



News of the Week June 2, 2021

Prayers of the Week

Please remember in your prayers this week:

For Pastor Trina Johnsten (interim) who has been hospitalized with high fever and pain and is awaiting diagnosis.

Prayers of congratulations and celebration for Pastor Sarah Schilcher and her family as they celebrate the birth of their son Jonathan.



From the Montana Synod Prayer Calendar:

American Lutheran Church Harlem
American Lutheran Church Hogeland
American Lutheran Church Turner

Nebraska Synod

Words from the Bishop: 2021 Synod Assembly



Assembly Links:

Use these links to watch the assembly live!

Friday, June 4th at 1pm: <https://youtu.be/G9XKOHj3ovI>

Saturday, June 5th at 9am: <https://youtu.be/WG1iBUA2oYY>



Beyond Covid is a resource that was featured in the April and May editions of Seeds Monthly. This free Post-Covid Congregational Re-Gathering and Renewal Resource has been downloaded by 163 leaders in 33 states and 4 countries. If you are looking for a resource to use in your congregation, take a look at this.

Pastor Peggy Paugh Leuzinger, DEM, Montana Synod.

If you're looking for a resource to encourage, inspire, and challenge your members and get them in the right frame of mind for your post-Covid journey ahead, consider Thriving Beyond Covid, a scripture-based small and large group study. The days ahead will be challenging but they can be managed with faith and a plan. Check out this two-minute video (<https://youtu.be/w1VQ5dMoeo0>) and the website to see if this resource is something your

congregation might want to use. A leader guide, small and large group participant guides, and videos, are available for free download at www.ThrivingBeyondCovid.org.

To access and review the resource, simply go to www.ThrivingBeyondCovid.org and submit the brief Download Resources request. You will immediately receive an email reply with links to everything. I have also attached some graphics in case you may wish to use them.

Pastor Jeff Linman served for 33 years as an ELCA pastor, 22 of them in redevelopment settings, and have a deep passion for church renewal. As a relatively new member of the retired roster. He states, "I continue to serve by leading congregational renewal weekends and by serving pastors as an ELCA Level 1 coach. This resource is my gift to the church for these challenging times."

By the power at work in our midst, God is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine!

Ephesians 3:20

www.ThrivingBeyondCovid.org

www.BeDreamLeaders.com

www.IgniteTheChurch.net

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Some wisdom from the Bishop re: recent CDC Guidelines

Many of you have no doubt heard about the confusing guidelines that came last week from the CDC regarding mask wearing, social distancing and other activities that affect our worship spaces and practices. Communities, counties, states and organizations are also attempting to issue guidelines based on the CDC guidelines which seems only to be making things more confusing. In light of this confusion, I will make no attempt to issue yet another set of guidelines as the congregations in the MT/NWY Synod continue to discern new and familiar ways to be church together as you emerge from pandemic related realities in your settings. Instead, I will offer the following:

- In whatever you decide and whatever you do, love one another.
- In whatever you decide and do, be wise, careful and ready to return to the safety-centered previous practices should Covid-19 numbers begin to rise again in your context.
- Keep an eye on the number of active cases in your area and listen to your health professionals, making decisions accordingly.
- Do not judge one another for the choices others are making or put stumbling blocks in the way of others in their faith. (cf. Rm 14:13ff)
- Instead lift one another up in mutual respect and "please your neighbor for the good purpose of building up your neighbor." (cf. all of Romans 14-15)
- Congregation councils and pastoral leaders, take a deep breath of fresh air outside, let it out slowly, and then continue to work together to make decisions for the common good of your congregation and your surrounding communities.

Finally, in all that you do, think and say, remember and live out the verses from Galatians I've quoted often during this time of pandemic, "For you were called to freedom, siblings in Christ; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence but through love become servants to one another." (Gal 5:13)

Your (just as confused) sibling in Christ, Bishop Laurie

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