



News of the Week May 24, 2023

Prayers of the Week

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

**From the Montana Synod Prayer
Calendar:**

All Saints Lutheran Church, Clancy

New Life Lutheran Church, Helena

Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church,
Helena

Lower Susquehanna Synod



**The Synod office will be closed on Monday, May 29th
in observance of Memorial Day**

Words from the Bishop: Wondering in the Spirit

*In those days I will pour out my Spirit, God
declares. Acts 2:17, 18*

Pentecost Greetings to you in the name of the Holy Trinity as we welcome the coming of the Holy Spirit and celebrate the birth of Christ's

Church this Sunday.

Last January, I wrote about liminal spaces. In her book *How to Lead When You Don't Know Where You're Going: Leading a Liminal Season*, Susan Beaumont describes the times and spaces that the church lives in today as "liminal," as standing in the threshold of an open door to something new but we haven't gone through yet. In this space, part of us stands in the former things, part in the future things, and part in the right now and here, the confusing and messy "this."



This threshold is not an easy space/time for us to live in. In this threshold between already and not yet, we find both anxiety of an unknown future and the grief of losing a dying past that felt stable (whether it was stable is another question). In the threshold, we feel pushed by some to go too quickly into something we feel we're not ready for yet or we feel held back by those clinging too tightly to something that doesn't work anymore.

And in this threshold we find God. In fact, it's in the liminal spaces, the times we aren't in control, the times of not knowing and uncertainty that we actually find ourselves closer to God than any other time.

The pouring of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples that Pentecost morning was definitely a liminal experience for them. Their self-constructed walls of future agendas, plans and judgments were torn away and they were brought face-to-face with what God was revealing to those around them through their own voices speaking unfamiliar tongues.

The pouring of the Holy Spirit upon us is a liminal experience as well. In fact, as followers of Christ who have been filled with the Spirit in our baptisms, every day is a liminal experience of wondering in awe and fear about what God may be doing next in our lives and the lives of the Church. Contrary to what some thought, there is not going to be a post-pandemic stability. We're still standing on the threshold between former things and new possibilities, a time of both worry and wonder. And we may be standing there for a while.

It is in these times of liminality that the Holy Spirit can better break through our closed and frightened minds, hearts and wills. As our reliance on our own ways, goals and identities is peeled back layer by layer, we can begin to see more clearly God's presence with us and the new things that God has been, is and will be doing among us. We see through a glass dimly, for sure, but with open eyes, hearts and wills, we can see.

And not only does God appear more present to us during this time, but our Spirit-given faith (trust) tells us that "God is Able." This sermon title from Martin Luther King Jr. continues to resonate with me: that God is indeed able. I think we forget that at times and begin to believe it is all up to us. But God is able to bring abundance out of scarcity. God is able to bring hope out of despair. God is able to bring life out of death. God is able to do all this and more again and again.

It's in the liminal spaces that the Holy Spirit enters into our lives, sometimes with violent winds and tongues of fire, often with still small voices of witness to the new life in Christ every moment of every day. It's also in the liminal times that we need to cling to the promise that God is with us and is able to make change in us and through us whether we feel it or not.

As we celebrate Pentecost this week, I am offering my thanks to you for your ongoing work of equipping for the ministry of the Gospel in your liminal places across the Montana/N. Wyoming Synod. Thank you for the many resources, including the financial resources, you have shared with the synod, the ELCA and our ministries over the past year so that we can better equip you. Thank you for your time, energy, commitment and willingness to persist and be resilient in the many ways you have been called to serve Christ and his Church wherever you are located.

With gratitude for the power of the Spirit pouring through you to serve the world,

Synod Assembly 2023 Equipping for Generosity

"Generosity is what God wants for us, not from us ."

Generosity is a gift of the Holy Spirit and we see that gift at work in the Montana Synod's communities of faith. We are surrounded by narratives of generosity and we daily create more of these stories through our thoughts, words, and deeds. At the Montana Synod Assembly, we will consider the vast benevolence of God, the eternal giving of God-self which created us and continues to care for us. We will reflect on the abundance of the Holy Spirit and its presence in our faith communities. And we will ask how this same Spirit invites us into a new way of living in a world that so deeply needs what we have to give.

On the practical side we'll explore:

- Personal generosity stories
- Stories of congregational open-heartedness
- Where we see the Spirit encouraging generosity in our congregations today and into the future.

Rev. Tim Brown, the Director of Congregational Stewardship in the ELCA and Rev. Peggy Paugh Leuzinger, Director for Evangelical Mission in the Montana Synod will lead the Synod Assembly in learning and conversation on Friday afternoon, equipping and encouraging one another in generosity.



Pastors please make sure that your voting members are receiving this information!

[Click here for the Synod Assembly Documents](#)

If you are a voting member coming to the Montana Synod Assembly now is the time to check up on what you need to know for our time together next week. Click the link above to be taken to the 2023 Assembly page, there you will find the tentative schedule.

Things to know about the schedule:

- If you are a voting member you have a ticket both to the banquet on Friday night as well as the breakfast buffet on Saturday morning.
- Please be at the Heritage Inn by 9am Friday morning. We will begin with worship and our first plenary will begin at 10:30am.
- Early check in will begin Thursday evening from 6-8pm and open again Friday morning at 7am.

Remember, there will be no printed material provided at the assembly. Make sure to either download or print out anything you'd like to have access to while there.

Any questions about the assembly can be directed to: cmccarty@montanasynod.org.

Sermon Manuscripts Available

Montana Synod leaders have been providing manuscripts for use in congregations through the Lent and Easter seasons. We are happy to announce that these manuscripts will be provided throughout the entire year! Thank you to the leaders in the Montana Synod who are providing these manuscripts every week. They can be found and downloaded on the [Montana Synod website here](#).

[Click here to give to the Montana Synod](#)

Synod Staff:

Bishop

Laurie Jungling: ljungling@montanasynod.org

Associate to the Bishop

Brenda Frelsi: bfrelsi@montanasynod.org

Director for Evangelical Mission

Pastor Peggy Paugh Leuzinger: ppleuzinger@montanasynod.org

Director of Technology and Communications

Colter McCarty: cmccarty@montanasynod.org

Office Manager

Oliver Main office@montanasynod.org

Director of NRIT

Jenny Kunka: j.kunka@nrit.org

[Click here to be taken to the newsletter archive on our website](#)



Montana Synod, ELCA | 1221 24th St. South, Great Falls, MT 59405-5034

[Unsubscribe cmccarty@montanasynod.org](mailto:cmccarty@montanasynod.org)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by cmccarty@montanasynod.org powered by



Try email marketing for free today!