



## News of the Week July 20, 2022

### Prayers of the Week

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

For Pastor Sarah Schilcher and her family as they mourn the death of her Aunt Leah.

Prayers for Rev. Alan Baglien who is recovering from a fall and is out of the ICU.

**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



### Words from around the Synod: Montana Synod Racial Justice Task Force

The Montana Synod Racial Justice Task Force was formed in 2019, following approval of a resolution at that year's synod assembly. The resolution called for a Racial Justice Task Force which would work to center conversations on God's distinct love for diversity, founded on definitions of justice declared in the Holy Scriptures.

Since the task force formed, over twenty ELCA pastors and lay leaders have participated in community organizing training and/or a 16-hour learning module titled "Wrestling with the Truth of Colonization." These classes provided learning opportunities for the task force members.

Because the ELCA is requiring that clergy receive diversity training, the "Wrestling with the Truth of Colonization" class also gave the task force a chance to begin vetting educational options for Montana

settings. Throughout the past year, the Racial Justice Task Force (RJTF) has researched a variety of classes in their effort to choose options that would work well for Montana pastors and LPAs. The RJTF believes that the Montana Synod would best be served by having a number of available classes to choose from, to fit the needs of varying congregations. They are aware that what suits an urban congregation may not be the right fit for rural communities. The task force is also looking into good class options for congregational members who want to learn more.

Additionally, the RJTF created an email thread, in order to share information with each other and any interested MT Synod members. The purpose of the email thread is to discuss opportunities for showing up as a way to be supportive and create relationship. The email group is especially focused on Indian Country, sharing dates and times for pow-wows, horse races and other events. Email members can make plans to attend an event together. The email thread allows members to hear of events where they need people to show support for Indigenous neighbors as well as opportunities to write letters or contact representatives when laws are deliberated that directly affect communities of color. The RJTF is working to form relationships with Indigenous leaders in Montana communities, taking time to listen and learn how best to be good neighbors.

To be added to the email link, contact Stacey Heggem at: [rjtfmtnsynod@gmail.com](mailto:rjtfmtnsynod@gmail.com)  
Financial gifts to support this work can be made out to and sent to the Montana Synod with “Racial Justice Task Force” on the subject line.

Focused on looking at Wrestling with the Truth of Colonization workshop.

1. Establish a procedural educational option – series of options for pastors. Do our own and tailor it to the church? Still trying to decide what would be the best options for our Montana pastors. A few different options. Different entries for getting the ELCA requirement completed for clergy and something for congregation members who would like to learn more.
2. Right now we have an email thread going (hoping for a Facebook page) when we hear about an opportunity to show up in our communities we are emailing each other. Especially letting folks know what is going on in Indian Country and being present in any way we can. We don't want to presume we know what's best, we want more to be there to learn and listen.

This is focused on Indian Country. Horse races, pow-wows. We are talking about meeting each other there, showing up, trying to form relationships with native American leaders in their communities so we can learn how to best show up for them in their communities.

If anyone has an intention in showing up or if they know of a community that needs people to show up. They are trying to share this information and work with each other to share info and how they can be good neighbors.

[rjtfmtnsynod@gmail.com](mailto:rjtfmtnsynod@gmail.com)

**Always looking for funding. If you want to contribute financially, gifts can be sent to the Montana Synod.**

## Faithful Innovation Training

Please click on the link for the brochure for the upcoming Faithful Innovation training to begin this fall.

If you and your congregation are interested in knowing more, please contact DEM Peggy Paugh Leuzinger.

If your congregation is ready to begin to intentionally listen to God, one another and your community and experiment and reflect intentionally, please sign up by contacting Peggy.

**Faithful Innovation Training for Congregations**  
(All Guiding Team members and their pastors attend all three trainings)

There will be an East and a West location for the 1st and 3rd Training.

- East: Sept. 9th @ 6 pm—10th @ 2 pm  
Location dependent upon participants
- West: Sept. 30 @ 6 pm—Oct. 1st @ 2 pm  
Location dependent upon participants

2nd Training will be a hybrid — on-line for some and over zoom for others in early Feb. 3rd Training will be in person at locations and dates to be determined soon. (Likely in late April—May, 2023.)

If you have participated before, you are encouraged to attend the in-person trainings. Other short 1.5 hour Zoom meetings will be held during the course of the year to share learnings and encourage one another.

**Who Is This For?**

Any congregation that wants to learn new ways to hear what God is doing in their community and the world — and put that into action. In this process, you will **Listen** in order to discover what God is up to in your lives and neighborhoods and determine how you can join in with what God is already doing. You will learn to **ACT** through experiments within your contexts and **SHARE** with others to discover what being church in the 21st century is all about.

Are you ready to partner with God to see what God is already doing in your congregation

**Montana Synod Faithful Innovation Process**

**Listen. Act. Share. And Repeat. Again and again.**

Register your team by Aug. 1, 2022  
For more information, contact Pastor Peggy Paugh Leuzinger, DEM in the Montana Synod  
406 451-8461 or [ppleuzinger@montanasynod.org](mailto:ppleuzinger@montanasynod.org)

Cost: \$250 per congregation covers the costs of training sessions, materials and congregational coaching.

## Summer Stewardship Conversation

Our conversation needs to be postponed until August due to Pastor Peggy recovering from a positive Covid diagnosis. We will announce the new time here in the news once rescheduled!

**We are still searching for an office administrator and are reconsidering the job description. We will post an updated version in the coming weeks.**

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### Synod Staff:

Bishop

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Associate to the Bishop

Pastor Jason Asselstine: [jasselstine@montanasynod.org](mailto:jasselstine@montanasynod.org)

Director for Evangelical Mission

Pastor Peggy Paugh Leuzinger: [ppleuzinger@montanasynod.org](mailto:ppleuzinger@montanasynod.org)

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Jenny Kunka: [j.kunka@nrit.org](mailto:j.kunka@nrit.org)

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