



News of the Week August 10, 2022

Prayers of the Week

Please remember in your prayers this week:

From the Montana Synod Prayer Calendar:

Bethel Lutheran Church, Great Falls
Redeemer Lutheran Church, Great Falls
Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Great Falls
First English Lutheran Church, Great Falls
Northern Illinois Synod



Words from the Bishop: Churchwide Assembly Report



Some brief reflections from the Churchwide Assembly after our first day of business.

- The ELCA, at least as represented by the assembly voting members, is more in harmony than is often expressed on social media. Many of the votes we took today showed a community that is trying to seek unity in diversity rather than uniformity.
- The Assembly voted to set up a commission to explore the possibility of “reconstituting the ELCA.” What does this mean? That’s what the commission is commissioned to discern. But one thing I’m certain about: we’ve just jumped onto the Holy Spirit’s train and are in for a wild and hopefully wonder-filled ride.
- Bishop Eaton, on behalf of the whole ELCA, apologized to the community of *Iglesia Luterana Santa Maria Peregrina* and once again committed all of us to do the difficult and on-going work of racial justice in our church and world. Four members of this Christian community from Stockton CA, after being deeply wounded by the actions of leaders of this church in the Sierra Pacific synod and beyond, exemplified Christ’s courage and grace by coming and receiving this apology, though they did not have to do so and it was very difficult decision for them to make. (The ELCA paid all their costs.) To listen to the apology and the community’s response, please go to the [Plenary 2 video on the Churchwide Assembly website](#) starting at the 2-hour, 19 minute mark.

· The worship service today was a time of lament for the injustice still experienced by BIPOC and LGBTQ+ people in the church and the world. As the confession says, “we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves” both as individuals and as social systems. Facing such realities and wrestling with the role we may play in causing such suffering (whether we know it or not) is hard work, but it is possible when we remember that our hope is in the promise of God’s unconditional forgiveness which in-spirits us to follow Christ’s call to seek God’s kingdom of love and justice for all in this world.



- Finally, a few reflective words from some of the synod voting members about their experiences at the CWA so far: “inspired, wrestling, heavy, hopeful, Holy Spirit, challenged, difficult, humbling, mixed, courageous confession, sacred, questioning, and community is hard but beautiful.”

Please continue your prayers for the Churchwide Assembly and all of Christ’s church.

Blessings to you all.

Bishop Laurie



[To watch video archives of the assembly or the livestream, click here!](#)

Updated Synod Job Description: Office Manager

Start date: As soon as available. Accepting applications until the position is filled.

Compensation and Benefits

- Full-time, hourly. \$17 per hour, 40-hour week, time and a half overtime when needed and approved in advance.
- Benefits: health and retirement benefits, vacation, sick leave and family leave, continuing education support.

Position Description:

The Office Manager for the Montana Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is an integral part of the synod staff team whose primary responsibilities involve the day-to-day activities within an office environment including answering phone calls and email, maintaining paper and on-line filing systems, organizing events, maintaining a contacts database and a variety of front office reception tasks.

[Download the full job discription and application instructions here.](#) Please feel free to share this in your congregation's newsletters!

Wondering how to lead?
Leading without hope?
Hoping something will change?
Changing without a plan?

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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.

[Click here to download the brochure](#)

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.

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

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

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

Montana Synod Faithful Innovation Process

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

Stewardship in Congregations

As leaders are thinking about the fall and making plans for the rest of 2022 and 2023, in the midst of post-covid and the inflation that we are experiencing, you maybe are wondering how the Montana Synod is working to provide resources for your congregation to address questions of stewardship, congregational finances and other issues. Please note these options available to congregations in the Montana Synod.

End-of-Summer Stewardship Conversation Via Zoom

Wed. Aug. 31, 7:00 – 8:30 pm

Join with others in the Synod for a 1 1/2 hour time of learning with DEM Peggy Paugh Leuzinger, Dennis

Trotter, Synod Stewardship Consultant and members of the Stewardship Task Force on basics of Stewardship and Generosity. Topics to be covered include the state of giving in the church today, challenges and opportunities to talk about money in the church and a beginning conversation about how to equip leaders to encourage and strengthen generosity in the congregation. The Zoom link will be posted with this announcement in mid-August. Leaders – invite those in your congregation to join in this time of learning and conversation together now.

Fed By Ravens: based on 1 Kings 19

Pastor Peggy Paugh Leuzinger, DEM, and Synod Stewardship Consultant Dennis Trotter will begin another round of “Fed By Ravens” to equip teams of stewardship leaders in congregations about stewardship, the “ask”, thanking people, and cultivating generous supporters of ministry. Please contact Peggy if you would like to learn more. This is a free service to Congregations in the Synod which will begin in the Fall of ‘22. This experiment has helped a few congregations in the Synod to consider the giving and support for congregations and has also been a time for the congregation leadership teams to learn and grow deeper in their understanding of generosity and the changes that congregations are experiencing in this time. Teams from congregations will meet in two large group learning times, and will also meet three times as a team with Dennis and Peggy for team coaching and conversation. This will begin in October and continue through the rest of 2022.

Stewardship Consulting or Coaching for Congregations and Ministries

DEM Peggy, Pastor Lindean Barnett-Christenson and MSU Campus Pastor JP Carlson have completed the “Executive Certificate in Religious Fundraising” and are available to consult with congregations in the Synod on Stewardship and Generosity. Please contact Peggy for more information. These might be a series of conversations or just one time. The intention is to meet the needs of congregations/leaders in your own context.

Grow Giving Through the ELCA’s Congregational Financial Assessment

Join us for a Zoom event to learn about the free Resourceful Servants Congregational Financial Assessment. Through this tool and website (resourcefuleservants.org/congregations), your congregation can help grow confidence of members by proactively engaging in a review of financial systems relative to best practices and healthy behaviors. By using best practices, your congregation signals to donors that your congregation is worthy of donations and conveys that accountability, transparency, professionalism, and impact are serious considerations. Steve Oelschlager from the ELCA will facilitate this webinar zoom on Monday, Aug. 29th from 6:30 – 7:30 pm. Please contact Peggy if you have questions. [Download the flyer](#) describing this resource for more information.

Contact DEM Pastor Peggy Paugh Leuzinger

At ppleuzinger@montanasynod.org or peggy.paughleuzinger@elca.org or call: 406 451-8461

A sermon will be provided this week from the Synod Staff. Please check [this link](#) on Friday afternoon!

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