

Spring 2026

# Montana District Reflections

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

## ***The cross and the tomb***

“The church is beautiful! There is one thing that bothers my heart, and that is that Jesus is still on the cross there. He is risen!!! The cross is certainly still the symbol of our being saved by the love and sacrifice of our Savior, but he is not there.” So reads the comment on the congregation’s Facebook page.

Of course, Jesus isn’t still on the cross, no more than He is still in the manger that we setup each year at Christmas. Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. On the third day He rose from the dead and ascended into heaven. These things are most certainly true. It is also true that a crucifix, or a cross with a corpus (a body), is not a denial of Jesus’ resurrection, and an empty cross is not a sign or a symbol of His resurrection.

If Jesus had come down from the cross like his earthly opponents and the devil tempted Him to do, the cross would certainly have been empty, but it would have been emptied of its power, not just His body. If Jesus had come down, the salvation of the world would not have been accomplished. Without Jesus, the cross is only an instrument of capital punishment. With Jesus, the cross has become our tree of life.

An “empty” cross certainly doesn’t deny Jesus’ atoning death and the cross is a symbol of our faith. A cross with the corpus is an even more vivid reminder that Jesus, the Son of God born of the Virgin Mary, died for the sins of the world, for your sins and for mine. His real body, His holy precious blood, His life, are the sacrifice that was necessary to redeem the world. A crucifix gives you a painful but perfect picture of how God feels about you. It shows you His great love for sinners.



### **Montana District LCMS**

759 Newman Lane, Ste 2  
Billings, MT 59101

(406) 259-2908

[office@mtdistlcms.org](mailto:office@mtdistlcms.org)

[www.mtdistlcms.org](http://www.mtdistlcms.org)

### **INSIDE THIS ISSUE**

Devotion from the  
President

Changes in the District

District Calendar

Notes from the Office

Current Vacancies

Calling

Congregations/Schools

Church Worker Profile

Missionary News

Board of Directors  
Report

Synodical Convention

Announcements

Giving Summaries

The last book of the Bible depicts a scene very similar to that of a church with a crucifix in its chancel. Take a few minutes and read Revelation chapters 4 and 5 again. This section is often called the throne-room scene because in these chapters we get a glimpse of the throne-room of heaven. It is a glorious and somewhat startling sight. You know and confess that Jesus died, was buried, rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven. So, wouldn't you then expect to see the resurrected and glorified Jesus seated next to His Father? But that's not quite what John is given to see or what he reveals to us. He writes, "And between the throne and the four living creature and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing as though it had been slain." (Rev. 5:6) The next scene shows everyone around the throne in heaven bowing down to worship the standing slain Lamb. This depiction is not a denial of Jesus' resurrection, far from it, this is the reality in heaven, the ongoing proclamation of His death until He comes again in glory.

Consider also Saul, who saw and was converted by the resurrected Jesus on the road to Damascus. Later he writes, "We preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles." (1 Cor. 1:23).

Depicting Jesus as the slain Lamb, the crucified one on a cross, is not a confession that He is still dead. Preaching Christ crucified for the sins of the world is not a denial of His resurrection.

There is no taking away the fact that a cross, whether Jesus' body is depicted or not, is offensive, it "bothers [the] heart". It is offensive because it shows us just how real and serious our sins are. It is offensive because it reminds us of what was divinely necessary for our salvation. It is offensive because God the Father handed over His only Son, the only man to have ever lived who was without sin, who kept God's law perfectly, to die a horrifying death in order to redeem and save poor miserable sinners. But it isn't all law. For those who believe, for those who look not to their works but to Jesus lifted up on the tree of the cross for their salvation, it is also beautiful Gospel, it is a powerful reminder of how God so loved the world.

An empty cross is not a picture of the resurrection, but the empty tomb, on the other hand, is a picture of the resurrection. "He is not here, for He has risen, as He said. Come, see the place where He lay." (Mt 28:6) On that first Easter morning, the women, then the disciples too, saw the empty tomb. At first, they thought someone had stolen the body, but the angels are careful to show them the grave cloths folded up and the place where he lay. No one had stolen His body. His tomb was empty because He had risen.

After His resurrection He appeared to many, more than five hundred believers Paul tells us in his great resurrection chapter (1 Cor. 15:6). They didn't go to see an empty Roman cross, they saw an empty tomb and their risen Lord and their hearts were filled with joy.

The next time you are at church and see the cross with a body on it, embrace the offense, think of your sins and ponder what Jesus really did, the price He paid, to save you, then remember the words of the angels, the eye-witnesses and the empty tomb.

As much as our eyes don't like the sight or our heart hurts in considering what Jesus endured, no matter how we may want to remove the offense of Jesus' body on the cross, we don't need a sanitized and empty cross any more than we need a quiet empty manager. What our eyes of faith must see and what our sinful heart must have to be at peace, is the crucified Jesus and His empty tomb.

We need to be able to rejoice with the angels and the shepherds that Jesus was born and wrapped in swaddling cloths and laid in a manger. We need to be able to weep with the women and the disciples that Jesus was crucified and wrapped in swaddling cloths and placed into a tomb. We need to hear eye-witnesses of Jesus' empty tomb and His resurrection. We need to consider Jesus' glorified wounds with Thomas and see the picture of the slain Lamb standing in heaven with John.

We need all these things so that as our hearts are weighed down with the evil in this world, as we face our own mortality, as we consider our sins and look at our own awaiting grave and the wages we have earned, we can boldly confess that Jesus Christ was born, crucified, and raised for me.

"Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life." (Rom 6:3-4)

We can't have Easter Sunday without Good Friday. We can't have life, without Jesus' death. Christ is Risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

If you know the tune, sing with me... "Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes; Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies. Heav'n's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee; In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me." (LSB 878:6)

Rev. Ryan D. Wendt  
Montana District President

## CHANGES IN THE DISTRICT

### Transfers Out

- Ms. Kianna Ogilvie-April 30, 2026: North Dakota District

### Candidate Extensions

- Rev. Timothy Klug
- Rev. Jeffrey Potter
- Mrs. Lorraine Roach

## CALLS

- Rev. Samuel Grayl is considering a Divine Call to St. Luke Lutheran Church, Cabot, PA
- Rev. Jakob Berger has returned the Divine Call to a dual parish Trinity Lutheran Church, Hope, and St. John Lutheran Church, Hillsboro, ND

## VICARAGE APPOINTMENTS

- CSL Seminarian Jacob Diercks (wife Julie) was assigned to Rev. Samuel Grayl and First Lutheran in Bozeman
- CSL Seminarian Donald "Will" Welch was assigned to Rev. Arlo Pullmann and St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Laurel

## District President's Calendar

- |                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| May 4:          | MT District Board of Directors Meeting, Billings   |
| May 11-13:      | Dual Circuit Conference, Christ the King, Billings |
| May 29-31:      | Floor Committee Weekend, St. Louis                 |
| June 22-25:     | Youth Retreat, Lion's Camp, Red Lodge              |
| June 26-28:     | Family Camp, Lion's Camp, Red Lodge                |
| June 29-July 3: | Church Workers Retreat, Lion's Camp, Red Lodge     |
| July 18-23:     | Synodical Convention, Phoenix, AZ                  |

## Reminders & Notes from the District Office

- Thank you to all the congregations that submitted their annual statistical reports. These reports not only serve to help keep an accurate accounting of our Synodical church body's membership, but on a district level, membership numbers are used to determine the congregational assessment for our district convention.
- Montana District Schools Fund Grant applications are due **May 30<sup>th</sup>**
- Montana District Church Worker Scholarship applications are due **June 30<sup>th</sup>**
- Annual Reporting Forms for Candidate members of our district are due **July 31<sup>st</sup>**
- Synodical Convention preparations are underway. The convention will take place in Phoenix, AZ, July 18-23, 2026. President Wendt will serve as the vice-chair of the CTCR floor committee
- Montana District Lutheran School Scholarship applications are due **August 1<sup>st</sup>**
- Student Loan Repayment Grant applications must be received by the Montana District Office by **September 15<sup>th</sup>**

## CURRENT VACANCIES

- Our Redeemer, Anaconda (Vacancy Pastors: Bruce Linderman & Mark Schultz)
- Holy Trinity, Belgrade/Grace, Three Forks (Vacancy Pastor: Daniel Merz)
- St. Mark, Butte (Vacancy Pastor: James Mavis)
- Zion, Chinook/St. Paul, Havre (Vacancy Pastor: Terry Forke)
- Mt. Calvary, Colstrip/Circle of Life, Lame Deer (Vacancy Pastor: Arlo Pullmann)
- St. John, Deer Lodge (Vacancy Pastor: Gideon Pullmann)
- Faith, Glasgow/Trinity, Plentywood/Trinity, Wolf Point (Vacancy Pastors: David Behm, Daniel Rinderknecht, Howard Schreibeis)
- St. John, Fairview/Trinity, Sidney (Vacancy Pastors: Rev. Christopher Brandt and Rev. Howard Schreibeis)
- St. Paul, Ronan (Vacancy Pastor: Kyle Whaley)

## Calling Congregations/Schools

- Our Redeemer, Anaconda
- Holy Trinity, Belgrade/Grace, Three Forks
  - Rev. Eric Stinnett has accepted the Call
- Trinity Lutheran School, Billings-Principal
  - Mr. Kyle Barth has accepted the Call
  - Thank you to interim principal, Mrs. Stacy Hall for her service to Trinity for the past two years!
- St. Mark, Butte & St. John, Deer Lodge
  - Rev. Karl Yahr, St. John Lutheran Church in Akeley, MN, has returned the Call
- Zion, Chinook & St. Paul, Havre
- Mt. Calvary, Colstrip & Circle of Life, Lame Deer
  - Rev. Richard Jones, Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch in Minot, ND, has returned the Call
  - Rev. Dennis Bauer ended his service at Circle of Life and Mt. Calvary. Rev. Arlo Pullmann, along with his vicar will now serve the vacancy at these congregations. Thank you Rev. Bauer!
- St. John, Fairview & Trinity, Sidney
  - The congregations have called Rev. Marcus Williams of Blessed Sacrament Lutheran Church, Rathdrum, ID (Previously served Zion, Chinook & St. Paul, Havre)
  - Rev. Rolf Preus ends his service at Trinity Sidney and St. John's Fairview. Rev. Chris Brandt will cover three Sundays in May, Rev. Schreibeis will cover the last Sunday in May. Plans are being made for ongoing coverage in June. Thank you, Rev. Preus!
- Faith, Glasgow/Trinity, Plentywood/Trinity, Wolf Point did not receive a Seminary Candidate
- Trinity Lutheran School, Kalispell-Teacher
- St. Paul, Ronan



Mr. Kyle Barth, currently serving Milwaukee Lutheran High School, Milwaukee, WI, has accepted the Call to serve as principal of Trinity Lutheran School, Billings. We ask that God would give peace and joy in this transition as he and his family join in ministry at Trinity Lutheran Church & School. Praise God!

## Getting to Know a Montana District Church Worker



### Rev. Arlo W. Pullmann

My maternal grandfather, Marvin Mangels, was born in Perry County, Missouri, the birth place of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. His mother died when he was 7 and he was sent to live with relatives in other states. He eventually migrated to northern Montana and settled near Havre, where my mother, Marjorie, was born.

My paternal grandfather, George, was born in Germany. He emigrated from there without his parents when he was 16. After graduating from seminary in 1912, he was assigned to a parish in western South Dakota. The parsonage was a sod hut with a dirt floor. After serving various congregations in South Dakota and Nebraska, he was called to Golgotha Lutheran Church in Wausau, Nebraska, where my father, Albert, was born.

Al also went to seminary. He was a vicar under Pastor Paul Freiburger at Trinity, Billings for two years. During that time he was sent to canvas the town of Eureka with the hopes of starting a congregation. His first call was Missionary-at-Large to Eureka. The Lord of the Church blessed his efforts to start a congregation and construct a church building.

Dad and Mom met through the Walther League. After they married, the Creator blessed them with four children of which I am the youngest. Although Eureka was our home, on March 13, 1962, I was born in Whitefish, the location of the nearest hospital. Twelve days later I was born again at Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Eureka.

After Dad was called from Holy Cross to serve in other ways, we lived for a short time in Missoula and then Seeley Lake for a few years. In 1969, Dad was called to serve Mount Olive, Billings.

I attended Trinity Lutheran School in Billings for eight years, graduating in 1976. After trying the public school system in Billings for two years, I went to St. Paul's College High School and Junior College in Concordia, Missouri. It was there that I met Nanette Groene. We dated as we obtained our high school diplomas (1980) and Associate of Arts degrees (1981). She finished college at Concordia College in Seward, Nebraska from which she graduated as a Lutheran school teacher. I finished at Concordia College in Ann Arbor, Michigan

## Getting to Know Arlo Pullmann

We married in 1983, two weeks before I started classes at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. I was a vicar at Hope Lutheran Church in Greece (Rochester), New York. Upon graduation in 1987, I was assigned to a dual parish in rural Saskatchewan, Canada where I was blessed to serve as pastor for five years.

The Lord of the church moved St. Johns congregation in Laurel to call me as her pastor in 1992 and I have been blessed to serve here ever since. Nanette and I are pleased that we have lived over half of our lives in Laurel. The godly people of St. John's have beautifully loved us and generously cared for us all of these years.

The Lord of life has blessed us with six children, born over a span of eight years beginning when I was still a seminary student. The second was born in Rochester, New York. The next three were born in Canada. The youngest was born in Billings. Currently, three of them live in Montana: Zachary, the oldest, in Big Timber; Naomi, the youngest, in Bozeman; and Gideon, our fifth child, in Boulder, carrying on the family line of pastors as he serves congregations in Boulder and Whitehall. Nathaniel, our second child, lives in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Joshua, our third-born, lives in Milwaukee. Amanda, our oldest daughter, lives in Denver. Through them, God has blessed us with 14 grandchildren. God willing, we will have a family gathering in June. All of our children and grandchildren intend on being here.

Over the years, people have asked me, "Does your wife work?" I have always answered, "Yes." But she has not always received her own paycheck. (Although, mine has always ended up in her hands.) While I was a seminary student, she worked various jobs so that we could pay the rent, be clothed, and have something to eat. After graduation, until our youngest was in school, Nanette worked at home. Then she finally put her teaching degree to work as a substitute in the Laurel school system. That eventually led to her being hired as the school secretary for Laurel's West Elementary School, retiring after 15 years. In addition, during our time in Laurel, she has delivered newspapers, made Montana Moon Cookies, and taught water aerobics (something she still does). For 43 years she has been my God-given helpmate. If there is anything good or praiseworthy about me, you can thank our Lord (as I do) for my dear wife.



St. Johns Lutheran Church, Laurel

## Getting to Know Arlo Pullmann

**Favorite Color:** Blue

**Favorite Season:** Easter

**Favorite Hobby:** I have always enjoyed puzzles. I do crossword puzzles, jigsaw puzzles, sudoku, nonograms, etc. I also have a collection of brain teasers that have to be taken apart and put back together. When I was in college, before the internet and YouTube videos, I solved the Rubik's Cube.

Nanette and I both enjoy riding our motorcycle. We annually ride over Beartooth Pass and through Sunlight Basin in Wyoming. Sometimes we take a short ride on a nice afternoon. Sometimes we take an extended trip for a week or so.

**Favorite Book:** One of my favorites is *The Phantom Tollbooth* by Norton Juster.

**Favorite Vehicle:** When I was courting Nanette, I had a less than romantic 1955 Chevrolet pickup. It had belonged to my Grandpa Mangels who sold it to my dad. I helped my dad fix the rusted fenders as well as make other minor repairs. The grill needed to be replaced so we cut and welded heavy, two-inch diameter pipe to spell my first name.

Later I owned a 1973 Buick Electra, a proverbial boat. A big car with a big engine. The owner's manual said it was longer than the Buick Estate Wagon. It rode so smoothly that I got a flat tire and didn't know it until the tire was ruined.

**Favorite Thing About Serving the Lord:** I love visiting those who would like to attend worship but for one reason or another are mostly home-bound. They tell me great stories (sometimes the same ones more than once). I learn much from their experiences and their wisdom.

**Favorite Hymn:** It is not fair to the rest of the hymnal but I am going to say that my favorite hymns are "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded" (LSB 450) and "For All the Saints Who from Their Labors Rest" (LSB 677)

**Elaborate on Your Hymn Choice:** To be more accurate those two hymns contain my two favorite stanzas.

"For All the Saints" is in the hymnal section marked "The Church Triumphant" which points us to our end goal and gives thanks to Jesus for those who have already arrived in his everlasting, heavenly kingdom of rest. But it also is realistic about the lack of rest that we have during our lives in this world.

Our Catechism teaches us that we are at war against three great enemies: the devil, the world, and our own sinful selves. In the hymn, we pray that we may "Fight as the saints who nobly fought of old." They were "soldiers" led by their "captain" Jesus "in the well-fought fight." We pray that we would be like them.

But it is not easy. We don't always fight "nobly." "We feebly struggle" in "the darkness drear." We lose battle after battle to our enemies. It is tiring. It can be very discouraging.

## Getting to Know Arlo Pullmann

**“And when the fight is fierce, the warfare long, Steals on the ear the distant triumph song, And hearts are brave again, and arms are strong. Alleluia”** (stanza 5)

My favorite verse of this stanza is “Steals on the ear the distant triumph song.” The “triumph song” is the message of Christ’s victorious resurrection. It is “distant” because we have not yet heard the angels, archangels, and all the company of heaven lauding and praising his glorious name. It is “distant” also because Jesus has not yet visibly returned.

Because the song is distant it “steals on the ear”. It gradually overcomes the din of battle and our distractions from God’s promises. Maybe it becomes audible just when we are most exhausted and most discouraged. The power of the Gospel in Word and Sacraments forgives, restores, edifies, encourages, and strengthens.

Without the Gospel we cannot survive the enemies attacks. They will offer you false promises if you will only betray Jesus who loves you most. But it would be better to die today in faith than to die later in unbelief. In “O Sacred Head” Paul Gerhardt provides a pre-emptive prayer for help. The prayer is tied to a heartfelt thanksgiving for the substitutionary suffering and death of Jesus on our behalf; a thanksgiving that can never be sufficient.

**“What language shall I borrow to thank Thee, dearest Friend, For this Thy dying sorrow, Thy pity without end.”** (stanza 5)

Now pray with me the last half of the stanza: **“O make me Thine forever! And should I fainting be, Lord, let me never, never, Outlive my love for Thee.”**

### District News-MT District Seminary Students

- MT Student, Seminarian, now Pastor-Elect Travis Hartmann received his Call from Faith Lutheran Church in Madison, IN on April 29th, 2026. He will be ordained and installed this summer in southern Indiana.
- MT Student, Seminarian, now Vicar-Elect Wade Harr received his vicarage assignment from St. Paul Lutheran, Eldora, IA on April 28th, 2026. He will begin his vicarage later this summer.
- MT Student, Seminarian, Noah Olaff is returning to CLS after completing his vicarage assignment at Trinity Lutheran Church, Springfield, MO, for his final year at seminary.

*God Bless your continued studies and service to His church!*

## EXCERPTS FROM: SERVING THE LORD IN LIMA, PERU NEWS FROM GERALD AND HEIDI PAUL

### A Joyous Celebration

On May 3, 2026, 5th Sunday of Easter, Gerald was installed as pastor and missionary at La Misión Luterana del Perú, San Borja. Rev Ted Krey, Regional Director of the LAC Region of LCMS OIM officiated and Rev James Sharp, Area Facilitator for Peru, was the preacher.



Two pastors who had attended the Peru Foro this weekend were also able to participate. Alliance missionary Rev. Rafael Milagres, who had served the vacancy the last two years, also attended, as well as Rev. Abraham Rosario, Peruvian pastor emeritus of Lutheran Mission Peru.

### 2 1/2 hr Maundy Thurs Service

Words fail us to describe the quality of the work that went into the production of this passion play! The Lutheran teachers at Castillo Fuerte did a phenomenal job with the kids there!

### Combined Easter Service

The Resurrection of our Lord was celebrated at Los Olivos – a combined service of all three congregations! What a joy-filled day proclaiming – “¡Cristo ha resucitado! ¡Ha resucitado en verdad!



Prayerfully consider partnering with the LCMS to support the work of Gerald Paul. Make checks payable to:

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod  
P.O. Box 66861 St. Louis  
MO 63166-6861

OR

Mission Central  
40718 Highway E 16  
Mapleton, IA 51034

On the memo line include Gerald Paul – Lima, Peru

Give securely from any device: [lcms.org/givenow/gerald.paul](https://lcms.org/givenow/gerald.paul)

Call a donor care representative: 800-930-4438

## EXCERPTS FROM: THE PREUS FAMILY IN EURASIA WINTER 2026 NEWSLETTER

### Reflections from home, by Jenny

The past year was a flurry of productivity and transition for our family, and the coming year looks like it will be the same, all thanks be to God! We are adapting to the new rhythm of David's work which involves a bit more travel than before. While we miss him when he's away, we're also thankful he is making connections, providing support and encouragement to others, and serving the region as he is doing. I am so thankful to God for the energy, intellect, and gifts He gave to David for the sake of sharing the saving gospel of Jesus Christ. I also pray daily for my own continued joy, stamina, and ingenuity with keeping the home fires burning while he is away! The older kid's adjustments this year went smoothly, with Hans repatriating to Missouri to live and work, Rebekah continuing her second year of studies with the University of Transylvania, and Rolf (a senior in high school) working in Colorado for part of the year. Lena and Søren continue to work diligently at their Wittenberg Academy classes, as well as Romanian and guitar lessons. We are continuing to learn Romanian with the kids taking language classes at a local school here. Leif, Andreas, and Lars are all homeschooling with me and have quite a few neighborhood and church friends. Sylvi (still nursing and very much a baby) is now two. She is learning to talk, loves to read, and keeps us all entertained with her endearing antics, and bright and interested involvement in anything the other kids are doing. We keep busy with the church here in Brasov. We are seeing some exciting changes with interest and growth among the Romanians and Hungarians, as well as new American missionaries moving here to work on the regional team with David. With the shift in David's work, as well as my own growing duties with the mission and family, our communication with supporters has unfortunately taken a back seat. But there is a time for every season, and we pray for grace and understanding with our limited outreach during this season of our lives. If you would like more information and updates about the work David is doing, the following sites are managed by our LCMS communication personnel and they will very frequently update and share articles that feature regional developments David is a part of.



<https://international.lcms.org/eurasia/> <https://www.facebook.com/LCMSEurasia>

Prayerfully consider partnering with the LCMS to support the work of the Preus family.  
Make checks payable to:

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod  
P.O. Box 66861 St. Louis  
MO 63166-6861

Mission Central  
OR 40718 Highway E 16  
Mapleton, IA 51034

On the memo line include Preus-Eurasia

Give securely from any device: [lcms.org/givenow/preus](https://lcms.org/givenow/preus)  
Call a donor care representative: 800-930-4438

## Montana District Board of Directors' Summary

The Montana District Board of Directors met on January 26, 2026, at the district office for the quarterly board meeting. The minutes from the October 20<sup>th</sup> meeting were presented and approved.

Chris Wood, Executive Director of Internal Audit Chris Wood, Executive Director of Internal Audit, presented to the Board about the audit process, the responsibilities of the Board of Directors and of the Internal Audit Team, and significant audit matters. Internal Audit identified no material weaknesses in the internal controls of MT District as of and for the year ended 12-31-24. No significant difficulties were encountered in performing the audit. Internal Audit reports that there are no material misstatements uncorrected; three adjusting entries were noted and recorded to the District's ledger in the first round of the draft audited statements. No conditions or events were noted that would indicate ongoing concerns.

The fourth quarter financial statements were reviewed and no concerns were noted. The MT District saw a significant generous outpouring of support for the Wolf Point, Plentywood, Glasgow Tri-parish by District congregations and their parishioners. The WPG Tri-parish is currently working to ready the parsonage acquired to be placed in service with a pastor through necessary remodeling, and there remains funding at the district level to assist. The District remains in a strong financial position in meeting expenses for the coming year.

Constitutions and By-laws revisions for Peace Lutheran Church, Great Falls and Zion Lutheran Church, Chinook were reviewed and changes will be brought to the congregations.

An overture was presented to fund a request for Christ for the Deaf for equipment for their ministry and to pray for Rev. Joshua Reinke's ministry. There was discussion of the BOD's desire to help them out more and to encourage them to ask when there is a need. The overture was amended and passed.

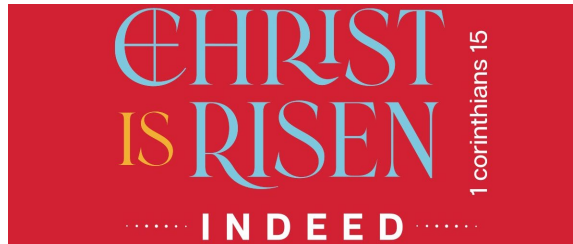
An overture was presented to reword part of the Church Workers' Scholarship Fund Policy (section 4) to correct an issue with what happens with money left in the fund at the end of the year regarding how much of the balance is added to the corpus of the fund. The overture was passed to amend the policy.

The Board of Directors met again on May 4<sup>th</sup>.

### **LCEF Partnering with the Montana District**

The Lutheran Church Extension Fund recently sent the Montana District \$1000 for the WPG Tri-parish car fund, and \$250 for a reception at the October Pastors/Teachers Conference. Thank you LCEF for supporting our congregations and work in the district!

## 2026 Synodical Convention



Nine delegates from the Montana District will travel to Phoenix, AZ, July 18<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> to participate in The 69th Regular Convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Over five days, delegates will hear and vote on overtures from around the Synod. 374 overtures were submitted for the workbook. Floor committees will work through these overtures to decline, amend, and bring them to the floor to be voted on. All information, including the convention schedule, workbook, and biographical information of nominees can be found at: <https://www.lcms.org/convention/national>

**Where:** The Phoenix Convention Center

**When:** July 18-23, 2026

**Who:** Montana District Delegates

### Voting Ordained

- Rev. Samuel Grayl (First, Bozeman)
- Rev. Paul Shupe (St. Paul, Bridger)
- Rev. Kyle Winter (The Church at Creston-Lutheran, Kalispell)

### Voting Lay

- Mr. Thomas Halvorson (Trinity, Sidney)
- Mr. Joel Kempff (Our Redeemer, Columbia Falls)
- Mr. Christopher Zier (Holy Trinity, Belgrade)

### Advisory Ordained

- Rev. Daniel Rinderknecht (Emeritus)

### Advisory Commissioned

- Mr. Gideon Schauer (Trinity, Kalispell-unable to attend)

### Board of Directors

- Mr. Eric Corneliusen (Williston, ND)
- Mr. Thomas Kosche (Billings, MT)

### **Candidates for President of the Synod**

- Rev. Benjamin Ball
- Rev. Joel Biermann
- Rev. Brady Finfern
- Rev. Matthew Harrison
- Rev. Peter Lange

## Around the District



### STAINED GLASS LUTHER'S ROSE DEDICATED

Trinity Lutheran Church, Miles City members, Joyce Holmlund and Emma Wegner, made the lovely stained glass piece now hanging in Trinity's Pearl Street entry. It was dedicated on All Saint's Day (observed) Sunday, Nov. 2, 2025.



Trinity Lutheran Church, Billings, has approximately 15 wooden banner stands to give away. Please contact the church office (406-245-3984) if you're interested



Vicar-Elect Wade Harr



CSL Seminarian Jacob Diercks (wife Julie)-First Lutheran in Bozeman



CSL Seminarian Donald "Will" Welch-St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Laurel



Sorting Arch books in Glendive, story on pg. 14





# BEFORE THE PSALM 90:2 MOUNTAINS

*Montana District LCMS Camps 2026*

Youth Retreat: June 22-25

Family Camp: June 26-28

Church Worker Retreat: June 29-July 3

Registration is available on-line at: [https://mtdistlcms.org/  
welcome/montana-district-camp-information/](https://mtdistlcms.org/welcome/montana-district-camp-information/)

Youth Retreat is \$75/participant and Family camp is \$150/cabin

**Register by June 5<sup>th</sup>**

*Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from  
everlasting to everlasting you are God. Psalm 90:2*

## Trinity Lutheran Camp - Bigfork

### 2026 Camp Schedule

- June 22-24 - Base Camp (1st & 2nd Grade Day Camp)
- June 24-26 - Kindercamp (PreK-2nd Grade w/ Parent)
- June 28-July 3 - Adventure Camp (3rd -4th Grade Overnight)

Learn More and Register at:

<https://www.trinitykalispell.org/camp-registration>



## LWML Montana District Memorial Scholarship Fund

To God be the glory, the LWML Montana District was able to award scholarships to three district seminarians and two college students going into full time church work. The awardees for the 2025-2026 school year are: Grace Donnelly, Holy Trinity Lutheran, Belgrade; William Harr, Trinity Lutheran, Great Falls; Travis Hartmann, Christ the King Lutheran, Billings, Noah Oloff, Trinity Lutheran, Billings and Aaron Thomas, St. John Lutheran, Libby. These scholarships are made possible by a portion of Mite box offerings and contributions to the LWML Montana District Memorial Scholarship Fund.

As a reminder, the application deadline for the 2026-2027 school year is September 30, 2026. The applicant student must be studying for professional church work within our Synod and be a member of a Montana District Church. Forms are available on the LWML website, [www.mtdistrictlwml.org](http://www.mtdistrictlwml.org). For more information contact the LWML Scholarship Chairman, Linda Reilly, (406) 274-7539 or [blr4852@live.com](mailto:blr4852@live.com).

The Montana District Reflections are back and will now be a quarterly newsletter. Please submit district news to: [office@mtdistlcms.org](mailto:office@mtdistlcms.org) by the 15<sup>th</sup> of April, July, October, and January, to be included in the subsequent issue.

## Invest with Purpose

*Serve with Peace*

A Church Worker StewardAccount® makes it simple to invest and manage your funds at your own pace and on your own time. If you work for an LCMS church, school or organization, you are eligible to open an account. **Start earning 3% on your investment today!**



\$100 MINIMUM



INTEREST COMPOUNDED  
AND PAID MONTHLY



UNLIMITED  
CHECKS



OPTIONAL VISA®  
DEBIT CARD



ONLINE ACCESS  
AND MOBILE APP



LUTHERAN CHURCH  
EXTENSION FUND



[lcef.org/cwsa](http://lcef.org/cwsa)

LCEF is a nonprofit religious organization; therefore, LCEF Investments are not FDIC insured, are not a federally insured savings or deposit account or insured by any state or federal agency. This is not an offer to sell investments, nor a solicitation to buy. LCEF will offer and sell its securities only in states where authorized. The offer is made solely by LCEF's Offering Circular. Investors should carefully read the Offering Circular, which more fully describes associated risks. StewardAccount products are not available to investors in South Carolina. StewardAccount access features are offered through UMB Bank n.a. Rates as of May 2026. Balance restrictions apply. Rates subject to change. Visit [lcef.org](http://lcef.org) for details.

