



Montana Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Equipping for Ministry

News of the Week July 14, 2021

Prayers of the Week

Please remember in your prayers this week:

For those in our companion synod, the Cape Orange Diocese of South Africa as the country is in the grips of violent political protest.

For the family, friends and the congregation of American Lutheran Church in Chinook, Montana as they celebrate the life of Pastor Valorie Putt on Friday, July 16th.



From the Montana Synod Prayer Calendar:

Trinity Lutheran Church, Choteau
St. John's Lutheran Church, Great Falls
St. Paul Lutheran Church, Cut Bank

Northeastern Ohio Synod

Spotlight on the ELCA - Director for Evangelical Mission Peggy Paugh Leuzinger

So what is going on in the ELCA? That is a question asked of us on the Synod staff sometimes. Let me share a little from my perspective about the ELCA. I was called to serve as the Director for Evangelical Mission for the Montana Synod almost four years ago. There are DEMs in most of the

Synods of the ELCA. We are employed by the ELCA, but deployed to serve in Synods of the church. As a pastor in the church serving in congregations over the years, I had certainly known of and been supportive of the ELCA. But I have been impressed and inspired by the work of my fellow colleagues and the churchwide staff to make a difference in congregations in Synods. I have participated in several workshops and training events, both in person and in the last year, in digital events, and have invited leaders in several congregations in the Synod to join me. We have left energized, inspired and encouraged to trust that God is present in the world and that we can engage and share and make a difference in congregations in the Synod. Currently, I have been attending a “Bootcamp” in an on-line forum that is intended to train congregational leaders to examine and reflect, then learn skills and act in ways to revitalize their congregation. (I am thinking to offer something similar here in the Montana Synod in the fall.) This is one example of how the whole ELCA partners with Synods and congregational leaders to help strengthen and equip us all to be ministers of the Gospel.



Where does your offering go? When you give to your congregation in our Synod, a large portion of your offering supports the ministry of your congregation: staff, building, cost of ministry (think education, worship supplies and other regular expenses.) Your congregation most likely also supports some other ministries in your community and other Lutheran ministries in the Synod and even around the world. In many congregations, the amount from offering that is retained for use in the congregation and community is close to 90 %. Most of the money given remains in the congregation and is used to support your local ministry. As a congregation in the ELCA, there is an expectation that your congregation will also share a portion of the income received to participate in the work of being the church outside your community. In fact, as a congregation in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, your constitution states that your congregation will share a portion of what is received for the sake of the larger church.

The Montana Synod receives that offering. I will share how the offering is spread out in and around the Synod in coming months, but today, I want to lift up the work of the ELCA, the churchwide organization. Of the money received by the Montana Synod, about 35 % is passed on to the ELCA. That is the largest amount of money given to any one entity in the Montana Synod. Pastor Ruben Duran, during his presentation to the Synod Assembly in early June shared some of the impact that makes a difference in the world, the church and even in the money that is “returned to the Synod” from the churchwide organization. The ELCA impacts structures for pastors and candidates, supports the network of Bishops of the 65 Synods, sends missionaries out into the world to be agents of grace, and calls the DEMs. The ELCA reaches out to support ministries around the whole church and around the world through the ELCA World Hunger Appeal and Lutheran World Relief.

Although several of these entities rely on intentional designated giving, the structure and administration of these are part of the ELCA. There are also several ministries in the Synods who receive grant funding from the ELCA. Money returns to Synods from the ELCA to support ministries on reservations, in the prison and among ministries who are not able to be self-supporting. Money also supports new congregations that are starting around the ELCA. The ELCA organization is organized under Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton and the Churchwide Council. (Loni Taylor from Box Elder, a member of Our Saviour’s Lutheran Church on the Rocky Boys Reservation, serves on the churchwide council and the Executive Committee of the Churchwide Council.) And every three years, voting members from every Synod attend the Churchwide Assembly to vote and take action on the business of being the church, while the Churchwide Council, Bishop and staff make decisions and guide the church between the Assemblies.

If you have never looked at the Churchwide website, I encourage you to do so. (www.elca.org) The churchwide organization is the umbrella that holds us together as Synods, congregations and various ministries around the whole church. I am reminded again and again, that when people work together (and give together) there is so much that can be done to proclaim the Gospel of our Lord and to live as servants and disciples in the world. Thank you for your generous giving to your congregation which helps to support

the ministry of the whole ELCA. If you would like to make a direct gift to the work of the ELCA, please go to the ELCA website and click on the “GIVE” button. Information about giving by check or other means is also available by clicking on the link.

LPA Class this fall!

A new class of LPAs will be starting up this fall in Great Falls. If you have a candidate in mind from your congregation, or would like more information, please call the Synod office or email Candi!

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