



Herald of Peace

August 2017

Peace Lutheran Church,
1301 Ave. D, Billings, MT 59102

(406) 252-5504
peacelutheranbillings.com

Making Christ Available to All by Rejoicing, Renewing and Reaching Out

Peace Lutheran Church Mission Statement

Leadership Directory

Pastor: Rev. Will Sappington
prsappington@gmail.com
office 252-5504 Home 647-8568
Office Manager: Dean Jenson
peaceoffice@bresnan.net
252-5504
Youth Director: Vanessa Stieger
peacelcyouth@gmail.com
office 252-5504 cell 698-5576
Intern Pastor: Liz Frey
internpeace@gmail.com
252-5504

Treasurer	Steve Frank
Organist	Robin Goodheart
Bells of Peace	Julie Draeger
Altar Guild Treasure	Molly Johnson
WELCA Treasurer	Connie Hausauer

Church Council

Anderson, Dewey	656-1709
Brown, Mike	855-1588
Christensen, Randy	701-260-5016
Draeger, Dave	698-1333
Finn, Susan	534-1860
McGough, Amy	861-3449
Miller, Holli	656-6847
Peterson, Bryan	671-1301
Sider, Melissa	281-7334
Strosky, Paul	661-2626

Worship Schedule

Saturdays: 5:00 pm
Sundays: 10:00 am
Education Hour: 11:00 am
Sunday Channel 7 at 9:00 am



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

"Changes"



There's an opportune time to do things, a right time for everything on the earth:

*A right time for birth and another for death,
A right time to plant and another to reap,
A right time to kill and another to heal,
A right time to destroy and another to construct,
A right time to cry and another to laugh,
A right time to lament and another to cheer,
A right time to make love and another to abstain,
A right time to embrace and another to part,
A right time to search and another to count your losses,
A right time to hold on and another to let go,
A right time to rip out and another to mend,
A right time to shut up and another to speak up,
A right time to love and another to hate,
A right time to wage war and another to make peace.*

The author of Ecclesiastes reminds us that we are a people of change. This is a famous passage not only because there is a great song we can sing, but because it resonates with us. We deal with change constantly.

There is a right time for us to do so many things. Do you ever find yourself doing the right thing at the wrong time? I know I have. As we surf the waves of change it helps to have some perspective.

We've said goodbye to one intern and we'll be saying hello to a new one this month. (This is not the first or last

Prayer Concerns of those we prayed for June/July 2017

We Believe in Prayer For praise and thanksgiving ...

Elizabeth A. Eaton - Presiding Bishop, ELCA
Jessica Christ - Bishop - Montana Synod;

For people around the world in need ...

New Members to come to Peace
Needs of our neighborhood
Visitors to Peace Food Pantry
President Donald Trump (requested by Peace member)
Christine Soileau – Quantico, VA. (member of Peace)
Scotty Soileau - Quantico, VA.

For illness or injuries .. of members

Donna Bangert - healing
Ryan Schatzke - recovery
Lisa Grimsley - healing
Art Reinhardt - healing
Ken, Carol Hoefner and family
Larry & Shirley Heiser –

For illness or injuries .. of family and friends.

Carolyn Campbell - diagnosed with breast cancer
Shawn Hanser

Prayer Concerns is a published list of those on the prayer chain, who have given permission to publish their names. If you are interested in praying for these, as well as others, please join the prayer chain. They have leaders who call or email. Please call Lone Bloom at 652-2441 or Lisa Grimsley (656-8113).

Thank you!

A big thank you goes out to all who donated to the Christikon Kitchen Shower and to Bernie Mason who headed up this fundraiser. We raised over \$1300. in product, from Pampered Chef, Thrivent Action Team seed money, and donations. It is not too late to still donate.

Greg Goodheart

Bonnie & Kevin - healing and strength

Karen Jordan - Intern Liz's mother's friend, cancer

Pr. Ellen Skatrud-Mickelson - former pastor recurrence of breast cancer

Emily - prayers for strength

Bob Miller - Rod Miller's father. stroke, surgery and recovery

Tyler Berg - kidney illness

Rethal - Cinda Robbins' mother, comfort and peace

Kari - healing and strength

Arvid Wedul - friend of Mike Brown - diagnosed with ALS

Phoenix - for healing

Bud Leuthold - friend of Joy Lindberg leukemia

Micah Hilario, son-in-law of Linda & Gary

Branae, (Lois Gorseth friends) has been diagnosed with ALS

For those grieving...

Family & friends of Mirth Ehret who died July 4th



FOOD DONATION WEEKEND August 5th 6th

We will be collecting for the
Peace Food Pantry,

This month there is especially a need for single-serving canned fruit, canned soup, cereal and granola bars.



Congregational News

Intern News

Hello Peace Lutheran,

Grace to you and peace from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Paul writes, "I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all." (Ephesians 4:1-6, NRSV)

This is my hope for myself and for all of us as we begin our new relationship. I love that Paul is begging us to lead a life worthy of the calling to which we have been called. As children of God, we all have been called to be humble and gentle, patient and peaceful. We have all been called to love one another.

My hope for this next year is that we will all learn and grow in this calling to which we have been called, that we will build, not only a relationship with one another, but a stronger, more deeply rooted.

My hope for this next year is that we will all learn and grow in this calling to which we have been called, that we will build, not only a relationship with one another, but a stronger, more deeply rooted relationship with God. As I have been preparing for my move to be with you, I have been praying for all of us. May the Lord of our lives and our call, join us together in ways we would have never imagined.

Blessings and Peace,

Brenda

Potluck! Potluck! Welcome!

Join us as we welcome Intern Pastor Brenda Boogren on August 26th and 27th. Bring a dish to share and we'll show her what a great community we are!



Doughnuts and Coffee; What a great time of fellowship we have after Sunday worship with Coffee and Doughnuts. We are looking for sponsors each week to defray the cost of the Doughnuts. The cost is \$28 per week. If you are interested the sign-up sheet is located in the narthex. Thank you!!



Your help is

needed in getting information on all College students. The office needs mailing address's for college student.

Please call Dean in the church office or leave information on office desk.



Join us on August

17th starting at 9am at Highland Elementary for a time of serving the elementary teachers in our neighborhood! We're scheduled for 9am – Noon, but come

for any amount of time that you can help. The teachers are always so appreciative. Contact Pr. Will for more information.



Congregational News

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interns transition we've had or will have.) We are also about to start on a new program year with new opportunities to learn and grow and serve together. I'm not excited for summer to end, but I am thrilled to launch into new adventures as we have Rally Day around the corner.

Your council will have a retreat August 25th and 26th. We'll be dreaming about the year ahead and I'm proposing we spend some time looking at how we can care for the building that allows us to do such great ministry. We've already had \$10,000 in gifts come in toward brightening up our space. We'll be inviting you to join us with gifts of time and finances.

We're also shifting our education focus to Wednesday nights for all youth from pre-k to confirmation to the youth group. We'll have occasional events on Sunday morning, but Wednesday will be our focus this year. We have a great group of church and neighborhood kids that are coming every Wednesday!

Change can make us nervous. Please remember that I am always available if you have concerns or if you'd like clarification.

I'm changing with you!

Peace,
Will +



Rally Day is September 10th!

Join us for worship on September 9th or 10th and on Sunday after worship join us for our Rally Day of Service! We'll have projects for all ages.



We love singing our favorite hymns!

On Sundays this summer we will be asking for the congregation to pick a favorite hymn for the sending song. Once you've had your favorite hymn sung, please allow others to suggest hymns – we want as many as possible to offer their favorites.



*you shall be my
treasured possession
out of all the peoples."*

Exodus 19:5, NRSV



Pr. Will's

Quick Hits

Be on the lookout for the "Adopt the Intern" sign up sheet. Please take the opportunity to invite Intern Pr. Brenda

Boogreny over or out for a meal.

Worship News

August Worship Themes

We focus on the Acts of the Apostles this summer. Explore the early church and their joys and struggles with us each week.

August 5th & 6th Ninth Weekend after Pentecost *Disrupters*

Readings: Psalm 145:8-9, 14-21; Luke 19:45-48; **Acts 19:21-41**

In the middle of our story for this week we have this description of the scene, "Most of them had no idea what was going on or why they were there." There is great resistance to the Gospel message because this message of hope disrupts the existing power structures. The Gospel still does this today. Are we like "most of them?" Come and see!

August 12th & 13th Tenth Weekend After Pentecost *Parting Words*

Readings: Psalm 85:8-13; Luke 12:1-7; **Acts 20:17-38**

The life of following Jesus is never promised to be an easy one in the Bible. Time and again we hear the encouragement to be alert and to stay focused. Paul is preparing to leave for Jerusalem and the hard road he'll face there. Let us hear Paul's words to the people as words for us today. It's time to move on.

August 19th & 20th Eleventh Weekend After Pentecost *Don't Go*

Readings: Psalm 67; Luke 22:39-42; **Acts 21:1-6**

It is in our natures to try and protect the ones we love. (Our God desires for us to protect everyone. That's a different story though.) This week we find Paul travelling and people are lifting him up in prayer. They say the Spirit says, "Don't go to Jerusalem." Where does Paul go? Where are we called to go?

August 26 & 27th Twelfth Weekend After Pentecost *Religious*

Readings: Psalm 138; Luke 10:25-28; **Acts 21:17-38**

We get religious about a great many things. Most of those things have nothing to do with the Gospel or the grace of God. From the ways we support our favorite teams to the way the table must be set we are dogmatic in our approach to life. Is this the way God calls us to live? Paul runs into religious people. It doesn't go well for him.



Compline Worship
Service

Mid-Week Worship Service at Peace!!!

Everyone is invited to attend

Compline (night prayer) service
The Second Wednesday of the month
August 9th at 7:00 p.m.

Holden Evening Prayer Service
The Fourth Wednesday of the month
August 23rd at 7:00

**Holden
Evening
Prayer**

Marty Haugen

Mission and Service News


Upcoming Mission & Service Opportunities to Watch For

It is amazing how fast the summer goes by. School is around the corner, and with that, there are many opportunities to lend your time and talents in August and September.


Here are the Mission and Service Reaching Out opportunities for August and September. Please consider praying for where you can personally serve others, and pray for those that will actively participate.




August


 **Fill Back-to-School Backpacks-** Family Service needs our help to fill 800 back-to-school backpacks. They provide everything, and you fill the backpacks using a simple list.


- **When:** Tuesday, Aug. 1, Thursday, Aug. 3, Monday, Aug. 7, Wednesday, Aug. 9
- **Time:** 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. each day
- **Where:** Family Service; 1824 1st Ave N
- **Signup** on the Mission & Service Bulletin Board
- **Contact:** Rich Robbins; 896.0718

 **Adopt-a-Teacher-** Please reserve August 16th on your calendar from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon for assisting teachers at Highland Elementary. They are already looking forward to us coming.


 **Habitat for Humanity-** A Thrivent house is currently being built and Peace members are being encouraged to help. Work dates and hours are posted. The Apostle build will start as the Thrivent house concludes, sometime in September.

September

 **All Congregation Day** of Service/Rally Day- Join us on September 10th as we have our sandwich making blitz. We'll also be making fleece hats for donation this day.

 **Habitat for Humanity Apostle Build-** Please watch for September volunteer opportunities as this project will begin as the Thrivent build comes to a close.

Additional Notes of Interest

 Starting with the September Rally Day, the congregation will begin collecting items for Family Service. Watch for more details to come.

We hope that everyone has had a safe and wonderful summer. Please give consideration to serving others with the opportunities above. God bless!

Community News

H Heidi Schnarr, who has been pianist at some of our worship services this summer, will present a piano/violin concert with Nikisa Gentry on August 16 at 6pm at American Lutheran Church. Nikisa will be a junior this year at Minot State University, majoring in violin performance. Heidi holds a Masters of Music in Conducting from Bard College and a minor in Piano Performance from Hood College. The program will include Beethoven Sonata no. 5, and selections from Paganini, Brahms, Bach, and Saint-Saëns. Hannah Mark will be a special guest for the first movement of a Bach double violin concerto. Free, everyone is invited.

Red Cross is looking for volunteers to train to assist during wildfires and other community disasters. There will be a Meet & Greet of volunteers and staff. No obligation- just go and see what Red Cross is doing and how you can join in.

Date: August 5, 2017

Time: 10a-2p

Where: Billings Public Library 510 N Broadway, Billings, MT 59101)



Christikon Clips

As you are reading this clip, we are readying for our last sessions of the season. We have hosted over 450 campers this season including Developmentally disabled adults, youth, families, and adults. We would welcome scholarship gifts as you are able for a wonderful group of new campers!

Our summer staff will be completing their stay with us and will soon be heading back to their lives outside of Christikon.

We look forward to our congregational retreats scheduled this fall and there are still retreat times available to visit Christikon! Call Kerry in the office and reserve a time.

We continue to ask for your prayers for those traveling to Christikon, our staff, and campers.

Blessings to all of you who support Christikon with prayer, time, skills, and financially. We are grateful.

It is the mission of Christikon to awaken and nurture faith in Christ — exploring God's creation and the adventure of life together.



Congregational News

Church E-mail Addresses



Pastor Will

prsappington@gmail.com

Church Office

peaceoffice@bresnan.net

Intern Pastor

internpeace@gmail.com

Youth Director

peacelcyouth@gmail.com

Check out the web site:

peacelutheranbillings.com. Web site is updated with, up to date calendar, newsletter in color, Youth page, and photo page.



Church Council Minutes

The approved church council minutes are available at the bulletin board outside the church office. Thank you

Find us on facebook:
Peace Lutheran Church, Billings MT

Simply Giving Program - Would you find it helpful to have your offerings taken from your bank account as you do other monthly drafts? Thrivent Financial for Lutherans sponsors a program called Simply Giving which offers this service for people who wish to have offerings transferred electronically to Peace Lutheran Church account. For those who travel, this is particularly helpful in keeping up with their intended offerings, and it will keep you from having to make up the difference later. Contact the church office for more details.



Bible Studies

The Regular schedule for Women's Circles returns:

Ruth Circle meets on the second Tuesday at 11:30 am at Hardees on 24th

Martha Circle meets on the third Wednesday of the month at 9:00 am in the fellowship hall

Deborah/Katie Join us in September

Congregational Life Committee

The Congregational Life Committee is responsible to touch the lives of the people of Peace Lutheran Church by involving them in the life and ministry of the church. One of the most visible responsibilities is fellowship following worship services. Last year, we moved from asking service committee members to bring cookies, etc., to providing doughnuts from the IGA. So, the duties have been reduced and only one or two people are needed for each Sunday. We will continue to assign monthly service committees as we have done in the past. If we have a potluck or other congregational function during the month, the committee may be asked to help. A committee chairperson will be assigned each month and will ask committee members to help with the fellowship/coffee following Sunday worship.

August Serving group

Deb Sider, chair
Chuck Sider
Rita and Wayne Wayman
Linda/Eddie Popp
Mary Ann/Ron Conboy
June/Dean Jenson
Jodi Pierce
Tina Fritz
Kayla Bettise

Congregational News

2017 Circles & Bible Studies:
Everyone is welcome!

Martha Circle

Meets Third Wednesday, at 10:00 am
in the Fellowship hall

Deborah-Katie Circle

Join us in September

Ruth Circle

Meets second Tuesday at 11:30 am
at Hardees on 24th

Peace Lutheran Church Council

- President - Holli Miller
- Vice President - Melissa Sider
- Secretary - Susan Finn
- Dewey Anderson - Abundant Life
- Mike Brown - Abundant Life, Property
- Randy Christensen - Abundant Life
- Dave Draeger - Worship
- Susan Finn - Mission & Service, Executive
- Amy McGough - Youth/Education
- Holli Miller - Congregational Life, Executive
- Bryan Peterson- Mission & Service
- Melissa Sider - Youth/Education
- Paul Strosky - Mission & Service

Boards/Committees

St John's Ministries

- Leah Bick
- Rich Robbins

Christikon

- Erl Barsness
- Jerilyn Dukart
- Vanessa Steiger

Lutheran Center

- Debbie Sider
- Kay Rossow

Shepherd Cluster

- John Goodheart
- Jody Pierce

Endowment Trustee

- Bob Gilbertson
- Gary Broeder
- Molly Johnson
- Jeff Murray
- Ed Popp

Nominating Committee

- Julie Draeger

Church Council Minutes
The approved church council minutes are available at the bulletin board outside the church office.
Thank you

Men's Breakfast and Bible Study

Meets every

Wednesday at 6:30 am in the
Fellowship Hall. New-comers
and one-timers are
always welcome



Questions about Council Activities? If

you have any questions or comments
regarding any council action - pending or
complete - please contact

President Holli Miller
Vice-President Melissa Sider

RELIEVE EDITORIAL STRESS:

**TURN IN
YOUR ARTICLES
EARLY!**

RE M I N D E R :

**DEADLINE FOR
NEWSLETTER
ARTICLES IS
August 20th**

Catch
Worship
Service
Broad-
cast on
Community
Channel 7
Sunday Mornings
at 9:00 am



Education and Youth News



As students, teachers, faculty, and parents are gearing up for the first day of school on August 24th, Peace Lutheran would like to invite you to the Blessing of Backpacks on August 20th. Worship will be at 10:00 AM! Bring your backpack, and we will wish you blessings on an awesome school year! All students and faculty are welcome to join.

Also, as everyone is gearing up for school starting, the first day of Sunday School/Confirmation will be September 13th. You might be wondering why that day is a Wednesday instead of a Sunday...

The Education and Youth Committee met and decided for this fall to focus on Wednesday as our primary education time for kids, confirmation students, and youth. We will not have Sunday School, but we will have occasional events like several weeks of practice for the Christmas program, special celebrations, and days of service. The committee did not come to this decision lightly and they are open to adding a Sunday School back in the future.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Will or Vanessa. We would be happy to discuss any comments, questions, or concerns.



On August 16th, join us for a Back to School Game Night! Starting at 5:30, we will be playing a host of different games for all ages. So, bring a game, bring a friend, and bring an appetite because we will be having Breakfast for Dinner!

All are welcome to come hang out with us! Pastor Will has an awesome game called Klask! It's quick and awesome, so be sure to join us for the Klask tournament.



August ReFuel Menu

August 2nd- Pizza

August 9th- Pulled Pork with Rich and Cinda

August 16th- Breakfast for Dinner

August 23rd- Nachos

August 30th- Sloppy Joes

*Worship Nights are in Bold

Community News

Words from the Bishop:

The Fire This Time

For Heat and drought have combined to make this a brutal fire season. Many parts of the West have been affected. Northeastern Montana has been particularly hard-hit. Homes, crops and livestock have been destroyed. On Sunday a fire emergency was declared for the entire state of Montana. There are more than two dozen major fires burning. Homes are being evacuated. Ranchers have had to cut their fences to release cattle from oncoming flames. But the cattle are still in danger, lacking food and drink. The firefighters working on the largest fires will soon be supplemented by the National Guard.

Fire is not somebody else's problem. It is our problem. We are in this together. Volunteers are gearing up with donations of fencing, hay and cash, as well as labor. Our office got an inquiry from an Iowa synod, remembering how they did a hay lift to drought-stricken Texas a few years ago and wondering if it would be welcome in our territory.

Dick Deschamps, our synod's Disaster Coordinator and liaison to Lutheran Disaster Response, is chair of the Montana State VOAD. They coordinate and communicate volunteer efforts in responding to disaster. For information about needs and places to drop off or request donations, go to www.northernag.net.

Fire season is alive and well in Montana. We currently have 25 active fires, the most in the nation, seconded by Alaska with 8 fires. Current hot and dry weather conditions will guarantee that we will enter August with an active fire season well established. Now is the time when we as the church can look for ways to help responders to and victims of the fires.

Our largest and most destructive fire is the Lodge Pole Complex in NW Garfield County, currently at 250,000 acres between 4 fires. 16 homes have been damaged or destroyed by fire.

As a rule of thumb it is better to give money than goods. Often times, unsolicited items provided in disaster go unused, because they are not the items needed. It also takes additional time and



Montana Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Look for more information in this week's e-news, as well as opportunities to contribute and to help. In response to tornadoes in southeastern Montana last year, the Montana Synod set up a disaster relief fund. We will accept donations for the fire damage, and requests for assistance.

Pastor Jean Larson has reflected on fire and its impact. She wrote this prayer:

O God of Grand Design,
As fire eats our land, give strength to our neighbors
who work and suffer in these flames:

Firefighters,
Those who must flee,
Cattle and horses and all creatures,
Those who must rebuild homes and
livelihoods.

Yet even in this struggle, open our hearts to the
mystery of your Creation
that brings new life through fire,
as pinecones burst, forests are pruned, and
grasslands grow lush – next year.

Holy Spirit, Refiner's Fire, kindle in us a brave
thanksgiving for all your good gifts.

And help us live humbly and wisely, as
servants of your earth.

Amen

Jessica Crist, Bishop

effort to organize and make available these items. When emergency managers and agencies have funds, they can purchase, often at a discount, the specific items required in a timely fashion.

Montana Synod maintains a disaster relief fund, funded entirely by your donations to help unmet needs for folks who have a disaster related need with no way to fund it. Your donations to that fund are always appreciated. Donations can be mailed to the Synod office at 3125 5th Avenue South, Great Falls, MT 59405-3337.

Above all else, please keep those affected by disaster, responders and victims, in your prayers.

Dick Deschamps

Montana Synod Disaster Relief Coordinator



August 2017

1 Ask God to bless communities, neighborhoods and military bases observing National Night Out this evening to help them be safe, caring places in which neighbors and law enforcement work together for the well-being of all.

2 We remember in our prayers ELCA missionaries Robin Strickler, the Rev. Kate Warn and the young adults serving in the Young Adults in Global Mission program in Rwanda. Pray that their ministries will be blessed as they work alongside companion churches and institutions sharing the gospel, strengthening and growing the church, serving communities, and striving for reconciliation, healing and justice.

3 Give thanks for the generosity of ELCA congregations supporting domestic and global ministries through Mission Support.

4 Remember and give thanks for the rich partnership and relationship we have with The Episcopal Church, a full communion partner with the ELCA since 1999, and ask God to further our work together sharing the gospel and serving our neighbor.

5 Pray for leaders, teachers and volunteers preparing for fall programs in congregations that the Spirit will stir their enthusiasm, creativity, confidence and a desire to share the gospel and nurture the faith of children, youth and adults.

6 When the disciples wanted to send hungry crowds away, Jesus said no, we can feed them. Ask God to stir our empathy, compassion and faith that, drawing on our collective resources and abundance, we have enough to share and will not turn away, ignore or disparage our neighbors who are hungry and in need.

7 Pray for leaders of our congregations and church gathered for the first ELCA Rostered Ministers Gathering in Atlanta, an opportunity for rostered ministers to meet colleagues for fellowship, share ideas and be refreshed and renewed for serving the church.

8 We pray – we plead – with God to help us end terror and violence in the world and to lift from us any fear, suspicion, anxiety, anger and even apathy that dwells in us.

9 Give thanks and praise to God for being attentive to our prayers, for being slow to anger, compassionate, loving and merciful with us.

10 Pray that every congregation will discover, use and carefully manage their diverse assets, resources of their community and abundance for growing the church, serving their neighbors, equipping and nurturing their members, and doing God's work in the world.

11 On this observance of International Youth Day, pray for children and youth that they experience the benefits of education, health care, clean water and stable food sources, and safe and caring environments to grow up in. Pray that they may know the joys of living, playing and dreaming as young people unencumbered and undiminished by persistent worry, violence or hopelessness.

12 We remember in prayer children and youth beginning a new school year and pray that with the help and inspiration of parents, teachers and caring adults in their lives, they will grow in faith, intellect, wisdom, confidence, curiosity and hope as maturing children of God.

13 Pray that when we are overcome by fear and terror, feel vulnerable and alone, helpless and ill-equipped, we remember and trust that God is ever-present, powerful and active in our lives and world.

14 Give thanks for nurses who attend with skill and compassion to our physical, emotional and spiritual needs in diverse communities, contexts and situations.

15 Mary, Mother of our Lord We are in awe of how God uses people like Mary who are humble and poor to reveal God's presence in the world and accomplish great things. Give thanks, praise and glory to God for the many ways in which we are called and sent into the world to share the good news of Jesus Christ and serve as humble witnesses of our faith.

16 Writers, poets, editors and bloggers inspire and inform us and stir our faith; praise God for the diversity of the body of Christ and for the gifts, insights and imagination they exercise and share with the church and world.



August 2017

17 Ask God to help us understand and value the spirit of the teachings, movements, insights and leaders throughout history that have contributed to the shaping and growth of the Lutheran church. Pray that we continue to be dynamic, growing and unafraid of change as we listen to God's word, discern God's will and strive to be nimble and faithful in our plans, preparation and work as disciples – today and for the future.

18 Elijah listened for God in a wind storm, earthquake and fire but instead heard God in the silence and calm that followed. Pray for patience and discipline that amid our busy, loud, attention-grabbing world we also create places and times for stillness and calm in which we do nothing but listen and talk with God.

19 There is hope in the progress being made to halt the spread of HIV through prevention, treatment and care and in eliminating the stigma and discrimination experienced by those who are HIV-positive. Give thanks for the progress and pray for generous support and continuing commitment for the work of supporting children who've lost parents or guardians to the disease, training pastors in HIV and AIDS counseling, getting medicines to remote rural health clinics, making free HIV testing available, preventing new infections and transforming this church into a safe space for people living with HIV and AIDS.

20 Ask God to help us be persistent and faithful in prayer for our own lives and for the needs of the world.

21 We unite in prayer, fasting and advocacy with our brothers and sisters in Christ of The Episcopal Church that our nation, elected leaders, public-service agencies and communities will address with compassion, wisdom and concern for justice the cuts to public programs that are vital to hungry people who are living in poverty.

22 The Lutheran church has a rich history of education for children, youth and adults. Give thanks to God for our early childhood education centers, elementary and secondary schools, colleges and universities, seminaries, lay schools of theology and lifelong education programs related to the ELCA. Pray they flourish and continue to influence and enrich the lives of the people they touch.

23 Pray to God with a joy-filled and grateful heart, knowing that God's promises and mercy are immeasurable and trustworthy with life-giving blessings to savor and share.

24 We give thanks to God for the challenging work of teachers, principals, custodians, cooks, student teachers, administrative staff, counselors, librarians, nurses, bus drivers and all who play influential and supportive roles in the education, well-being and development of our children and youth.

25 We remember in our prayers the Rev. Phillip Baker and the Rev. Rosanne Swanson, ELCA missionaries serving in Indonesia. Pray that their ministries will be blessed as they work alongside companion churches and institutions sharing the gospel, training leaders, strengthening and growing the church, and serving the needs of communities.

26 We pray that God's saving power through Jesus Christ will be known throughout the world, that all may praise God and sing for joy.

27 Pray that when asked about our faith or who Jesus is, with the help of the Spirit, we reply enthusiastically in our own words – imperfect or insufficient as they may be – that Jesus is our Savior and the Son of the living God through whom we are loved, forgiven, opened to God's word and ways, set free on a new path in life and promised eternal life.

28 The world is vast and its people often unknown to us, despite technology and worldwide media. Trusting that we all have one Creator and Savior, we pray that the Spirit of God will move in us and among us, bringing us closer together that we will no longer be strangers but familiar and welcoming brothers and sisters in Christ.

29 Sing and shout prayers of thanks and praise to God for all God has done, taught us, blessed us with, revealed to us for the strengthening of our faith, and the countless ways in which God is present with us and equipping our congregations for every challenge and opportunity we encounter.

30 We remember in our prayers the ELCA missionaries serving in Hong Kong: the Rev. Jenna Bergeson, the Rev. Wayne Niemen, the Rev. Christa Vonzychlin and the Rev. Carolyn Schneider. Pray that God will bless and further their ministries working alongside companion churches and institutions training and encouraging leaders for ministry, sharing the gospel, and strengthening and growing the church.

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Our hands.**

August 2017

