



Montana Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

News of the Week February 3, 2021

Prayers of the Week

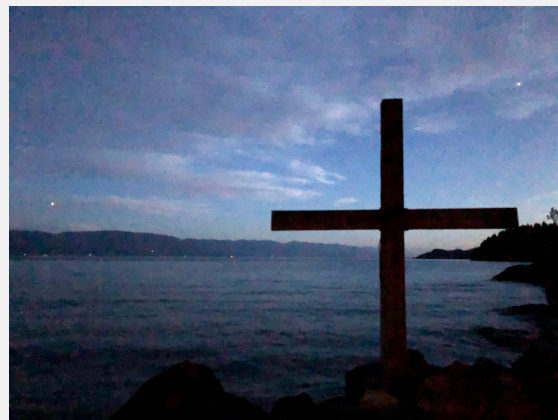
Please remember in your prayers this week:

For SAM Robin Trudell (Zion Lutheran, Fairview) and her family as they mourn the death of her mother.

From the Montana Synod Prayer Calendar:

Trinity Lutheran Church, Sheridan, WY
Hope Lutheran Church, Powell, WY

Alaska Synod



Spotlight on the Synod: Rocky Boys

Because we aren't gathering as usual, we haven't been able to introduce and welcome new pastors as fully as we'd like. Over the next few months, we will introduce some of these new pastors through short profiles. The first of these is on Rev. Tom Gehring, pastor at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church on the Rocky Boys Reservation. In order to lift up this ministry, we've also included a letter from Pastor Gehring.

When Tom Gehring graduated from Augustana College in Sioux Falls, he was considering seminary but felt he first needed time to get a different perspective of the world than what he'd experienced growing up in the upper Midwest.

After spending the summer at Sky Ranch in Colorado, Tom had the opportunity to serve for a year, through the Episcopal Diocese, on the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota. He lived in intentional community and partnered with the Episcopal priest to serve an 8-point parish. For Tom, this was a pre-seminary program as he helped plan and lead worship and worked with the youth group and other ministries.

When he finished that year of service, Tom went to Luther Seminary in St. Paul and did his internship at a Lutheran congregation in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

During his time at Luther, Tom met Kelly Sherman-Conroy and Joann Conroy, who are in leadership in the American Indian and Alaska Native Association for the ELCA. Through his friendship with them, he took two trips to the Standing Rock Dakota pipeline protest in 2016, first as a call to action for clergy and the second time to provide spiritual care. Tom also helped to organize and lead a group of interfaith chaplains to provide chaplaincy support and spiritual care for people during the Black Lives Matter movement in Minneapolis after George Floyd was killed.

In discerning a call to Our Saviour's, Tom visited the Rocky Boy's reservation in August and met Loni Taylor, one of the leaders at the church. Tom and Loni both felt pulled by the spirit to consider what the spirit might be doing through a ministry partnership. After that visit, Tom accepted the call and moved to Rocky Boy's at the end of September. Since then, he and Loni have been fostering a sense of teamwork with the congregation to look into what gifts exist already and how they can tap into those gifts to determine Our Saviour's ministry in the community.

A Letter from Our Saviour's Lutheran Church in Box Elder, MT

Greetings and Tansi!

It's a joy to be writing to you all as the recently ordained and installed pastor of Our Saviour's Lutheran Church on the Rocky Boy's Reservation! What an honor it is to serve this congregation that is celebrating 101 years of ministry this year! My first four months of ordained ministry have by and large looked wildly different than how I ever imagined they would thanks to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. But, I can assure you, ministry *has* been happening here at Our Saviour's, and it has been happening long before I arrived as the new pastor!

From January through September, though Our Saviour's did not have a pastor, the congregation stepped up to continue the ministry efforts of the congregation. At the end of every month, congregational volunteers help to pack 40 grocery bags with food and then drive across the agency to deliver those groceries to folks who need them, especially if their food stamps/SNAP money has run out for the month.

Although many congregation's ministries were hampered by the pandemic, Our Saviour's found an opportunity to start something new by stewarding the resources they had available as a congregation. Partnering with the Rocky Boy Health Center, Our Saviour's made the four cabins on the church campus available as quarantine housing for individuals who had tested positive for Covid-19 and didn't have a place to safely isolate themselves. Multiple people were able to stay in the cabins and ensure the safety of their family and friends, which I think is a phenomenal way of living into our call to love and serve our neighbors.



Worship is still a central aspect of Our Saviour's, yet these days it looks and feels different than it ever has before. On Sunday mornings, I (often accompanied by church council president, Loni Taylor) drive to the homes of congregation members, and lead them in prayers as well as communion. Staying socially distanced and masked up, "Worship on the Go" has been a great opportunity for me personally to meet the people here and stay connected with their lives. In addition to Worship on the Go, I have been livestreaming worship services through the church facebook page. I yearn for the day that the congregation will be able to worship in-person again, but livestreaming services has been a great placeholder for now!

I'll end this little letter by saying thank you to each and every individual and congregation who has stepped up to support Our Saviour's this past year. All your generosity and support have helped the congregation and community. As we start to more intentionally examine the ministry of the congregation, and discern together what the next chapter of ministry will look like here on Rocky Boy's, it is by no means lost on me that so much of what we do is possible through the support of our friends and partners in ministry.

May you know the blessings of the Creator, the comfort of Christ our redeemer, and the sustaining breath of the Spirit,

Pastor Tom Gehring.

February 1, 2021

Dear Bishop Manong and Members of the Manong and Nsibande Families,

It is with great sorrow that I heard of the death of your beloved wife, Mma-Bishop JD Manong. We in the Montana Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America mourn her loss as siblings in Christ with you even as we remember the words of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, "I am the resurrection and the life. She who believes in me will never die."

I have also heard that you, Bishop Manong, have been hospitalized and were unable to attend Mma-Bishop's funeral in person. I am thankful to hear that your health is improving and pray that your healing in body and spirit will continue to increase under the care of your physicians and the healing hand of God.

Please know that we are praying with and for you during this time of suffering and sadness. While mere words cannot take away our pain, we trust in the comfort of the Holy Spirit to give us strength and hope in these days knowing that our hearts rest in the eternal life and love of God.

"For just as we were united with Christ in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his." May God bless and keep you always and especially as you grieve Mma-Bishop Joy's death and find ways to celebrate her life among us.

In Christ's love always,

Rev. Dr. Laurie Jungling
Bishop, Montana Synod, ELCA
ljungling@montanasynod.org

PPP Round Two information:

Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) Reopens:

The Paycheck Protection Program reopened on January 11, 2021. The PPP provided 5.2 million loans worth \$525 billion supporting more than 51 million jobs during the initial round of funding and an additional \$284 billion has been allocated in the second round.

Applications for this latest round of PPP funding will be accepted until March 31, 2021. For those who did not apply for a PPP loan in the First Draw the same terms apply as the original program and First Draw applicants will be prioritized before Second Draw applicants.

- Non-profit organizations and churches qualify for PPP funding.
- Loan amounts are 2.5x the average monthly payroll up to \$2M.
- 1% fixed interest rate.
- Payments are deferred for 6-months.
- 5-year repayment period.
- PPP loans are 100% entirely forgivable if 60% of the funds are used toward qualifying payroll costs and employment levels are maintained.

To be eligible for a Second Draw PPP loan, organizations must use the full amount of the first PPP loan and must demonstrate at least a 25% reduction in gross revenue between comparable quarters in 2019 and 2020.

For more information regarding the Paycheck Protection Program contact:

Peggy Paugh Leuzinger Peggy.PaughLeuzinger@elca.org

Dennis Trotter dennis_trotter@mac.com

Or visit the Small Business Administration Paycheck Protection Program website: [SBA Paycheck Protection Program](#)



Montana Outdoor Ministries worship

Your Montana Lutheran Outdoor Ministries are excited to worship with you on Sunday, February

14th - Transfiguration Sunday! Together, Christikon and Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp will be sharing a full, virtual worship that we invite you to use for your Sunday Worship. The service will include music, the readings of the week and a sermon, communion (and the option to share our service without communion), and other elements of worship. It will be shared next week, but in the meantime, here is an order of worship to plan and prepare.

We thank you for your care and support of your camps. We hope you will join us for worship!

[Click here to access the videos!](#)

[Download the bulletin here \(no Communion\)](#)

[Download the bulletin here \(with Communion\)](#)



Winter Thursdays (and 1 Tuesday) with NRIT

Vital Congregations: What are they and how do they do it?

Most people connected with a congregation wonder at some point how their congregation is doing and how it is and how it can be a center for God's mission. Doctors check "vital signs" as indicators of health or illness. What are the signs of life and health in congregations? This can be an anxiety producing question. We worry sometimes about "survival". We yearn and grieve for days that are past and wonder about what God is doing, could be doing in the days to come. And, then, there is the pandemic.... There are layers of grief to peel back. But there are also signs of hope and life and dare we even say, new life, in congregations today!

Pastor Peggy Paugh Leuzinger, Director for Evangelical Mission in the Montana Synod will offer insight and perspective to engage the questions about signs of vitality and life in congregations and seek to open us up to focusing less on ourselves and our fears and more on what God is doing. We will hear about the Faithful Innovation process that will be opened for congregations in the Montana Synod to participate in so that your congregation can learn to listen to God, to one another and to your community.

Thursday, February 11 10am to Noon

2 Contact Hours

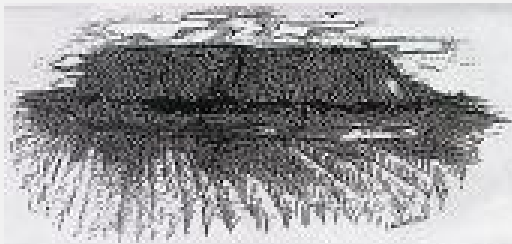
FREE

To register: www.montanasynd.org – Click on the "Faith Formation" tab, top of the page and click on NRIT. Scroll down to find these class.

Lutheran Campus Ministry MSU Worship Service



[Bulletin Download Here](#)



***The William and Blanche Hetzel
Foundation, Inc.***

P. O. Box 22276
Billings, MT 59104-2276

2021 Grant Applications are now available on our website

www.hetzelfoundation.org

Application due date is March 15, 2021

If you have questions please contact Kerry at 406-656-1969 or email her at
hetzelfoundation@gmail.com

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