold Hill Evangelical Lutheran	Butte	555	416	\$13,730.13	4%
American Lutheran	Chinook			\$300.00	0%
Trinity Lutheran	Choteau	398	1	\$3,000.00	13%
First Lutheran	Circle	270	270	\$3,450.00	8%
All Saints Lutheran	Clancy	6	6	\$3,341.98	0%
Trinity Lutheran	Cody	265	260	\$17,493.68	2%
Our Savior's Lutheran	Columbia Falls	344	238	\$5,327.06	6%
St. James Lutheran	Columbus			\$2,000.04	0%
Trinity Lutheran	Culbertson			\$6,000.00	0%
St. Paul Lutheran	Cut Bank	534	149	\$2,894.00	18%
Volmer Lutheran	Dagmar	42	42	\$1,250.00	3%
Freedom in Christ Prison Congregation	Deer Lodge			\$0.00	0%
Devon Lutheran	Devon			\$1,200.00	0%
Dodson Lutheran	Dodson			\$400.00	0%
Bethany Lutheran	Dutton			\$4,200.00	0%
St. Elizabeth's Lutheran	Ekalaka	106	78	\$500.00	21%
Grace Lutheran	Fairfield	168	122	\$1,400.00	12%

2014 Giving per Baptized Member

Congregation	Physical City	2014 Baptized	2014 Confirmed	2014 Giving	% per Baptized Member
St. Paul Lutheran	Fairfield	156	122	\$450.00	35%
Zion Lutheran	Fairview			\$17,242.00	0%
Hope American Lutheran	Fallon	68	60	\$650.00	10%
Fort Peck Lutheran	Fort Peck			\$0.00	0%
Valley of Christ Lutheran	Frenchtown	149	93	\$3,300.00	5%
Froid Lutheran	Froid			\$1,500.00	0%
Galata Lutheran	Galata			\$400.00	0%
Goldstone Lutheran	Gildford	26	17	\$0.00	0%
First Lutheran	Glasgow	582	437	\$25,651.60	2%
Zion Lutheran	Glendive	531	520	\$22,276.09	2%
Bethel Lutheran	Grain	17	14	\$250.00	7%
Bethel Lutheran	Great Falls	787	545	\$15,555.04	5%
First English Lutheran	Great Falls	321	225	\$12,096.00	3%
St. John Lutheran	Great Falls	104	82	\$605.00	17%
Our Savior's Lutheran	Great Falls			\$10,482.00	0%
Redeemer Lutheran	Great Falls	309	309	\$12,000.00	3%
New Hope Lutheran Ministry	Great Falls	115	97	\$4,880.40	2%
Faith Lutheran	Hamilton	430	204	\$14,900.00	3%
First American Lutheran	Hardin			\$1,200.00	0%
American Lutheran	Harlem	60	58	\$2,540.00	2%
American Lutheran	Harlowton			\$3,774.00	0%
First Lutheran	Havre	429	303	\$8,830.98	5%
Messiah Lutheran	Havre			\$1,500.00	0%
St. John's Lutheran	Helena	738	622	\$11,997.00	6%
New Life Lutheran	Helena			\$1,670.00	0%
Our Redeemer's Lutheran	Helena	1152	888	\$89,686.33	1%
Hingham Lutheran	Hingham			\$0.00	0%
Hinsdale Lutheran	Hinsdale	129	85	\$1,749.87	7%
American Lutheran	Hogeland	39	31	\$3,247.00	1%
Trinity Lutheran	Hot Springs	32	28	\$1,543.66	2%
Joliet Lutheran	Joliet	86	53	\$2,400.00	4%
Bethel Lutheran	Joplin			\$300.00	0%
Immanuel Lutheran	Joplin			\$0.00	0%
St. John's Lutheran	Jordan			\$675.00	0%
Bethlehem Lutheran	Kalispell	559	499	\$42,215.39	1%
Northridge Lutheran	Kalispell	660	624	\$21,840.00	3%
Kremlin Lutheran	Kremlin			\$0.00	0%
First Lutheran - Lambert	Lambert			\$0.00	0%
Our Savior's Lutheran	Laurel	198	198	\$3,150.00	6%
American Lutheran	Lavina			\$0.00	0%
Zion Lutheran	Lewistown	612	453	\$21,500.00	3%
Christ Lutheran	Libby	316	302	\$10,800.00	3%
Redeemer Lutheran	Livingston	104	88	\$500.00	21%
American Lutheran	Livingston	252	196	\$7,026.00	4%

2014 Giving per Baptized Member

Congregation	Physical City	2014 Baptized	2014 Confirmed	2014 Giving	% per Baptized Member
Loring Lutheran	Loring			\$1,000.00	0%
Malta Lutheran	Malta			\$10,819.14	0%
Trinity Lutheran	Martinsdale			\$1,200.00	0%
Ebenezer Lutheran of McCabe	McCabe	46	43	\$895.00	5%
First Lutheran	Miles City	551	0	\$500.00	110%
Immanuel Lutheran	Missoula	432	265	\$26,130.75	2%
Prince of Peace Lutheran	Missoula	100	75	\$2,252.00	4%
Atonement Lutheran	Missoula	781	569	\$10,425.74	7%
St. Paul Lutheran	Missoula	1200	780	\$45,603.63	3%
Our Redeemer Lutheran	Nashua	78	65	\$600.00	13%
First Lutheran	Opheim			\$600.00	0%
First Lutheran	Plains	133	116	\$4,897.00	3%
Plentywood Lutheran	Plentywood	742	742	\$13,000.00	6%
Peace Lutheran	Plevna	134	98	\$1,800.00	7%
Good Shepherd Lutheran	Polson	658	658	\$6,664.74	10%
Spirit of Life	Poplar	0	0		0%
Hope Lutheran	Powell	136	122	\$10,874.96	1%
Messiah Lutheran	Red Lodge	95	91	\$13,531.56	1%
Nathanael Lutheran	Reserve	40	40	\$3,333.32	1%
Faith Lutheran	Reserve				0%
American Lutheran	Richey			\$0.00	0%
Faith Lutheran	Ronan	179	155	\$5,000.01	4%
Zion Lutheran	Roundup			\$850.00	0%
Saco Lutheran	Saco	199	199	\$2,500.00	8%
First Lutheran	Savage	168	0	\$2,520.00	7%
St. Luke's Lutheran	Shelby			\$1,200.00	0%
Emmanuel Lutheran	Shepherd			\$3,000.00	0%
Trinity Lutheran	Sheridan	1349	829	\$27,885.00	5%
Pella Evangelical Lutheran	Sidney			\$40,000.00	0%
Grace Lutheran	Skaar	49	0	\$0.00	0%
Eidsvold Lutheran	Somers	195	163	\$16,890.98	1%
Lutheran Church of Sunburst	Sunburst	139	115	\$2,800.00	5%
Our Savior's Lutheran	Thompson Falls	59	48	\$300.00	20%
Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran	Townsend			\$3,300.00	0%
American Lutheran	Turner	57	50	\$2,639.80	2%
Immanuel Lutheran	Westby			\$5,000.00	0%
St. John's Lutheran	Westby			\$1,490.00	0%
American Lutheran	White Sulphur Springs			\$631.25	0%
Whitewater Lutheran	Whitewater			\$1,000.00	0%
Shields River Lutheran	Wilsall	212	191	\$2,291.54	9%
First Lutheran	Wolf Point	690	690	\$16,287.60	4%
Grace Lutheran	Worland	258	230	\$8,668.49	3%
Totals		26853	19562	1046304.22	3%

**Montana Synod of the ELCA
Designated Gifts from Congregations
01/31/2015**

<u>Gift Number</u>	<u>Gift Name</u>	<u>MTD Gifts</u>	<u>YTD Gifts</u>
WHS0096	100 Wells Challenge	\$1,166.77	\$1,216.77
646	1st Call Theological	\$215.30	\$2,837.93
626	Assembly Offering:MONTANA	\$0.00	\$985.00
WHS0030	Augusta Victoria	\$0.00	\$500.00
MSG0075	Buerkle, Bradn	\$62.50	\$4,512.50
CWC0025	Campaign for ELCA	\$60.00	\$2,220.00
616	Campus Min-Bozeman (MSU)	\$342.00	\$5,074.71
629	Campus Min-Missoula-UofM	\$499.92	\$4,430.52
605	Christikon Bible Camp	\$167.00	\$2,902.00
602	Concordia College	\$0.00	\$200.00
701	Continuing Education	\$50.00	\$550.00
641	Dacotah Oyatue Churc	\$60.00	\$900.00
DDG0060	Disaster Response Fund	\$0.00	\$2,664.33
640	Ebenezer Lutheran/Oa	\$60.00	\$900.00
IDG0090	Ebola Outbreak	\$305.06	\$3,600.46
MSG0682	Eller, Justin & Kari	\$2,260.01	\$21,035.12
610	Emmaus Endowment	\$314.00	\$314.00
653	FISH-MT	\$115.00	\$1,615.00
660	Family Promise	\$150.00	\$1,481.00
608	Flathead Bible Camp	\$800.96	\$7,561.43
DDG0069	Flooding - US	\$0.00	\$1,250.00
IDG0089	Gaza Humanitarian	\$0.00	\$1,000.00
GCS4004	Global Ministries-Brazil	\$0.00	\$25.00
GCS1000	Global Mission	\$0.00	\$95.00
WHS0102	Goat	\$0.00	\$29.40
WHS0051	God's Global Barnyard	\$4,853.00	\$6,701.00
654	Great Falls Rescue M	\$100.00	\$400.00
MSG0700	Help an ELCA Missionary	\$0.00	\$5.00
662	Helping Hands	\$0.00	\$100.00
647	Immanuel Lutheran Ho	\$100.00	\$400.00
617	Kogodus	\$50.00	\$600.00
601	LSS-MONTANA	\$775.00	\$6,955.45
4	LWR-A5	\$1,938.17	\$17,061.68
MSG0260	Langdji, Anne & Willie	\$0.00	\$940.00
615	MT Synod Endowment	\$0.00	\$100.00
633	MT Synod Office Building	\$11,846.05	\$22,220.45
699	MT Synod Only Benevolence	\$25.00	\$45.00
644	MT-Fund for L in Mission	\$215.30	\$3,282.42
MIS0003	Malaria Campaign	\$0.00	\$4,429.73
661	Mental Health Center	\$0.00	\$463.00
603	Misc Gift - Montana	\$341.00	\$3,645.62
MPG0122	Mission Partners	\$0.00	\$300.00
652	Mission Venture Capital	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
GCS2000	Missionary Support	\$0.00	\$1,265.00
650	Mont Assoc of Church	\$0.00	\$250.00
619	Mt Synod Gift	\$630.00	\$1,630.00

**Montana Synod of the ELCA
Designated Gifts from Congregations
01/31/2015**

<u>Gift Number</u>	<u>Gift Name</u>	<u>MTD Gifts</u>	<u>YTD Gifts</u>
628	NRIT	\$400.00	\$2,938.82
MIS0002	Nets-Malaria Initiat	\$121.50	\$1,871.70
705	PLU	\$0.00	\$200.00
IDG0087	Pacific Typhoon	\$0.00	\$1,587.00
IDG0057	Philippines	\$0.00	\$50.00
638	Poverello Center	\$425.96	\$2,906.43
WHS0016	Project Comfort/Freight	\$0.00	\$715.50
622	Rocky Boy	\$0.00	\$125.00
108	Seward Peninsula	\$300.00	\$300.00
663	Spirit of Life/Fort Peck	\$0.00	\$397.88
IDG0033	Sudan Crisis	\$0.00	\$490.00
636	Synod Prison Congregation	\$1,767.79	\$9,286.93
IDG0078	Syria Conflict Relie	\$0.00	\$1,300.00
DDG0020	Tornados - United States	\$0.00	\$225.00
621	Upper Missouri Minis	\$0.00	\$200.00
WHS0108	Water Well	\$0.00	\$113.15
WHS0038	World Hunger	\$6,491.45	\$92,953.37
727	World Vision	\$0.00	\$450.00
		<u>\$38,008.74</u>	<u>\$255,805.30</u>

ELCA in Region 1
 Summary of Restricted Accounts - YTD Activity
 Montana Synod

February 2014 to January 2015

Note: The Report Option to include Open Transactions is selected.

Accounts	Beginning Balance	Restricted Revenue	Restricted Expenses	Ending Balance
Temporary Restricted				
02-341-04186 - Funds Held-LSS Montana	\$0.00	\$6,955.45	\$6,955.45	\$0.00
02-341-04196 - Funds Held-Companion Synod	(\$5,262.52)	\$4,978.44	\$2,251.00	(\$2,535.08)
02-341-04216 - Funds Held-New Hope	\$0.00	\$860.37	\$860.37	\$0.00
02-341-04246 - Funds Held-Energy Conservation	\$5,829.19	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,829.19
02-341-04256 - Funds Held-Undesignated Gifts	\$12,973.93	\$11,943.80	\$14,211.88	\$10,705.85
02-341-04276 - Funds Held-Lutheran Supplement	(\$544.75)	\$0.00	\$0.00	(\$544.75)
02-341-04346 - Funds Held-Seminarian Moving Costs	\$3,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,000.00
02-341-04366 - Funds Held-Seminary Student Aid	(\$0.02)	\$0.02	\$0.00	\$0.00
02-341-04376 - Funds Held-Secretaries Workshop	\$77.41	\$0.00	\$77.41	\$0.00
02-341-04386 - Funds Held-MT Synod Prison Cong	\$0.00	\$9,286.93	\$9,286.93	\$0.00
02-341-04396 - Funds Held-Fort Peck	\$0.00	\$37,172.88	\$31,893.33	\$5,279.55
02-341-04416 - Funds Held-Rocky Boy	\$0.00	\$125.00	\$125.00	\$0.00
02-341-04426 - Funds held-Anti Racism	\$850.00	\$0.00	\$850.00	\$0.00
02-341-04436 - Funds Held-World Hunger Grant	\$1,730.72	\$195.31	\$0.00	\$1,926.03
02-341-04446 - Funds held-Growing in God's Field	\$3,722.55	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,722.55
02-341-04476 - Funds Held-Leaders in Mission	\$6,055.75	\$88,192.30	\$92,682.12	\$1,565.93
02-341-04516 - Funds Held-Mission Partners	\$633.27	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$633.27
02-341-04526 - Funds Held-American Indian Strategy	(\$674.58)	\$850.00	\$0.00	\$175.42
02-341-04556 - Funds Held-Evangelism Grant	\$1,898.33	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,898.33
02-341-04566 - Funds Held-Rural Ministry	\$3,863.76	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,863.76
02-341-04576 - Funds Held-Bishop Transition Fund	\$6,060.06	\$0.00	\$0.02	\$6,060.04
02-341-04586 - Funds Held-Cong Leadership Training	\$26.75	\$42.50	\$26.75	\$42.50
02-341-04596 - Funds Held-Lay Pastoral Associates	\$4,942.83	\$9,662.75	\$8,586.75	\$6,018.83
02-341-04606 - Funds Held-Equipment Reserve	\$5,619.12	\$500.00	\$839.95	\$5,279.17
02-341-04676 - Funds Held-Campus Ministry Capital	\$4,604.02	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$5,104.02
02-341-04806 - Funds Held-Bishop's Crisis	\$166.46	\$0.00	\$166.46	\$0.00
02-341-04976 - Funds Held-Stewardship Growth grant	\$1,129.88	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,129.88
02-341-04986 - Funds Held-Mission Venture Capital	\$94,261.30	\$4,215.00	\$22,060.00	\$76,416.30
02-341-05006 - Funds Held-MLF receipts	\$32,297.04	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$32,297.04
02-341-05696 - Funds Held-1st Call Theological	(\$6,836.77)	\$8,630.03	\$67.50	\$1,725.76
02-341-05706 - Funds Held-Care of Clergy & Family	\$879.37	\$616.46	\$0.00	\$1,495.83
02-341-07206 - Funds Held-Church in Society	\$1,860.69	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,860.69
02-341-07406 - Funds Held-Building Maintenance	\$7,678.34	\$500.00	\$114.00	\$8,064.34
02-341-07506 - Funds Held-Aid to Smaller Congr	\$3,911.24	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,911.24
02-341-07606 - Funds Held-Church Council Training	\$81.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$81.00
02-341-08406 - Funds Held-Communications Committee	\$271.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$271.00
02-341-08636 - Funds Held-Youth Gatherng	\$42.00	\$4,130.00	\$42.00	\$4,130.00
02-341-08676 - Funds Held-Full Communion	\$2,906.50	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,906.50
02-341-10016 - Funds Held-New Syn Offic Bldg Fund	\$234,463.28	\$50,796.75	\$60,475.95	\$224,784.08
02-341-10026 - Funds Held-Design Plans-New Bldg	\$8,264.67	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$8,264.67
02-341-10036 - Funds Held-Advertising-New Building	\$4,690.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$4,690.00
02-341-10046 - Funds Held-Capital Campaign Income	\$38,499.04	\$83,929.45	\$45,742.04	\$76,686.45
02-341-10056 - Funds Held-Capital Campaign expense	(\$246.40)	\$61,075.95	\$32,020.74	\$28,808.81
02-341-64066 - Funds Held-Montana Synod Youth	\$5,375.70	\$42.00	\$0.00	\$5,417.70
02-346-01006 - Funds Held-Assembly Offering	\$0.00	\$9,435.86	\$9,435.86	\$0.00
Continuing Education Accounts				
02-345-00046 - Funds Held-CE-Crist, Jessica	\$2,102.49	\$699.96	\$2,000.00	\$802.45
02-345-00056 - Funds Held-CE-Asselstine, Jason	\$45.65	\$699.96	\$32.45	\$713.16
02-345-00066 - Funds Held-CE-Hedahl, Susan	\$196.99	\$225.00	\$130.00	\$291.99
02-345-00086 - Funds Held-CE-Peters, David	\$0.00	\$233.32	\$233.32	\$0.00
02-345-00096 - Funds Held-CE-Smith, Susan	\$746.00	\$180.00	\$0.00	\$926.00
02-345-00116 - Funds Held-CE-Karres, George	\$0.00	\$365.20	\$299.00	\$66.20
Total Continuing Education Accounts	\$3,091.13	\$2,403.44	\$2,694.77	\$2,799.80
Council Designated				
02-341-04096 - Funds Held-Leadership Development	(\$256.73)	\$0.00	\$0.00	(\$256.73)
02-341-04136 - Funds Held-Christian Ed Network	\$3,138.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,138.00
02-346-00006 - Funds Held-Synod Assembly	\$6,351.77	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$6,351.77
06-341-10006 - Funds Held-Crist Scholarship Fund	\$2,113.57	\$5,000.00	\$443.00	\$6,670.57
06-341-20006 - Funds Held-T Shirts	\$0.00	\$40.00	\$36.00	\$4.00
Total Council Designated	\$11,346.61	\$5,040.00	\$479.00	\$15,907.61
Temporarily Donor Restricted				
02-341-05626 - Funds Held-Bolivia Water Project	\$0.00	\$275.00	\$0.00	\$275.00
02-341-05656 - Funds Held-J Crist Retreat Center	\$5,953.25	\$300.00	\$6,253.25	\$0.00
02-341-05666 - Funds Held-Macedonia Grant	\$3,435.32	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,435.32
02-341-05676 - Funds Held-School Scholarships	\$58,274.17	\$3,027.37	\$3,876.92	\$57,424.62
Total Temporarily Donor Restricted	\$67,662.74	\$3,602.37	\$10,130.17	\$61,134.94

ELCA in Region 1
Summary of Restricted Accounts - YTD Activity
Montana Synod
February 2014 to January 2015
Note: The Report Option to include Open Transactions is selected.

Accounts	Beginning Balance	Restricted Revenue	Restricted Expenses	Ending Balance
Total Temporary Restricted	\$567,200.64	\$405,683.06	\$352,075.45	\$620,808.25
Permanent Restricted				
05-341-06116 - Funds Held-Planned Giving Endowment	\$27,051.10	\$5,957.82	\$3,737.83	\$29,271.09
05-341-06126 - Funds Held-Emmaus Endowment	\$50,515.52	\$11,236.89	\$6,964.47	\$54,787.94
05-341-06606 - Funds Held-Omland-Daehlin Memorial	\$78,709.90	\$513.87	\$79,223.77	\$0.00
05-341-08686 - Funds Held-Ramseth Seminary	\$128,610.83	\$27,809.24	\$17,724.05	\$138,696.02
Total Permanent Restricted	\$284,887.35	\$45,517.82	\$107,650.12	\$222,755.05

**Region 1 of the ELCA
 World Hunger Gifts
 From 02/01/2014 To 01/31/2015**

Organization	City	PIN	MTD Total	YTD Total
Montana Synod of the ELCA				
American Lutheran Church	Baker	13345	\$100.15	\$916.66
All Saints in Big Sky	Big Sky	30785	\$0.00	\$221.50
Big Timber Lutheran Church	Big Timber	13349	\$0.00	\$155.00
Atonement Lutheran Church	Billings	13351	\$0.00	\$347.00
Bethlehem Lutheran Church	Billings	04836	\$0.00	\$75.00
King of Glory Lutheran Church	Billings	16293	\$0.00	\$4,544.00
Our Savior's Lutheran Church	Bonner	13354	\$0.00	\$822.26
Christ the King Lutheran Church	Bozeman	04851	\$0.00	\$6,632.94
Hope Lutheran Church	Bozeman	13357	\$250.00	\$3,155.56
Gloria Dei Lutheran Church	Butte	04840	\$34.85	\$499.74
American Lutheran Church	Chinook	13367	\$0.00	\$550.00
First Lutheran Church	Circle	13369	\$225.00	\$2,988.00
Trinity Lutheran Church	Cody	13372	\$0.00	\$125.00
Ebenezer Lutheran Church (McCabe)	Culbertson	13434	\$561.00	\$561.00
Trinity Lutheran Church	Culbertson	13376	\$0.00	\$1,476.75
St Paul's Lutheran Church	Cut Bank	13377	\$0.00	\$997.37
Bethany Lutheran Church	Dutton	13381	\$150.00	\$600.00
St Elizabeth's Lutheran Church	Ekalaka	30475	\$44.01	\$99.30
Zion Lutheran Church	Fairview	13384	\$179.50	\$1,044.50
First Lutheran Church	Glasgow	13392	\$237.50	\$1,197.50
Zion Lutheran Church	Glendive	13393	\$0.00	\$856.00
Bethel Lutheran Church	Great Falls	04843	\$1,878.37	\$19,637.36
First English Lutheran Church	Great Falls	04844	\$15.00	\$15.00
Our Savior's Lutheran Church	Great Falls	13396	\$0.00	\$275.00
Redeemer Lutheran Church	Great Falls	13397	\$300.00	\$1,400.00
St John Lutheran Church	Great Falls	04845	\$80.84	\$1,596.08
Faith Lutheran Church	Hamilton	13398	\$0.00	\$125.00
American Lutheran Church	Harlem	13400	\$0.00	\$150.00
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church	Helena	13405	\$0.00	\$10,055.50
St John's Lutheran Church	Helena	04846	\$0.00	\$1,600.00
Bethel Lutheran Church	Joplin	13412	\$0.00	\$15.00
Bethlehem Lutheran Church	Kalispell	13415	\$80.00	\$340.00
Northridge Lutheran Church	Kalispell	16105	\$171.42	\$3,662.25
Zion Lutheran Church	Lewistown	13427	\$75.00	\$965.00
Christ Lutheran Church	Libby	13428	\$989.95	\$989.95
American Lutheran Church	Livingston	13430	\$0.00	\$100.00
Malta Lutheran Church	Malta	13433	\$0.00	\$150.00
Atonement Lutheran Church	Missoula	13438	\$80.00	\$1,850.41
Immanuel Lutheran Church	Missoula	04848	\$150.00	\$1,942.22
St Paul's Lutheran Church	Missoula	13439	\$125.00	\$920.00
First Lutheran Church	Plains	13447	\$0.00	\$95.00
Plentywood Lutheran Church	Plentywood	13448	\$0.00	\$30.00
Peace Lutheran Church	Plevna	13449	\$0.00	\$200.48
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church	Polson	13450	\$0.00	\$2,976.10
Hope Lutheran Church	Powell	13453	\$0.00	\$1,951.00
Messiah Lutheran Church	Red Lodge	13454	\$115.00	\$1,045.00
Nathanael Lutheran Church	Reserve	04850	\$0.00	\$100.00
Volmer Lutheran Church (Dagmar)	Reserve	04842	\$0.00	\$200.00
Goldstone Lutheran Church (Gildford)	Rudyard	13463	\$0.00	\$300.00
Trinity Lutheran Church	Sheridan	05513	\$0.00	\$3,476.06
Pella Lutheran Church	Sidney	13474	\$0.00	\$4,000.00
Lutheran Church of Sunburst	Sunburst	13477	\$0.00	\$1,189.00
Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church	Townsend	13479	\$548.86	\$2,259.88
St John's Lutheran Church	Westby	13484	\$100.00	\$100.00
First Lutheran Church	Wolf Point	13491	\$0.00	\$1,377.00

**Region 1 of the ELCA
World Hunger Gifts
From 02/01/2014 To 01/31/2015**

Organization	City	PIN	MTD Total	YTD Total
Montana Synod of the ELCA				
Total: 55			\$6,491.45	\$92,953.37

ELCA MISSION BUILDERS

The Mission Builder program is intended to provide congregations of the ELCA and its FULL COMMUNION PARTNERS who desire to construct their own facilities with guidance, direction, and information during the period prior to construction, and hands-on help through completion of the project.



Our organization strives to help broaden your spiritual and congregational outreach.

The Mission Builder Construction Manager is responsible for overseeing the entire project and makes sure the subcontractors are performing to plans and to specs. Mission Builder builders are employed by the congregation and work side by side with church or camp volunteers. The congregation as the owner of the building project is responsible for securing volunteers from its own membership. Volunteer participation in the project develops the feeling of ownership in the project and helps lower costs. Congregations get new facilities with cost savings and a unique sense of ownership. Congregations often report their congregation is stronger and closer after working side by side with Mission Builders. Mission Builders themselves gain new friendships, the reward of helping others, and service to our Lord.

Mission Builders are dedicated Christians who have committed themselves to giving glory to God through their work and actions as they actively participate in the worship and service life of the congregation for whom they work. Spiritual growth is an important aspect of their makeup. A congregation involved in this type of project will develop a strong feeling of ownership and a sense of being a family of God. Mission Builders are talented people who want to share and give of themselves to others. Recently, Mission Builders have been involved in Montana construction projects at Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church in Helena, and Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp. Currently, we are working at Bethel Lutheran Church in Great Falls.

If your congregation or ELCA organization is considering a building project, please contact Bill Graves, Director, at 1-800-643-5295 or msnbuilder1@gmail.com to learn how Mission Builders can help. See our display at Synod Assembly for promotional materials and information.



ELCA Fund for Leaders
Montana Synod
2015 Annual Report

Thank you to the people of the Montana Synod for making an investment in the future of this church through the ELCA Fund for Leaders. Our goal is to provide full-tuition support for every rostered ministry candidate at the ELCA seminaries, and together, we are making great progress toward that goal.

In the 2014-2015 academic year, the ELCA Fund for Leaders provided scholarship assistance of more than \$1.45 million in support of 241 future pastors and rostered lay leaders. Thank you for your role in ensuring that those who are called to serve our church have the opportunity to pursue a path that leads to informed faith and passionate discipleship.

We are grateful that the Montana Synod Fund for Leaders scholarship endowment provided a total of \$1,000 in tuition support during the 2014-2015 academic year for:

- Tonia Fisher-Clark – Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary

As of Dec. 31, 2014, the Montana Synod Fund for Leaders scholarship endowment had the following:

- A total market value of \$136,841.45
- Estimated earnings of \$5,221.35
- Outright gifts in 2014 of \$79,212.12
- A remaining balance in the income account of \$1,975.10
- Amount available for scholarships in the 2015-2016 academic year: \$6,475 (amount includes a 10% conservative cushion to account for sudden market fluctuations)

Since its inception, the Montana Synod Fund for Leaders endowment has awarded scholarships of \$4,000 for seminary tuition, and the ELCA in total has awarded more than \$11.1 million.

If you choose to spend more than the amount we calculated as available for scholarships this academic year, keep in mind that market variations may occur and if there is not enough available to pay what is promised to the students, we will need to deduct the difference from your spendable amount in the following year. We encourage you to prayerfully discern which rising candidates would benefit most from the support you can offer.

Finally, we ask the Montana Synod, its congregations, and its members for continued support of the ELCA Fund for Leaders as a meaningful way to make an investment in the future of this church and its leadership. It is a wonderful way to celebrate your pastor's ordination anniversary, the installation of a new pastor, or the anniversary of your congregation.

For more information, please visit ELCA.org/fundforleaders, or call our office at 800-638-3522, ext. 2749.

Montana Synod Malaria Campaign Report 2014

Five years ago the ELCA set a goal, dreamed big with our Lutheran companion churches and partners and set out to raise \$15 million by 2015. Working through Lutheran partners in Africa, the ELCA Malaria Campaign continues to provide mosquito nets, education, testing, medication and more to help eliminate deaths from this disease — for good. Our companions overseas continue to see a reduction in the number of deaths from this preventable, treatable disease and are engaging in active service with one another to bring an end to this cycle of despair, poverty and sickness. As of December 31, 2014 the Malaria Campaign, through the support of over 5000 ELCA congregations, has raised \$13,329,410.59.

Here in the Montana Synod, we take our global fundraising very seriously. Our congregations have embraced the fight against malaria across the state and across age categories. Synod congregations have:

- participated in the Malaria VBS curriculum, "Catch the Buzz"
- hosted malaria themed dinners
- fought off 'mosquito attacks'
- utilized a variety of direct fundraising for malaria with such activities as envelope fundraising, change for change, and bake sales.

The collective efforts of our members resulted in direct giving to the ELCA Malaria Campaign of \$38,053.93 in 2014. Since the inception of this campaign, the Montana Synod has given \$152,927.19 which represents approximately \$3.82 per member. Our efforts have not only realized financial gains, but the education of thousands of youth and adults in the comprehensive effects of a preventable and treatable disease such as this on a family, community and nation.

The efforts of Lutherans in the Montana Synod, and across the nation, comes to life in one vital statement: as the inception of this campaign, 1 child under 5 years of age died every 45 seconds. Today, that number is 1 every 60 seconds. While we can rejoice in the saving of lives, education of families and potential to dream of bigger things, we can also see that much can still be done. Your prayers are appreciated, your dollars are put to good use and your knowledge can spur others on to fight this disease.

With Appreciation,

Jennifer Asselstine

Montana Synod Malaria Coordinator
jenannassel@yahoo.com



Mission Investment Fund
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

About the Mission Investment Fund

The Mission Investment Fund (MIF), a ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, makes low-interest **loans** to established ELCA congregations, new-start congregations and ELCA-related ministries for capital projects.

Established congregations use MIF loans to renovate, expand or relocate. New-start congregations rely on MIF loans to buy land and construct their first church buildings. ELCA-related ministries use MIF loans for a variety of capital projects.

To fund these loans, MIF offers a variety of **investments** for congregations, their members, synods and ELCA-related ministries to purchase. MIF investments offer adjustable- or fixed-rate terms and earn interest at competitive rates.

The Mission Investment Fund is **financially strong and stable**, with a record of steady, controlled growth:

- With total assets of \$661 million and net assets of \$192 million at year-end 2014, MIF achieved a capital ratio of 29 percent—maintaining MIF's position in the top tier of well-capitalized church extension funds.
- At year-end 2014, loans for capital projects for more than 780 ELCA congregations and ministries totaled \$461 million. MIF investments by congregations, their members, synods and ELCA-related ministries totaled \$464 million.

Investments and Loans in the Montana Synod

As of December 31, 2014:

- 9 Mission Investment Fund loans, with a balance of **\$5,812,877**, are at work throughout the synod.
- Investments in the Mission Investment Fund by 256 individuals, 57 congregations, 5 ministries and the Montana Synod totaled **\$6,303,814**.

MIF representative for the Montana Synod:

The Rev. Daniel B. Carlson, Regional Manager: Tel. (773) 682-2943; e-mail: dan.carlson@elca.org

Mission Investment Fund | 8765 West Higgins Road | Chicago, Illinois 60631
Tel: 877-886-3522 | Web: mif.elca.org



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Region 1
Rev. Mark Nelson
Coordinator for Missional Leadership

Spring, 2015

Dear Assembly voting members, observers, guests and staff,

I write to you at your assembly with a great sense of gratitude for your partnership in our common mission in Region 1, Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington. A brochure that we share with seminarians who will be ready for assignment and first call describes Region 1 this way: "We grow, develop and equip leaders in synods and congregations so that the power of Christ is unleashed, renewing persons, ministries and God's world." It's good work that we do together!

New to our common Financial Services Office this year is bookkeeper Leslie Frederick. She'll be the voice you hear and the great helper you'll find when you call our FSO at 206-624-0093 with any financial questions. Leslie was hired to fill the vacancy left by retiring bookkeeper Judy Webb who has worked for our church for more than 30 years. Our thanks to Judy! Led by veteran accountant Alyce Bakker our FSO is the envy of other ELCA synods and regions.

Rostered leadership development continues to be the focus of my work. Our synods' six candidacy committees and their supportive synod staffs continue to accompany your colleagues who are preparing for rostered service in our ELCA. The need for new ministers of Word and Sacrament and ministers of Word and Service continues to grow. You see, the "retirement bubble" has come to the surface in Region 1. We now have more vacancies than we have pastors and other rostered leaders to fill them. This is particularly true for the smaller, rural congregations of our Region. The shortage is felt throughout our ELCA. Might you be a future rostered leader? Who might you encourage to serve our church in this way? Please pray for our next generation of leaders and the congregations they will serve.

In their first three years of service all rostered leaders participate in First Call Theological Education. We have two programs in Region 1: Leaders in Montana host a FCTE event specifically geared for the Montana context. The other synods join together for a more general program that covers specific topics over three years. Excellent leadership development!

Regional support for synodical officers, our bishops, synod staffs, campus ministries, and others who come together in our Region can make all the difference. You share in God's mission as we serve together in Region 1.

Thank you!

Lutheran Bible Camp, Inc.

CHRISTIKON

Rev. Mark Donald, Executive Director



Last year went better than we could have hoped (and we had high hopes!). A few numbers that tell something of the year past:

- § **21**...incredible, hard-working, faithful staff people
- § **500**...approximate number of former Christikon staff
- § **400+**...number of former staff connecting faith and life in their communities and in their congregations (teachers, board members, readers, assisting ministers, etc.)
- § **200+**...number of former staff connecting faith and life as church professionals (youth directors, AIMS, etc.)
- § **80+**...number of former staff connecting faith and life as ordained ministers, serving congregations all over the country and world
- § **21**...staff serving this summer, hailing from Montana, Washington, Minnesota, Tennessee, Wisconsin, South Dakota, Alaska and Oregon. Twelve are new, eight are returning
- § **2**...pastors leading our July 10th-12th family weekend. **Revs. Lindean & Grant Barnett Christenson** lead a full camp in sessions focusing on the gifts and challenges of honoring the Sabbath
- § **2**...theologians leading our Aug. 3rd-6th Continuing Education Retreat. **Professor Kathryn Schifferdecker** (Old Testament, Luther Seminary) leads sessions on "In Memory of Her: Three Biblical Women." **Bishop Jessica Crist** (Montana Synod) presents "In God's Image: The Ongoing Struggle for Women's Equality."
- § **64** (and counting)...years Christikon has served God's people faithfully and well; we consider ourselves an arm of ministry to congregations and the larger Church, both near and far.
- § **4th-12th**...graders who come up as campers and backpackers
- § **50+**...developmentally disabled campers who come to Christikon (as far as we know we are the only camp in MT that serves this population)
- § **24**...kids from disadvantaged and/or troubled backgrounds that take part in our Sojourners camp
- § **1 of 3**...camps in MT accredited by the American Camping Association (ACA accreditation indicates that a camp meets rigorous industry-wide standards for camp safety, administration, health care, site adequacy, programming, and staffing)

Thank you for your prayers, encouragement, and support during our time of transition. As always, we look to the future with hope and give thanks for all the ways God is faithful to Christikon and to the world God loves. See you at camp.

Christikon • 1108 24th Street West • Billings, MT 59102-3810 • 406 656-1969
director@christikon.org • www.christikon.org



Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp

Thank you for your prayers, gifts and support that make so many wonderful activities and experiences for children and people of all ages possible.

Did you know...?

- *There were over 4800 participants in FLBC year round programs in 2014
- *There were 59 strong wonderful summer staff for 2014 from 10 states, plus 1 from Norway and 1 from Tanzania!
- *There were over 119 pastors and other adults who volunteered for a week in 2014 (up from 43 in 2013)
- *70% of the annual income is from user fees?
- *30% of the annual income is from gifts from congregations and individuals?
- *FLBC traveled to 20 congregations to provide day camp with over 950 children participating
- *Seattle and local servant mission trips included 42 youth
- *The new "Gathering Pavilion" was dedicated in October 2014
- *Through our summer 2015 offering, our campers will be raising funds for a water pump for our friends in Bolivia.
- *65 programs are offered at FLBC each summer
- *460 gallons of granola were made! (Our backpackers, rock climbers, sailors, and rafters need their energy!)
- *15 retreats and events by FLBC happen each year, there is something for all ages
- *Over \$30,000 was given to campers in need as camperships from FLBC. Thank you, donors, who made this possible.
- *8 year round staff are here to serve you! Need a church council retreat, strategic planning retreat, or wellness retreat? Contact us
- *People of all ages experience the love of Christ and have faith growing experiences through your ministry of outreach of FLBC

Hope to see you at camp soon!

**Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp
603 S. Main Street
Kalispell, MT 59901
P: 406-752-6602 / F: 406-752-6670
www.flbc.net**

Bolivia

We are intentional about fostering a relationship with our companion Church in Bolivia and believe that our time spent together in prayer and encouragement is mutually beneficial. For the past several years we have actively shared in the Gospel together both in Montana and throughout the country of Bolivia through visits to our respective territories to listen, witness, learn and pray together. This past year, together with Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp, The Montana Synod sent a group of young adults to Bolivia. Alisha Breen was one of the young adults from Choteau that visited Bolivia this past summer. Here are a few of her highlights...

On Sunday we attended worship with the congregation in Sorata, a small village high in the Andes Mountains. This wasn't an elaborate church and nothing like you would see in the U.S., but I think it was perfect. I will never forget the feeling I had when I walked into the sanctuary. I can't remember a lot of the specifics from this trip, but this day and that service I remember. Individuals of all ages came and they sang their native songs, read scriptures, and gave a lesson. We were blessed to take communion with them and this showed that no matter where you are in the world and what situation you are in, we all have God. It was a truly special moment as we all broke bread together. After Communion, they sang Jesus loves me in their native tongue and we followed with Jesus loves me in ours. It was very special and put a smile on everyone's face.



The next day was my favorite day of all. We spent the morning learning more about the water war, loss of farming land, contamination of the water, and everything that is happening within Bolivia and South America. That night we went to a church that had an after school program for children. This was a place for kids of all ages to go after school to get help with their homework, and more importantly, a meal. The teacher told us that if they didn't come here, she wasn't sure if they were getting any food at home. The kids were ages 3-12 and spoke no English. We spent almost five hours with these kids working on their homework, playing games, and then it ended with a performance by them. Seeing all these kids and getting to know them made my heart hurt. We heard stories about what their lives are like, and it was hard to comprehend. Each one of them though had a smile on their face and loved the attention we gave them. They performed not only a skit, but gave us songbooks so we could sing along with their songs. When it was time to leave, every child came and gave me a hug and a couple gave me a kiss on the cheek. The time we spent with them was special and I wish that I could go back and work with them again.

Also on the Trip was Natalie Faltin, Emily Fewer, Skylar Sullivan, Trevor Leuzinger, Jasmine Allen, Annie Marshall, Pr. Nathan Clements and Pr. Jason Asselstine



Our relationship with the Church in Bolivia is made stronger by the eagerness of President Emilio Flores of the Lutheran church in Bolivia to be together, and by the leadership of Pastor Justin Eller of the ELCA. Thank you to both of them for accompanying us on our journey to Bolivia.

By Pastor Jason Asselstine

CONCORDIA COLLEGE

Greetings to you, friends and partners in mission, from Concordia College. Below you will find a concise report on life and work in our community of faith and learning.

College Plan

Concordia is in the third year of implementation of the strategic plan, *Whole Self, Whole Life, Whole World: The Plan for Concordia College, 2012-2017*. You can view the document, along with related progress reports, on line at <https://www.concordiacollege.edu/about/our-mission/strategic-plan>.

Enrollment

The current student body of 2,351 undergraduate students represents 36 states and 30 countries. These students come from a variety of cultural backgrounds and faith traditions. 55% self-report Lutheran affiliation. As of June 1, Karl Stumo, a 1992 graduate of Concordia, will assume the position of Vice President for Enrollment and Marketing. He previously served as Associate Dean of Admissions at Drake University (IA), as Vice President for Admission and Enrollment Services at Pacific Lutheran University (WA), and Vice President for Enrollment and Marketing at Dominican University (IL).

Key Mission Initiatives

Dr. Roland Martinson, past dean of the faculty at Luther Seminary and current member of Concordia's Board of Regents, has been engaged with us in conversation about the emerging vision of ministry at Concordia. The ongoing Worship, Faith and Spiritual Practice Project has discovered and mapped an amazingly rich diversity of faith and spiritual practices among Concordia students, faculty and staff. Efforts are now underway to nourish this dynamic culture of practice with the goal to deepen and expand the life of faith and spirituality on campus.

The Concordia Career Initiative has been developed to create an innovative plan for career readiness for our students, one grounded in the context of a twenty-first century liberal arts education and in the Lutheran concept of vocation. The new Executive Director of the Initiative, Carly Nelson, comes to Concordia from Microsoft. She is a 1996 graduate of Concordia who earned a M.A. in Leadership from Luther Seminary in 1998. The Initiative's focus is to engage both internal and external constituents in expanding and diversifying the portfolio of opportunities for student internships and other off-campus work experiences, engaging alumni and friends of the college in working directly with students in their career preparation, and raising funds to support the Initiative.

The science project is the major capital initiative before the college—the largest in its history. In the words of one faculty member, "We're not educating scientists to be the best scientists they can be, but to be the best scientists the world needs them to be." Planning and fundraising are well underway to upgrade the college's science facilities to better mirror the needs of a 21st century science education and ensure Concordia continued success among its graduates.

Farewells and Best Wishes

Rev. Thomas Schlotterback left Concordia this fall to return to his beloved Montana as Vice President for Mission Advancement at St. John's Lutheran Ministries in Billings. On April 27 we will celebrate Campus Pastor Tim Megorden's career of service to church and campus with chapel at 9:50 a.m. and a reception at 1:30 p.m. Please join us if you can.

The Concordia Relationship with Lutheran World Relief

One of the great privileges of my office has been the invitation to join the governing board of Lutheran World Relief. I came on to that board just as Bishop Jessica Crist (Montana) was concluding her board service. This January I traveled with the board and LWR staff to see its work in Honduras among farm families. You can read the reflection I wrote about that experience and what it affirmed for me about the abiding value of a Concordia education by following this link: <https://www.concordiacollege.edu/news-media/detail/defining-college-value/>

Let me close by thanking you for your faithful work on behalf of the church we love and of world it serves.

Sincerely,



William J. Craft
President

PACIFIC LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE SYNODS AND CONGREGATIONS OF REGION 1 • 2014

Facts About PLU as of Fall 2013

Undergraduate and Graduate

Students Combined.....	3,462
Average GPA for first-year students.....	3.62
Student-to-faculty ratio.....	14-1
Percentage of first-year students who live on campus	85%
Religion Reported by First-Year Students	21% Lutheran

A Message from Dr. Thomas W. Krise, President of Pacific Lutheran University

As I look back over my nearly two years as President of PLU, I can proudly say that we accomplished a lot, and the groundwork has been set for even more progress in 2014 and beyond. Much of this would not be possible without your support.

PLU is able to fulfill its mission of teaching, research and service largely because of the unwavering commitment of our friends in the synods and congregations of Region I. Increasing access and moderating the cost of higher education are priorities for PLU, and through your support and the generous commitment of our donors, we have been able to increase undergraduate financial aid by 3.7% to \$44.5 million for the coming academic year.

Here are just a few more accomplishments that your support has enabled in the past year:

- PLU was named to President Obama's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll.
- PLU's MediaLab was nominated, once again, for an Emmy Award. That makes four nominations and one win.
- Our Faculty Assembly approved—unanimously—the first professional doctorate at PLU, the Doctor of Nursing Practice degree.
- We celebrated the grand opening of the \$20 million Karen Hille Phillips Center for the Performing Arts, which won a LEED Gold certification for environmental sustainability.
- *The Princeton Review* recognized our School of Business as one of the nation's best, and we've held the prized AACSB accreditation for more than 40 years.

- PLU won the Gold Award from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) for our commitment to sustainability.
- Dr. Richard Nance, Conductor of the Choir of the West, won the American Prize for Best Conductor.
- A leader in producing Fulbright scholars, PLU was also recently named among the top three small colleges and universities nationwide for our number of Lute Peace Corps volunteers.
- Kaaren Hatlen, '12, was one of nine finalists for the NCAA Woman of the Year Award—and she's a teacher in an urban Chicago public school with the prestigious Teach for America program.
- We broke ground on the new Garfield Station mixed residential and retail complex at Garfield and C streets, with completion planned by August 2014.
- Our ASPLU (Associated Students of PLU) student government won a grant from the Washington Secretary of State for a program to promote voting.
- The Lute Battalion of Army ROTC won the MacArthur Award—the highest award available—for the second time in three years, a rare achievement.
- PLU is ranked 15th out of 137 Regional Universities in the West by *U.S. News College Guide*, and 32nd of 724 Master's Universities in the U.S. (top 4.4%) by *Washington Monthly College Guide*.
- We are ranked second in the West for Best Colleges for Veterans by *U.S. News*.

Once again, many thanks for helping to create a memorable year marked by notable achievements. PLU is a remarkable institution and community, with students, faculty, staff and alumni distinguished by their intellectual curiosity, creativity, service and devotion to the University. I have been honored to meet so many Lutes and supporters in the past year, and as we approach PLU's 125th anniversary in 2015, I look forward to many more such opportunities.

With deepest gratitude,



Office of Congregation Relations
Tacoma, WA 98447
253-535-7424 crel@plu.edu
www.plu.edu/congregations

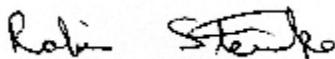
Imagining innovative ways forward in educating leaders for Christian communities

In my first year at Luther Seminary, I've been building relationships, listening carefully and identifying strengths. This has made it clear to me that we are in the process of becoming the kind of nimble, innovative teaching and learning institution that will lead to long-term sustainability for the mission of the seminary.

I am excited about what I see happening at Luther Seminary.

- **Both applicants and admits are on the rise.** The inquiry pool for the 2015-16 academic year is off to a solid start. We've seen a significant increase in applications and admits over last year for both the Master of Arts and Master of Divinity programs. Our number of presidential scholarship applications has also far exceeded our expectations. We are hopeful that these are positive indications that prospective students have confidence in the type of education Luther Seminary provides.
- **Our students are enjoying the flexibility of our new curriculum.** It's an exciting development in seminary education, and one that took years of collaboration among faculty and staff. This curriculum continues to equip our leaders to meet the changing needs of the church and world.
- **We see a wealth of potential in our Lifelong Learning programs.** Nearly 4,000 leaders in ministry—in multiple denominations, across the country and in Canada—are served annually. For the sake of church leadership we need to encourage more men and women to join us by both enrolling in seminary and engaging in lifelong learning opportunities.

We can't do any of this without your help. We want to say thank you for all the support you provide. Keep praying for us, sharing our story, supporting us financially and sending new students our way. Thank you for partnering with us.



Robin Steinke, President

Luther Seminary educates leaders for Christian communities called and sent by the Holy Spirit to witness to salvation through Jesus Christ and to serve in God's world.

In your synod...

Financial Support

Synodical and churchwide support accounted for 7 percent of Luther Seminary's 2013-14 budget.

During the 2013-14 fiscal year, the Montana Synod provided direct financial support of \$15,071.

Students

Thank you for sending and supporting the education of Luther Seminary students.

- There are five students from your synod enrolled at Luther Seminary.
- There are no interns serving in your synod.

Seminary Finances

- Of Luther's operating income, 58 percent comes from private gifts and grants.
- Of Luther's operating expenses, 54 percent goes toward student instruction and institutional support.

Rostered Faculty

Kathryn Schifferdecker

Board of Directors

Ann Christ
Jessica Crist

Alumni

There are 116 Luther Seminary alumni living in the Montana Synod.



THANK YOU Montana Synod for being a ministry partner!

Your gifts of prayers, direct synod support of \$24,896 last year, and raising up students like Doris Tollefson and Tonia Fisher-Clark are sincerely appreciated and make a real investment in the mission of PLTS which is to prepare people to put their call and purpose into action with God's grace. We do this in three ways:

CULTIVATE mind, body, spirit

Knowing that as we enrich their intellectual understanding of theology, we must also attend to their physical and spiritual well-being. At PLTS we do this through:

Complimentary spiritual direction and pastoral care is provided for students. On Wednesday, the entire community gathers for worship and lunch with friends welcome. A group on campus, PLTS Being Well, organizes group fitness activities like ultimate Frisbee, circuit training, and hiking.

EMBODY faith in diverse contexts

Our location in one of the most cosmopolitan areas of the country makes us adept at living our faith and collaborating with others in a wide range of cultural, religious and socioeconomic circumstances. In evolving cultural contexts, PLTS graduates will be ready.

The Graduate Theological Union provides a one of a kind seminary experience where students can take courses at eight member schools and eleven multifaith and interdisciplinary programs.

EXPAND ideas

Excellent theological education set in the San Francisco Bay Area helps us expand our notions both about God and about the church. We are prepared to ask tough questions and challenge assumptions so that we may better and more faithfully serve the church.

Contextual and continuing education provide opportunities for students and church leaders throughout the world. Teaching parishes and internship sites are vital to the formation of our leaders. Week of Renewal June 22-26 at PLTS offers the chance for professional and lay leaders to immerse themselves in a continuing education experience with time for retreat and recreation.

We are excited to share a few highlights from this past year as well developing plans:

- In May 2014, thirty-five graduates in all programs completed their studies.
- We are finishing our first year of the Flexible MDiv program, a new online learning option.
- Dr. Shauna Hannan joined the faculty as Associate Professor of Homiletics.
- The Cal Lutheran School of Management is a teaching partner in a new leadership course.
- Dr. Kirsi Stjerna will join us in the fall as Professor of Lutheran History and Theology.
- We are on track to nearly double the size of the incoming class in September.



LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY—MSU BOZEMAN

714 South Eighth Avenue
Bozeman, MT 59715

Phone: 406.586.3172
www.christuscollegium.org

But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare. Jeremiah 29:7 (NRSV)

Encouraging Faith on and Beyond Campus

Our most successful on campus event this year was our Wittenberg Doors project. As with Martin Luther's posting of 95 Theses on the church doors, we wanted to start a dialogue. Members of the campus community were invited to respond to one or more prompts intended to foster a conversation about faith. The prompts were posted on doors at the center of campus. Students could write their responses on index cards and nail them to the doors. Some students stopped just to read the responses, others to engage in conversation. We discovered a hunger for a safe space for respectful dialogue. Plans are underway to continue the dialogue.

Our community gathers for worship on Sunday evenings and on Thursdays for dinner and a variety of programming from Bible study and discussion to guest speakers. Seasonal fun events such as pumpkin carving are also planned. Faculty and staff also gather each semester for lunch and conversation.

For the fifth year our community garden produced an abundant harvest for the Gallatin Valley Food Bank. Students and others planted, tended, and harvested a variety of organic vegetables. Other service opportunities have been found through MSU's Service Saturdays.

Originally funded by a generous development grant from Thrivent Financial, our outreach team of student musicians is available to come to your congregation and lead worship. Contact us for more information.

One of the ecumenical gifts we share with United Methodists and Episcopalians is the Christus Collegium, Center for Campus Ministry. This year we received a matching grant of \$25,000 from NLCM, Inc. for capital improvements centered around our gathering space, kitchen, and creating fully accessible space. These projects will allow us to continue to be a place of welcome and hospitality for all. The Collegium also has dorm-style housing for MSU students. Students from supporting denominations are encouraged to apply. This year Lutheran Social Services of Montana moved their Bozeman office to the Christus Collegium.

We are grateful for the generous support of prayers, student referrals, and gifts to Lutheran Campus Ministry from churchwide, the Montana Synod, congregations, WELCA groups, Thrivent Choice Dollars, individual donors, and fundraisers. Increasingly, our funding comes from these latter sources. Thank you for the partnership we share and the privilege of serving on your behalf.

Board of Directors: Michael Beehler, Co-Chair; Melanie Schell, Co-Chair; Pr. Steve Schmidt, Secretary; Jayme Schlepp, Treasurer; Pr. Lindean Barnett Christenson; Kirsten Blunck; John Sheppard; Mason Weber; Jaynee Groseth; Rolf Groseth; Pr. Tim Spring.



Student residents and staff: We currently have 11 students living in the Ark and Emmaus House who are committed to living in community, sharing some meals and being part of campus ministry. Currently we have about 35 students in our "Active" file with about 30 more who are contacts. In addition, we have about 15 active older young adults (mid-20's through 30 or so), as well as about 65 faculty and staff contacts.

Worship, Community and Dialog: The heart of our student ministry is our weekly worship and Sunday night dinners and discussions groups. We average between 10-15 students on any given event. We changed our worship this past spring to a Dinner Church model, which includes a worship service around and within a weekly sit-down family style meal. This has been a stronger pull than our evening vespers that we have had in the past.

Retreats and Trips: We offer a fall floating retreat and a winter snow retreat. This spring we had students travel to Vancouver, BC for a service/learning/exploring adventure during Spring Break. We also offer whitewater rafting, hot springs, and day trips. This summer we are offering a summer wilderness trip and course called, "The Bob Marshall Experience" which will include 3 days backpacking and 4 days floating on the South Fork of the Flathead River. This will be for UM or NRIT credits.

Outreach Teams: We are in our third year of having a 8-10 student outreach worship team. The past several years we have lead worship in 8 different congregations and plan to do the same in 2015-16.

Volunteerism and serving others: This past year we volunteered with Family Promise at Atonement Lutheran, Habitat for Humanity, promoted campus-wide charitable giving, and served at the Montana Food Bank Network.

Friends in Need: This past year we started up a new program called Friends in Need. This is staffed by an intern who did a year of the ELCA Young Adults in Global Mission and is run with volunteers of all ages. This program does renovation and fix-up work in homes of need and was seeded by the Montana Synod Mission Venture Capital fund. We have had 1-2 projects per week using student and congregational volunteers.

Faith and Action Cohort Group: This fall we are starting a Faith and Action group that will be offered to all of our interns, student staff and other young adults or students with social service or ministry positions. It will be offered also as a 2 credit course in the Honors College. This will be a weekly group that will include spiritual and theological grounding for community leadership and engagement, leadership and organizing training, peer support, and vocational discernment.

Stewardship of our buildings: This year we raised funds, found grants, and used local volunteers and paid help to paint the exterior of the Ark house, renovate the Emmaus House basement kitchen, living room, and a bedroom, put in 3 new egress windows for two basement apartments, and currently are building a new porch for the Emmaus House.

Campus Pastor Activities:

Teaching at UM: Fall: 1 credit Intro to Honors class called "Finding Your Path".

Emmaus Lunch Series: a monthly gathering for lunch, learning and friendship. Hosted at Emmaus House.

Internship Supervision: we are in our second year of supervising seminary interns serving at Valley of Christ Lutheran in Frenchtown and part-time at Emmaus. This has been a wonderful partnership and we are scheduled for an intern in 2015-16. We also have a Post-Young Adult in Global Mission intern who has worked out very well. We are open to another intern for the fall. In addition, we have a master's level social work internship application in for this next school year.

Preaching and Teaching: Please call for pulpit supply, a teaching event around young adult spirituality and church life, interfaith dialog, faith-based responses to climate change, and perspectives on the relationships between people, land and theology.

A heartfelt thank you to all of our supporting churches in the local Missoula area as well as throughout the Montana Synod. Thank you to the many individuals who have contributed time, food, furniture, and financial gifts this past year. Thank you also to our ecumenical partners; University Congregation and Holy Spirit Episcopal who continue to be a blessing to our ministry!



432 Angus Dr.

Belgrade, MT 59714

Phone: (406) 449-6010

email: mac@macmt.org

website: macmt.org

Dear Montana Synod Assembly,

Blessings be with you as you meet in Great Falls to celebrate the good work in Jesus' name you are doing for the sake of the world! You will be in the prayers of the Montana Association (MAC) council and membership.

MAC is a forty-one year old Christian ecumenical organization dedicated to seeking unity among Christian denominations in Montana. For over four decades we have lived out this unity through service and advocacy that is dedicated to God's justice.

In the fall of 2014 MAC decided to open up its membership possibilities. Formerly, MAC was an association of denominational units (synods, presbyteries, dioceses, districts, and the like). MAC's annual assembly voted to make it possible for congregations, individuals, and non-profit organizations also to become members. With this change, MAC changed its name from the Montana Association of Churches to the Montana Association of Christians. In addition, MAC has created a system in which Ministry Teams are created by its members to do the work of MAC in timely ways around the issues of the day. The goal of these changes is to create possibilities for much greater participation for Christians around our state to work together.

MAC has a wonderful history, born in the grand days of major ecumenical breakthroughs. MAC is known for: its important voice against anti-semitism in Billings in the early 2000's; its events held around the state to help rural communities and farmers during the agricultural crisis; its thoughtful way of creating position papers on important issues of the day; and its advocacy at the Montana Legislature. For example, during this past legislative session MAC worked to advocate in three areas: abolishing the death penalty in favor of life without parole, caring for the welfare of children, and reforming the ways prisoners are reintegrated into society. This is important Christian work!

The Montana Synod is a vital member of MAC. I invite all of you to join MAC's membership. You can join as individuals and families. Your congregation can join. If you are a part of a Christian non-profit organization, it can even join. We are an network of Christians and Christian organizations who seek to pray together as one, be present in our state's broken places, and walk together in the freedom and openness of the Holy Spirit. Many people and congregations find great excitement and faith-renewing energy through practicing discipleship in an ecumenical way. Please be a part! See our website to sign-up.

May Christ's grace and peace be with you,

Rev. Peter Erickson
 President of the Montana Association of Christians

MAC's Mission: We are called together by God to

- ♦ ***Pray together as one***
- ♦ ***Be present in our state's broken places***
- ♦ ***Walk in the freedom and openness of the Holy Spirit***



WYOMING ASSOCIATION OF CHURCHES

Report for 2015 Montana Synod Assembly

One People, One Earth brought faith leaders, Native American elders, youth and scientists together to talk about global warming's impact on water resources in Wyoming.

Building Understanding and Cultural Bridges was a 4-day event last summer on the Wind River Indian Reservation (WRIR) giving non-Natives from 3 churches an opportunity to experience and learn more about our Native American neighbors in Wyoming. Several opportunities for churches are being planned for this summer.

Health Disparities Awareness was raised by our producing and distributing posters revealing that the average lifespan for Native Americans in Wyoming is age 51 compared to 79 for the general population and higher rates of infant mortality and chronic diseases.

Creation of the Wind River Native Advocacy Center was launched with "get-out-the vote" resulting in one precinct increasing voter turnout by 25%, two "Making Your Voice Heard" workshops and 25 from the WRIR went to Cheyenne for Native Advocacy Days gaining significant steps toward obtaining resources for improved health care.

Participated in the Sand Creek Massacre 150th Anniversary Commemoration with Northern Arapahos who are descendants of the families killed in the massacre in southeastern Colorado after having been driven from their lands and which led to their being homeless, starving and escorted by the military to the Wind River Indian Reservation where the Eastern Shoshone Tribe already lived.

Respectful Conversations workshops led by Dr. Rev. Jim Ryan were held in Cheyenne and Lander in 2014 to encourage churches to respectfully talk about controversial topics.

Three Red Desert tours and one virtual tour in 2014 helped to raise awareness of unique features within Wyoming that are currently unprotected and vulnerable to destructive development.

Leadership Development in partnership with Rev. Rebekah Simon-Peter for a program called *For the Common Good* in Lander for people of faith. She also led training on *Money* at our board meeting to kick off our 2014 funds drive. She is leading *For the Common Good* for Native American leaders.

Legislature Luncheon in 2014 during the legislative session, we again had our annual "lobby-free zone" luncheon with legislators leading the worship. This is planned again for 2015.

Lobbying Presence in Cheyenne during the legislative session. The issue focus for 2015 advocacy is: Medicaid expansion, repeal of the death penalty, restoring the possibility of considering "Next Generation Science Standards" being taught in the public schools, and an end to discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Encouraging a Refugee Program for Wyoming in support of Governor Matt Mead's efforts, the only state where a refugee program does not exist. With Church World Service, we hosted an all-day workshop in January on how Wyoming could become a welcoming state.

Repeal of the Death Penalty Panel Program held in January was co-sponsored with the Roman Catholic Diocese of Cheyenne.

For more information, contact Chesie Lee, Executive Director, at 307-0761-0755 or chesie@wyochurches.org or go to the website at www.wyomingassociationofchurches.org

Montana Synod Candidacy Committee

The Montana Synod Candidacy Committee is part of the ELCA ministry that seeks to identify, nurture, train, and approve leaders for the public ministries of the church. Candidacy invites an active participation of congregations, Candidacy committees, seminaries, and the ELCA's Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, to work together with individuals who are discerning whether their vocation in life includes service in the church's "rostered ministries."

Currently the ELCA's public ministries are ordered in four **rosters**. Most people are familiar with **Ordained Ministers**, whose work is centered in Word and Sacrament. In addition, there are three ELCA lay rosters: **Diaconal Ministers** carry out ministries of Word and service in the world. **Associates in Ministry** work in partnership with other rostered ministers and with other lay people to serve mission and ministry needs, usually in the context of the church's congregations, agencies or institutions. Members of the **Deaconess Community**, which grew out of a nineteenth-century movement among Lutherans and others in Germany, are women acting in community to serve church and world.

(Besides the ministries towards which Candidacy is directed, the Montana Synod also has a separate program for preparing and recognizing Lay Pastoral Associates [LPA] for various kinds of ministerial service within the Synod, sometimes as Synodically Authorized Ministers [SAM]. Some other synods have comparable programs.)

As it works with those who are discerning and preparing for church vocations, the Montana Synod Candidacy Committee, on behalf of the whole church, makes three important decisions along the way: *Entrance* recognizes promise for ministerial leadership and formally brings a candidate into the whole process. *Endorsement* acknowledges that the candidate is ready for internship or field work within the particular arena of ministry for which she or he is preparing. *Approval* indicates to the whole church that the candidate is now ready to be called into its public leadership.

Members of the Candidacy Committee serve four year terms which may be renewed once. They include **Mike Connor** (Kalispell), who completes his term in June, **Wava Goetz** (Great Falls), **Kathy Johnson** (Great Falls), **Peter Metcalf** (Missoula), **Pastor Linda Rose** (Shepherd), **Pastor Kim Wilker** (Red Lodge), **Bishop Jessica Crist** (*ex officio*), **Rev. Mark Nelson** (*advisory*, ELCA Region 1 Coordinator), **Rev. Dr. Kathryn Schifferdecker** (*faculty advisor from Luther Seminary*), and **Rev. Bob Quam** (*Synod staff representative*). Joining the Committee in June will be **John Mundinger** (Helena).

Currently active Montana Synod Candidates (14 total):

for Ordained Ministry (8): **Jeff Brown** (Cut Bank, Luther Seminary, *approved*), **Sylvia Bull** (Great Falls, Princeton Theological Seminary, *endorsed*), **Marlow Carrels** (Sand Springs, Wartburg Theological Seminary distance learning [DL] student, *endorsed*), **Jeremy Duprey** (Big Timber, Luther Seminary DL, *endorsed*), **Megan Hayes** (Helena, Wartburg Theological Seminary, *endorsed*), **Jessica Obrecht** (Havre, Trinity Lutheran Seminary/Lutheran School of Theology, *endorsed*), **Stephanie White** (Kalispell, Luther Seminary). **Peter Christ** (Red Lodge, Luther Seminary graduate) has been approved and is in the assignment/call process.

for Ordained Ministry through TEEM – Theological Education for Emerging Ministries, an ELCA initiative to prepare leaders for service in special locations/situations of missional word and Sacrament worshipping communities (3): **Charles Bott** (Billings, LPA serving as SAM at First American in Hardin), **Tonia Fisher-Clark** (Billings, LPA serving as SAM at St. James in Columbus, *endorsed*), **Doris Tollefson** (Hinsdale, serving as SAM at Hinsdale and Saco).

for Associate in Ministry (3): **Colter McCarty** (Great Falls), **Keith Weatherford** (Laurel), **Carol Will** (Helena, *endorsed*).

Do you think you might be called towards the church's public ministries? Do you know someone who may be interested and promising for such service? Contact the Synod Office, the Synod Staff Representative for Candidacy, or anyone on the Candidacy Committee. And keep this ministry, and our candidates, in your prayers.

Submitted by Bob Quam

Synod Representative for Candidacy



Montana State Prison - RAC
500 Conley Lake Road
Deer Lodge, MT 59722
406-846-1320 ext. 2237
pastorrob@ficprisonministry.com

2015 has been a benchmark year for Freedom in Christ Prison Ministry. We entered our final year of eligibility for our Mission Development Grant from the ELCA. What that means is that in 2016, we will be totally dependent upon the support and partnership of this network of individuals & worshipping communities of the Montana Synod of the ELCA.

That said; let me give you an idea of what we do, on your behalf, at Montana State Prison and beyond. We are a worshipping community within, and an outreach ministry of the Montana Synod. Our inmate participants worship together, regularly, several times each week. Our service is ecumenical, and attended by people from lots of different denominations and traditions, virtually all of which include an order of confession and forgiveness and Communion.

We hold small group Bible study several times each week, and do pastoral visits at the Religious Activities Center and at secure housing units such as Locked Housing or the Intake Unit. And just like any worshipping community, we baptize, and we come together to mourn and celebrate the lives of those who have passed.



This living out of God's Work; Our Hands, aids in the building up of the Body of Christ by incorporating these individuals into the worshipping community, both inside the walls and beyond, following their release back into the neighborhoods of our communities.

We have logged thousands of hours of one on one and small group contacts with these fathers and sons, husbands and brothers, loved ones, striving to walk with them as they grow in the faith and understanding that they are beloved of God; God's little children.

I ask for and covet your support, both in prayer and financially, but further, I invite you to consider being an active participant in this ministry, volunteering your time, talents and tongues, both inside the prison and throughout your own communities, walking with "the least of these my brothers and sisters" in Jesus name.

Transforming lives at Montana State Prison through the power and presence of Jesus Christ.

The William and Blanche Hetzel Foundation, Inc.
P. O. Box 22276
Billings, MT 50104-2276

The William and Blanche Hetzel Foundation exists to provide financial assistance to agencies and institutions providing care for the elderly and programs for the health, education, religious training and recreation of children and young people through the Montana Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

In 2014 the Hetzel Foundation Board distributed financial grants in the amount of \$50,040.00. The following organizations that have served the elderly and youth within the Montana Synod received grants in 2014: Elderly: St. John's (remodel one room), Emmaus Campus Ministry (Friends in Need), Valley View (massage therapy), Immanuel Lutheran Community (Senior Care Farms), Hope Lutheran Church (Building a Bolivian Servant Mission Relationship) and Prairie Ridge Village (networking/copier). Youth: Hope Lutheran Church (Building a Bolivian Servant Mission Relationship), Christikon (Sojourner At-risk Scholarships), Our Redeemer (Kids Packs/Food for Children), Flathead Lutheran Camp (Where is God leading us? Strategic Planning), Our Savior's Lutheran Church (Building up Young Girls into Strong Women), and Lutheran Campus Ministry MSUB (Lutheran Cats Live).

Current Board members of the Hetzel Foundation are Chair Kay Hanson, Vice-Chair Dale Peterson (Chair Investment Committee), Director Beth Keating (Chair Grants Committee), Director Pastor Amanda Liggett (Investment Committee), Director Wayne Leininger (Investment Committee), Director Pastor Robert Leaverton (Grants Committee), and Director Bishop Jessica Crist. Non-board members serving on the Grants Committee are Elaine Sealey from Billings, Ruth Edge from Powell, WY, and Steve Martin from Harlowton. Treasurer Steve Restad and Secretary Kerry Ellertson.

Together in Christ,
Kay Hanson
Chair, Hetzel Foundation Board

Hunger

I was unaware of how many resources were available on the [ELCA Hunger link](#) until I was honored to become the Synod Hunger Coordinator. Since last fall, I have been able to sit in on several webinars, attend a church wide hunger conference in San Francisco, and spent quite a bit of time on the ELCA [website](#). I have learned how much the ELCA is doing toward ending hunger, I have learned how much our Synod is doing and I am learning how much the individual congregations are doing in their local communities. One of the tools I have found very helpful is “The Go and Do News”. It is published by the ELCA each month and is full of updates, ideas, information on Hunger Grants and much more. You can find this great newsletter at the ELCA website under the Hunger tab.



Some of the hunger related events that will happen this summer are the second annual “Pedal for Peas” to raise money for ELCA Hunger, and the “Walk 4 Water” which will happen during the youth gathering in Detroit this July. I hope both events will have good support from the churches in our synod. The new ELCA “peer to peer” fundraising tool should make it easy to give support.

I will have some of the materials the ELCA has produced at a table during this year’s Synod Assembly, and I hope to gather information to build a Synod wide hunger team list so we can work together.

The Montana Food Bank Network reports that about one in seven Montanans has experienced hunger in the past year, and too many of these are children. Lutherans are truly a caring and generous people who live out the promises made in baptism to “care for others and the world God made.” Working together, we can make a difference.

Jan Martin
Montana Synod Hunger Coordinator

KOGUDUS RENEWAL MINISTRY

The Board of Directors of Kogudus Renewal Ministry and I thank the Montana Synod for the support given over the years. We are also grateful to Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Great Falls for generously providing office space free of charge. K.R.M. has kept its home office in Great Falls since it was founded in 1975 by Rev. Olaf Magis. It also continues to be an official partner in ministry of the Montana Synod and the ELCA. People are encouraged to take part in Kogudus events no matter what denomination they may claim. Rev. Greg Karlsgodt has served as the executive director since 2002. You may visit the website at www.kogudus.org.

Approximately 100 people attended 12 Kogudus retreats in 2014. Events were held in Montana, North Dakota, and Illinois. There were 8 retreats conducted in 5 prisons (3 for women and 5 for men) in North Dakota and Montana. There were 3 retreats held in Illinois at Camp Griesheim which is managed by Lutherans in the south central part of that state.

A "Contrast Community" retreat was conducted at both Montana prisons for the first time (the women's prison in Billings and the men's in Deer Lodge). There were 16 team members representing numerous communities in Montana and over 30 inmates who attended. The response on the part of the inmates and leaders was very positive; and the staff at both prisons have been very supportive to K.R.M. The "Contrast Community" retreat focuses on the Sermon on the Mount and was inspired by a book by Dr. James L. Bailey.

A "Lament and Laughter" retreat was held at Atonement Lutheran Church in Missoula. This was the first time it was offered outside prison. This retreat connects our losses with the cross of Christ and our joys with the resurrection of Christ. The "Faith and Life" retreat, which focuses on the Apostles Creed and ministry in daily life, continues to be the one most frequently offered and attended. As "a short course in Christianity" it provides a good opportunity for spiritual renewal for both individuals and congregations. Furthermore, developing lay leadership has been, and continues to be, a priority for K.R.M.

As a "Covenant Member" with Freedom in Christ ministry at Montana State Prison in Deer Lodge, K.R.M. is committed to offer prayer and financial support, help provide leaders, assist in communicating this ministry, and encourage congregations, organizations, and individuals to do the same. One of our board members, Rev. Chris Flohr, serves on the "Freedom in Christ" council, which provides support to Pastor Rob Nedbalek. This exciting prison ministry is proving to be a blessing to the inmates who take part as well as to the volunteers who come from sponsoring congregations. We are grateful to the Montana Synod for its support because lives are being transformed both inside and outside of our prisons as a result!

The board of directors and I continue to be open to new opportunities K.R.M. may be offered. Retreats over the years have taken place in congregations, on college campuses, in hotels & motels, at Bible Camps, retreat centers, prisons, a parsonage, a retirement center, and even in a cow pasture! Please pray that the Holy Spirit prepare the way for future retreats; and please contact us to sponsor or host a retreat. Those who have attended a Kogudus retreat have found it to be a welcome break from the daily challenges of life and a meaningful time of spiritual renewal. The message of Christ, fellowship in Christ, and service for Christ continue to be the foundational principles of this retreat ministry. K.R.M. depends upon the dedication, leadership, and generosity of many volunteers (laity and clergy) to carry on this vital ministry. And for them we give God thanks. Please join us as we celebrate 40 years of dynamic ministry!

"Come, Holy Spirit! Revive your Church! Begin with me!"

A Fellow Servant in Christ,
Rev. Greg Karlsgodt, Executive Director

Lay Pastoral Associate (LPA) Program 2015 Synod Assembly Report

In 1997 the Montana Synod established the Lay Pastoral Associate (LPA) program to train and equip qualified lay persons for a congregational-based ministry of preaching, administration of the sacraments, worship leadership, and where appropriate, leadership for Bible study, catechetical instruction, visitation and spiritual growth. Once completed, Lay Pastoral Associates are licensed by the Bishop, to serve our synod as supply preachers and on occasion, Synodically Authorized Ministers (SAMs), or in other capacities as approved by the Bishop.

The Lay Pastoral Associate program follows a two-year training curriculum that teaches students coursework in Old and New Testament, Church History, Lutheran Theology, Preaching, Worship, Prayer and Spirituality, and Pastoral Care. In addition, the LPA students are mentored by an ordained ELCA clergy person in their own or a nearby congregation. This mentor-guided training assists the LPA student in developing those skills needed such as teaching a Bible Study or confirmation class, and providing pastoral care & nursing home visits.

If you or your congregation are interested in the LPA program, the next class cycle will begin in fall of 2016 in Great Falls. Please contact the Synod office for more information.

And remember, if your congregation needs a supply preacher you can find our LPA directory on our Synod website at:
https://www.montanasynd.org/uploads/3/0/9/6/30961995/lpa_directory_january_2015.pdf

Thank you to all who have given graciously of your time and efforts to help make the Montana Synod LPA Program such a success. This year has produced our largest LPA training class to date: 36 students! From staff to students to instructors—God's Work, Our Hands.

In Christ's Service,

Jason Asselstine, Associate to the Bishop

Current LPA students: 36

Active LPAs: 77

Montana Synod Mission Table



“And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.” 1C13:13

Think of a Table... In the kitchen or dining room, a table is a place where meals are shared with family and friends. It’s not just about the food we eat, but it is also about nurturing relationships and making plans for what we will do together.

Think of a Communion Table... In the church when we gather together as God’s people, the Altar is the Communion Table – the place from which we receive bread and wine – the body and blood of our Lord. From this table we share food with each other and experience God’s love and forgiveness. From this table we are sent out to proclaim and share God’s love and forgiveness with the world.

Think of the Mission Table... In the Montana Synod, we use this term to describe a group of leaders who meet together to listen to God and each other – and to vision and plan our church’s mission in Montana and northern Wyoming. The Mission Table has three “LEGS” that focus on three major areas of ministry:

- **Congregations - New Starts and Renewal** – Thinking about where and how we should begin new congregations in our Synod. Planning for how we can support and help renew existing congregations so that they can experience new life and vitality as they do God’s work. *(Members are: Rev. Doug Peterson, Hamilton; Rev. Valorie Putt, Chinook; Rev. Jennifer Quanbeck, Shepherd; Rev. Andrew Wendle, Somers.)*
- **Stewardship and Mission Support** – Helping congregations to grow in their stewardship and in their awareness of what we do together as a church through the Montana Synod and the ELCA. *(Members are: Rev. Scott Hedegaard, Glasgow; Ms. Pam Koterba, Lewistown; Ms. Jeanne McCoskery, Missoula; Rev. Will Sappington, Billings)*
- **Missional Strategy** – Planning for and supporting ministries in our Synod such as the Freedom in Christ Prison Ministry; our Native American ministries of Our Saviour’s Lutheran Church on the Rocky Boy’s Reservation and the new Spirit of Life ministry on the Fort Peck Reservation. Visioning other ministries that we might be able to do together as our Synod in Montana and northern Wyoming. *(Members are: Mr. Eric Bueling, Livingston; Mr. Tom Gossack, Great Falls; Ms. Lisette Langdorf, Choteau; Rev. Joel Skindlov, Big Sandy)*

We invite you to be a part of our conversation! If you have ideas or are interested in any of the above areas of ministry, contact a Mission Table member or Pastor George Karres, Director for Evangelical Mission at gkarres@montanasynod.org.

Montana Synodical Women's Organization



As a Community of Women
Created in the image of God,
Called to discipleship in Jesus Christ,
And empowered by the Holy Spirit,
We commit ourselves to
Grow in faith
Affirm our gifts
Support one another in our callings,
Engage in ministry and action, and
Promote healing and wholeness
In the church,
The society,
And the world.

The Montana Women's Organization lives our purpose statement daily. We sew quilts and assemble kits for Lutheran World Relief. We respond to needs in our communities, the state, the nation and the world. We support one another in our leadership callings. We are committed to supporting the ministries of the Montana Synod and of our sister synod, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Bolivia. In August 2015, a group from the Montana Synod and the Montana Synodical Women's Organization will be traveling to Bolivia. We have pledged support for the Bolivia Water Project. In memory of Diana Hedegaard, we are supporting the children's ministry in Cobija, Bolivia. We continue our support of the Today's Dream, Tomorrow's Reality, anti-racism program. Our peer educators, Mait Board, Gloria Lannen and Pastor Linda Webster, are available to provide workshops and presentations to further the understanding of different cultures. Gloria is also a Process Builder in the development of the ELCA social statement, "Women and Justice, One in Christ".

In September 2015, we will hold our Biennial Convention in Great Falls. The theme is "Go Light Your World". Our Pool of Living Water offering is designated to Lutheran Campus Ministry and Katie's Fund. Katie's Fund is an endowment named in honor of Martin Luther's wife, Katherine von Bora Luther which provides scholarships to women to further their education and grants to programs providing services to women and girls.

In July 2014, women from Montana and Wyoming attended the Ninth Triennial Convention and Gathering in Charlotte, North Carolina. We are now preparing for a Region I Gathering in the Seattle area in the summer of 2016 and our Tenth Triennial Convention and Gathering in Minneapolis is July 2017.

On behalf of the Montana Synodical Women's Organization, thank you for your support. We invite and encourage all women to be an active part of our community.

Sandra Blosser
MTSWO President



NORTHERN ROCKIES INSTITUTE OF THEOLOGY

Since the last assembly, we have had 204 registrations for 9 events (with registration for one class still to take place as of this writing.)

Our classes have been held at 13 different churches, one Inn, one camp and through various computers via webcast.

NRIT has also collaborated with our two Lutheran Bible Camps and has supported events organized by campus ministries and churches in the Montana Synod.

Since last year's assembly, our courses and collaborations included:

- *Preaching Through the Eyes of Faith* with Dr. Steven Loy
- The Christikon Continuing Education Retreat with Dr. Terry Fretheim and Dr. Aana Vigen
- *Church Administration* with Pr. Roberta Pierce
- *Come and Worship: Music and Liturgy in Small Congregations* with Ms. Mary Stevens
- *Chance, Necessity and Love: An Evolutionary Theology of Cancer* with Dr. Leonard Hummel
- *Compassionate Communication* with Pr. Joel Westby
- *Webcast: The Gospel Road Show – Mark* with Dr. David Rhoads
- *Midwinter Theological Conference: The Book of Ruth* with Dr. Diane Jacobson
- FLBC Adult Spirituality Retreat with Rev. Susan Briehl
- *Transitions Retreat* with Pr. Jean Larson and Mr. Daniel Kemmis
- *Crisis of Identity: Christians as Minorities in the Holy Land 1798-1948, a Brief History* with Ms. Megan Pratola

Thank you to all who attended a class/ hosted a class/ told a colleague or congregation member about an event/ gave to NRIT/ encouraged and supported a pastor participating in continuing education/ supported the hundreds of different educational opportunities going on in churches, at colleges and in camps throughout the synod.

Thank you also to the Montana Synod, without whose support, NRIT could not continue.

Jenny Kunka, Director

j.kunka@nrit.org

(406) 452-1663

Please visit our table for a “Resource Catalogue” detailing local classes that you can bring to your congregations, councils, WELCA groups, clusters...

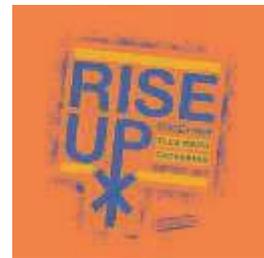
*****See your bag for coming NRIT courses*****

The primary focus of the youth in the Montana synod this year has been the ELCA youth Gathering in Detroit. Every three years the ELCA hosts a gathering that includes youth and their adults leaders from all over the country and world. The last two events were held in New Orleans, Louisiana and hosted a total of 75,000 youth and leaders.



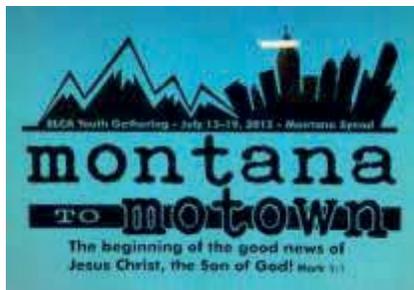
Few events have a greater impact on the lives of our youth and upon our congregations than attending an ELCA Youth Gathering. The summer of 2015 brings over 30,000 youth and adults to Detroit for the *Rise Up Together* event. Youth will have the opportunity to worship and serve together. They will learn what it means to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with the world and have the opportunity to walk alongside the people of Detroit through service and advocacy.

The Montana Synod is sending 250 youth and adults to share in this experience. While in Detroit, we will gather as a Synod with Bishop Crist in worship and learning during our *Proclaim Story* day. Four youth will serve as guides during our *Proclaim Story* day: Cassidy DeBruycker (Dutton), Joey Chester (Columbia Falls), Riley Reed (Harlowton), and Eric West (Kalispell) as well as youth musicians from Hope Lutheran in Bozeman.



Of the 250 youth attending, 80 will be traveling together by bus organized through the Synod. Along the way we will be sleeping in churches and stopping for a visit at Concordia College in Moorhead, MN for a tour of the campus.

The theme for this event ***Rise Up Together*** focuses on the Good News of Jesus Christ brought to us through the Gospel of Mark. Young people and adults who engage in the ministry of the 2015 ELCA Youth Gathering will learn that as individuals, as communities, and as a collective humanity, we are called and claimed as characters in and witnesses to God's divine story, a story that always moves through the cross to the resurrection. They will be touched by God's story unfolding in Detroit. They will return home more aware of their place in God's story, a story enhanced by the stories of others, especially those who are different from them. Ultimately, young people will be encouraged to see themselves as essential witnesses to God's story in the world as they learn to proclaim the beginning of the good news in and through their lives of discipleship, a discipleship marked by their baptismal promises.



For additional information go to: www.elca.org/gathering

Pr. Jason Asselstine, Associate to the Bishop in the Montana Synod.

Immanuel Lutheran

— COMMUNITIES —

A LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP AND MINISTRY IN OUR COMMUNITY

ABOUT US

1953 The Immanuel Lutheran Corporation is organized. After seeing a need to care for the most vulnerable in our community, a non-profit organization was formed. Immanuel Lutheran Corporation started grassroots fundraising to open the Immanuel Lutheran Home, with the mission of *“Enriching lives by providing Christian communities of support and loving care.”*

1957 The Immanuel Home opens its doors. Through the hard work and dedication of many in the community, the Immanuel Home opened its doors to provide care for seniors in our community.

1976 Immanuel Lutheran Communities opens one of the first congregate living environments in the country dedicated to caring for people with dementia. The Bratsberg Memory Wing was opened, through the advocating of Dr. E.O. Bratsberg. Immanuel Lutheran Communities recognized early the need to provide loving, compassionate care with programs to support the needs of residents living with dementia and has been meeting that need for over 39 years.

1988 Immanuel Lutheran Communities opens the Buffalo Hill Terrace, an independent living apartment residence for seniors. It was one of the first for seniors in the northwest. Buffalo Hill Terrace offers a warm and friendly community for quality residential living. A spacious dining area with exceptional meals, abundant recreational choices, library, fitness center, and beautiful courtyard are some of the amenities.

2000 Immanuel Lutheran Communities begins providing Assisted Living Services. Expanding upon a person-centered philosophy, Immanuel Lutheran Communities offered innovative Assisted Living services at Buffalo Hill Terrace, affording residents access to compassionate skilled care with a focus on whole-being wellness that maintains their independent lifestyles.

2012 Immanuel Lutheran Communities opens The Retreat at Buffalo Hill. Offering guests the highest level of leading-edge therapy techniques and state-of-the-art equipment, Immanuel Lutheran Communities opened the nationally recognized Retreat at Buffalo Hill for short-term rehabilitation. With a hospitality-focused philosophy, guests are offered exceptional rehabilitative care in resort-like accommodations. The Retreat earned the *Long-Term Living Magazine’s* Design Environments for Aging Award, being cited for “cutting-edge practices in both rehabilitation and person-centered care to create an extraordinary facility”.

2012 Buffalo Hill Terrace expands by adding additional apartments. To meet the growing needs of residents and provide a comfortable home environment, Buffalo Hill Terrace was expanded to build additional apartments and renovated to update the common spaces.

Future Plans

Immanuel Lutheran Communities continues to pursue the mission of *‘Enriching lives by providing Christian communities of support and loving care.’* Striving to provide consistent, high-quality care to fulfill the ministry and mission to our area seniors, Immanuel Lutheran Communities has adopted a master plan to expand and reposition the community campus. The master plan includes:

- Creating new Memory Care Assisted Living with specialized programs for the varying stages of Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias.
- Expanding the ability to care for more guests at The Retreat at Buffalo Hill.
- Remodeling and updating the Skilled Care Center to create more home-like environment.
- Building new independent living residences.
- Enhancing our offering as the Valley’s only Continuing Care Retirement Community allowing seniors to age in place throughout the continuum from independent living to assisted living, skilled nursing and short stay therapy, and memory care services if needed.



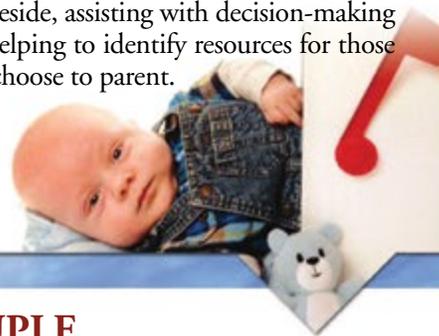
ANNUAL REPORT
2014
Lutheran Social Services
OF MONTANA

FOUNDING AND MISSION

Lutheran Social Services of Montana has served in social ministry since 1952, with our first adoption occurring in 1954. Since 2000, LSS has operated under the auspices of St. John's Lutheran Ministries, sharing in the mission of providing living opportunities within nurturing environments of hope, dignity and love.

BIRTHPARENT COUNSELING

In 2014, LSS staff across Montana met with 58 women and men seeking support in dealing with an unplanned pregnancy, including 13 mothers who chose to place their babies adoptively. Adoption agencies nationwide report a steep decline in adoptive placements, but LSS continues to provide free counseling to women wherever they reside, assisting with decision-making and helping to identify resources for those who choose to parent.



MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING SERVICES

For the past several years, Missoula's LSS counselors have provided therapeutic counseling services on a sliding fee scale. Last year 47 individuals benefitted from this service, and the Billings office is preparing to offer similar services in the upcoming year. Currently LSS has the only counselor in Montana certified as a post-adoption and foster care specialist, and a second LSS counselor is preparing to apply for that certification as well.

ADOPTIVE COUPLE PREPARATION

Although the number of parents who choose adoption for their babies is declining, the number of couples hoping to adopt remains stable. In 2014, LSS worked with 144 couples interested in adopting, and 11 domestic adoptions were finalized through LSS. Currently, nine families are ready and waiting to receive a child and 23 are awaiting an invitation to the next adoption workshop.



SEARCH AND REUNION SERVICES

After decades of backlog and long waiting lists, 2014 was a very good year for search and reunion. LSS fielded 23 requests from LSS birthparents and adoptees seeking post adoptive services, and we were able to orchestrate six reunions. Currently, we have eight searches in progress with only five on the waiting list.



WENDY'S WONDERFUL KIDS

2014 marked the 9th year that LSS was awarded a Dave Thomas Foundation Grant to help match foster children with forever families. This past year, our Wendy's recruiter worked with 32 children and 75 families, and was able to place five older children from the foster care system into loving permanent homes.

GRATEFUL

Lutheran Social Services of Montana is deeply grateful to the Synod, to St. John's ownership churches, and to all who individually and collectively help us continue Joining Hearts in Hope across Montana.

Kathryn Sabol
Kathryn Sabol
Executive Director



PEOPLE SERVED

In 2014, St. John's Lutheran Ministries provided housing for over 1300 senior adults; home and community based health care services for over 600 people; and daily care for 145 children within the on-campus Center of Generations. Rehabilitation and pharmacy support was provided to over 150 residents within rural communities. Lutheran Social Services of Montana provided statewide adoption and mental health services to more than 430 people. God's work. Our hands.

FOUNDING AND MISSION

As a social ministry organization of the ELCA for over fifty-one years, St. John's Lutheran Ministries has remained a community of diverse people sharing God's healing presence. Our mission is to provide living opportunities within nurturing environments of hope, dignity, and love.



In partnership with the Billings Clinic and Big Sky Senior Services, St. John's launched Senior Independence of Montana, providing additional in-home services, beginning with skilled home health care. In May, a deficiency free survey from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid services was received and certification granted. Already, over 100 clients have been served in the place they call home.



The foundation has been poured and construction continues on the WyndStone project, located in the Billings Heights. WyndStone, a joint venture between St. Vincent Healthcare and St. John's, will provide 83 apartment units of Independent Living, Assisted Living, and a Memory Care Cottage. Reservations are being received and apartment selection has moved forward at steady pace. Anticipated opening is Spring 2016.

50TH ANNIVERSARY ROOM REMODEL

Nearly half of residents living within St. John's nursing home have exhausted their financial resources and rely on assistance. St. John's remains committed to providing a quality home for all, regardless of ability to pay. In 2013, a 50th anniversary project to upgrade 28 resident rooms began. Generous donors have already offered nearly one-half of the \$404,600 needed. Remodeling of 14 rooms will be completed by this year's end.

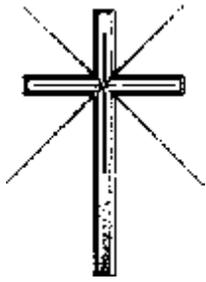
PHILANTHROPY

The generosity of private and business donors fuels ministry at St. John's in countless ways, and that generosity continues to grow. In 2014, St. John's honored Joyce Syverson as Philanthropist of the Year and Energy Laboratories as Business Partner of the Year. Our sincere gratitude to them and to all.

GRATEFUL

Thank you for commending St. John's Lutheran Ministries to people in need of nurturing environments of hope, dignity, and love. Thank you for the abundance of gifts which encourage and sustain our mutual ministry in the world.

Tom Schlotterback
VP of Mission Advancement



Valley View Home

A "Caring" Home

1225 Perry Lane • Glasgow, MT 59230
Tel: 406-228-2461 • Fax: 406-228-4831

This past year, Valley View Home has contracted with Health Management Services, a Montana Company established in 1983. Health Management Services currently manages nine facilities in Montana, Wyoming, and North Dakota. We have implemented new programs, new team members, and new roles. Our goal is to continue to provide quality care, a safe environment, and an enjoyable facility for our staff and volunteers to work in.

Valley View Home reached the decision to initiate a Facility Renovation Project to continue to insure the health and safety for the elderly in our care, our employees, and volunteers. This project constitutes the repair/replacement of three systems in our facility, including: first phase – The Fire Alarm System Panel needs to be replaced as it is the original and needs to be brought up to code; second phase – The Nurse Alarm System also needs to be updated as replacement parts have been discontinued; and the third phase – The roof needs to be replaced as it is also original to the building. VVH has been very fortunate to receive a number of generous donations from community charitable organizations this past year, some of which include: Lukes 100, VVH Foundation, Soroptomist International, Valley County Community Foundation, First Community Bank, Town Pump Charitable Foundation, Northwest Farm Credit Services, and many local businesses as well as members of the community. We are very thankful for all of their support.

Valley View Home has implemented a new software program called Matrix Care which is being utilized facility-wide for clinical and accounting purposes. Matrix Care is a cloud-based electronic health record system. It helps long-term care facilities deliver superior care, resulting in better clinical and financial outcomes. It allows providers to deliver person-centered care while maintaining high occupancy rates, maximizing revenues, and integrates with partners and physicians to provide the best possible care for the residents.



Portico Benefit Services — 2015 Report to Synod Assemblies

Dear Partners in Ministry,

Healthy, resilient leaders shape healthy, resilient faith communities. This ELCA core belief is referenced in guiding church documents, and explains the enduring partnership between ELCA organizations, their leaders, and Portico Benefit Services. As one community, we're called to strengthen ministry.

ELCA organizations are expected to provide sustainable livelihoods for their leaders, and give them time to tend their well-being. Leaders are expected to tend their well-being so they are able to shape healthy congregations in changing, often challenging, times. Portico delivers cost-effective benefits, resources, and inspiration, helping leaders use services and tools to strengthen their financial, emotional, and physical well-being.

This partnership comes to life in a story Portico shared during last year's Open Enrollment. Erik Heskin, pastor at Bethany Lutheran Church in Escanaba, Michigan, required an organ transplant in 2013. Supported by his congregation and the benefits it provides, Pastor Heskin is now reclaiming his role in parish ministry.

Yes, his care was costly — in fact, about 1% of members incur one-third of annual health claims. But on any given day, through illness or injury, any of us could find ourselves in Pastor Heskin's shoes. By standing together as a community, purchasing health care wisely, and maintaining healthy lifestyles, we're better able to shape resilient faith communities and afford quality care for leaders in need.

To Strengthen Ministry — ELCA Organizations Support Their Leaders

Benefits are an investment in God's ministry as carried out through the lives of rostered leaders and lay employees.

— ELCA Philosophy of Benefits

Last year, 7,085 ELCA organizations partnered with Portico to sponsor one or more leaders in the ELCA benefit program, honoring the ELCA's long-standing commitment to protect members and their families against the impact of aging, illness, injury, disability, and death. Since the ELCA's founding, the number of its pastors enrolled in the ELCA benefit program has remained above 90%.

This commitment was evident during last year's Open Enrollment. Ninety percent of sponsoring employers chose to offer the Gold+ health benefit option for 2015, despite an 11% health contribution rate increase triggered by higher than expected health claims. While this kind of increase isn't typical for Portico, it is typical in the marketplace. Since 2007, Portico's average health contribution rate increase has stayed well below the average U.S. employer rate increase, saving millions of dollars for ministry.

ELCA sponsoring organizations also partner with Portico to administer benefits efficiently. In 2014, we automated several manual processes and encouraged sponsors to save time and increase accuracy by paying their monthly bill online. Currently, 48% use this simple, cost-saving process, and we're encouraging the rest to take this stewardship step in 2015.

"In every respect, I have been thankful to our church for providing such a superb retirement program. As a third generation pastor in our family, I am pleased with the way in which our denomination has progressed in its care for all of her pastors and lay professionals. Thank you!"

Pastor Ken Gamb, Retired
Iowa City, Iowa

To Strengthen Ministry — Leaders Strive to Live Well

The ordained minister needs to be an example of self-care, as well as caring for others.

— ELCA Vision and Expectations

Annually, Portico invites health plan members and spouses to take stock of their health, and then take a small step to improve their emotional or physical well-being. In 2014, our members responded in force.

Eighty-one percent of ELCA-Primary health plan members took the Mayo Clinic health assessment, up from 77% the year before. This increase helped the number of sponsors earning the 2% discount on ELCA health contributions jump for the sixth consecutive year to 97%, saving the ELCA \$2.3 million collectively.

Even more impressive, over 51% of ELCA-Primary health plan members earned all their wellness dollars by completing last year's featured wellness activity, up from 44%. One result of these healthy steps: Among those taking the health assessment each year from 2010 to 2014, 5.4% are no longer at risk for poor nutrition, and 7% are no longer at risk for poor emotional health.

Other ways leaders stepped up their use of ELCA benefits in 2014:

- In an average month in 2014, 769 ELCA-Primary health plan members received the fitness center discount by visiting a fitness center at least eight times during the month — an 11% increase from 2013.
- As of Jan. 1, 2015, 47% of plan members are now partnering with Portico to strengthen their future financial well-being by making pretax retirement contributions, up 8% from last year. Forty-eight percent of plan members who made pretax retirement contributions in 2014 increased their contribution amount for 2015.
- 955 sponsored members and 24 retirees purchased a discounted long-term care insurance policy as part of Portico's first-year offering.

To Strengthen Ministry — Portico Helps Leaders Tend Their Well-being

Benefits should support and enhance the unique needs of this church.

— ELCA Philosophy of Benefits

To best serve ELCA sponsoring organizations and leaders, Portico routinely asks the ELCA community for feedback. In 2014, we gathered survey responses from members and sponsors, as well as input from our advisory committees, the Conference of Bishops, synod assembly participants, synod office staff, theological conference attendees, our own Live Well ELCA Facebook page, and the ELCA Clergy Facebook group.

Through this intentional listening, we improve our offerings. For example, after hearing a number of members request long-term care insurance, we used our collective purchasing power in 2014 to offer it at a discounted rate. Another example: Using Customer Advisory Committee feedback, we were able to streamline last year's Open Enrollment process, a clear benefit for time-strapped sponsors and members.

"I have let my 'be still' practice spill over into the church I serve and it is having GREAT effects. We gather for guided silence now before the Lenten Wednesday evening services."

Keith Weber, Dir. of Music
Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church
Houston, Texas

Portico continues to steward the ELCA investment program with efficiency and precision, carefully selecting managers and calibrating asset allocation to enhance the performance of the funds. In 2014, more than 70% of Portico’s investment managers exceeded their benchmarks. This was not the case for most of the investment industry. Morningstar reported that fewer than 20% of U.S. stock mutual funds exceeded their benchmarks during 2014.¹ What’s more, our actively managed funds, with few exceptions, performed better than comparable mutual fund peer group benchmarks during the year — in some cases, by a wide margin. Importantly, this also holds for 10-year and longer time periods.²

Beyond the ELCA, Portico’s ongoing involvement with multi-denominational church benefit organizations like the Church Alliance continues to deliver value. When a federal district judge struck down the clergy housing allowance exclusion as an unconstitutional preference for religion under the First Amendment in Nov. 2013, Portico, as part of the Church Alliance, jointly filed an amicus brief urging the court to uphold the exclusion’s constitutionality. Thanks, in part, to our effort, the U.S. Court of Appeals, 7th Circuit, acted in Nov. 2014 to preserve the clergy housing allowance exclusion.

“A few of our staff members petitioned our local gym to be on the Fitness Center discount list, and I can now continue my daily workouts (aka sanity sessions) and save money, too! Thank you for such great benefits to help keep me healthy, ELCA!”

Pastor Amy Stewart
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
Manchester, Missouri

Together, for Life

Our partnership with sponsoring organizations and members is enduring. In 2015, we’re partnering with synods to learn how Portico can better support sponsors and leaders in the ELCA call process. And to simplify things for our members, we’ve begun to enable “single sign-on” access to our benefit partner websites. As of Jan. 2015, members can access Mayo Clinic’s new Healthy Living website directly from myPortico, and we intend to expand single sign-on to other health benefit partners later in the year.

As always, we thank you for your partnership in this shared call to strengthen ministry.

In Christ,



The Rev. Jeffrey D. Thiemann
President and CEO

1. Source: Return of the Stockpickers, S. Max, Barrons — The Dow Jones Business and Financial Weekly, Jan. 12, 2015.

2. Find specifics about ELCA Retirement Plan investment fund performance at myPortico.PorticoBenefits.org.



Benchmark #2.

Serve the world, especially the poor and those who are in need.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. (John 3:16-17)

We will be able to articulate how everything that we do, everything that we advocate, everything that we commit time and money to will serve the world, remembering that the Gospel of John tells us that God so loved the world as to give Jesus, for the whole world. Through direct action, advocacy and cooperative work, we will minister to the poor, the poor in spirit, the forgotten and neglected. Realizing that this mission field is limitless, we will encourage coalitions, cooperation and establishment of meaningful priorities.

Montana Synod Strategic Benchmarks

Our Mission: "Marked by the cross of Christ forever, abundantly blessed, we faithfully serve God and neighbor."

Our Vision: "Every person a witness, Every minister equipping witness, Every congregation and ministry, empowered for witness, serving faithfully."

The Montana Synod will measure its own faithfulness to our mission and vision and to the task of providing leadership to the Montana Synod by the following benchmarks:

1. Meet the future boldly.

For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart. (Jer 29:11-13)

We will take risks for the sake of the Gospel, remembering that Jesus said that whoever wants to save your life will lose it, and the only way to be a disciple is to pick up a cross and follow. We will learn from our conversations with congregations and we will model faithful, visionary ministry that is more prophetic than safe.

2. Serve the world, especially the poor and those who are in need.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. (John 3:16-17)

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3. Deepen faith and witness.

"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matt 28:18-20)

We remember that Jesus called us to go and make disciples of all nations. We will support and encourage congregations to remain faithful in worship, Word and Sacrament. We will support congregations as they encourage their members to grow in faith and to broaden their witness in their communities and beyond.

4. Promote unity.

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus (Phil 2:1-5)

We remember Paul's image of the body of Christ. We will maintain a clear sense of who we are and whose we are. We will celebrate our diversity within the unity that is ours in Christ. We will give thanks for our many gifts of the Spirit as we explore our different responsibilities within the body.

5. Support congregations.

For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another (Gal 5:13)

We are a resource to congregations and pastors. The Synod leadership, staff and volunteer, will provide support to congregations to empower them to live out their calling as centers of mission. We will encourage and support the development of networks among clergy, lay leaders and congregations.