

## Gold Hill Evangelical Lutheran Church

934 Placer Street  
Butte, MT 59701  
(406) 723-4242  
pastorgoldhill@gmail.com  
churchoffice@goldhilllutheran.org

**Empowered by the Holy Spirit,  
United to Serve**



The Nugget E-News

June 22, 2020

## Montana Synod News

**The Montana Synod is curating information  
and resources on the Montana Synod Website**

Click [HERE](#) to be taken to the COVID-19 resource page.  
There you will find information released by the Synod office, resources,  
and tools for your congregation.

### Here are some important reminders for you and your congregations:

**Please remember** you need to be as prepared to close your worship  
space as you are to open. *Especially as the virus continues to spread  
throughout our Synod.*

An example from the Synod: Grace Lutheran in Worland, WY was open  
for one week before they had to close again as the town became a  
hotspot for Covid-19 spread.

**As you begin to gather for worship, please take down names of those  
physically attending for the purpose of trace contacting if needed.**

**The Synod office** is back to regular office hours as of June 1.  
*Also as of June 1 staff travel will resume on a very limited basis, for  
necessary congregational business only. Staff will meet with small  
groups such as councils, call committees, pastors, or other committees,  
except in congregational meetings where a Synod staff member must  
be present. Staff will not be traveling to conduct worship or other  
congregational events at this time.*

This policy will be revisited at the end of June.

## Lutheran World Relief Face Mask Challenge

Many people in developing countries don't have the option of social  
distancing or frequent handwashing to slow the spread of COVID-19.  
The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention now says cloth  
face masks, along with hand washing and social distancing may help

## LINKS:

[Click here to visit our  
growing website](#)

[Click here to visit our  
FB page and "like" us](#)

[Click here to support  
the Butte Furniture  
Bank](#)

[Click here to visit our  
Church Library Page](#)

### CHURCH COUNCIL

May 2020

**Mike Lawson-**  
President

**Curt Quist -**  
Administration Director

**Revonda Stordahl -**  
Treasurer

**Peggy Graving -**  
Secretary

**Julie Corbin -**  
Spiritual Growth Ministry  
Team Leader

**Chris Ketchum -**  
Worship Ministry  
Team Leader

**Lynn Aniksdal -**  
Leadership Ministry  
Team Leader

**Dale Schultz -**  
Outreach Ministry  
Team Leader

**Pastor Marlow Carrels**

reduce transmission.

We need your help to sew cloth face masks to help us reach men, women and children in vulnerable communities.

After all, Lutheran World Relief was founded 75 years ago to help neighbors around the globe who were suffering during World War II. What will be our generation's legacy during this time of crisis?



[Click here](#) for easy to follow mask instructions and find out how to pledge!



## Words from the Bishop: The Pulpit

So, what is your pastor, SAM, and/or LPA called to preach to you from the pulpit during these interesting days?

The answer to that question seems easy on the surface but in fact, when we dig a little deeper into the response, we might not like the answer we hear. But nonetheless, according to scripture and the Lutheran tradition, your preacher has been called and ordained/licensed to speak particular things to you and it isn't always what you might want to hear.

The simple answer to the question of what your preacher is called to preach is God's Word. The preacher has been called first by God and second by the body of Christ represented in your congregation/ministry to preach God's Word. Seems simple enough.

But what is God's Word? Often when we hear that phrase, we think "Bible." And we're not wrong. The Word of God preachers are called to speak includes the Bible. But it is not only the Bible. In fact, God's Word goes beyond the Bible and starts not with words on a page but in the fullness of a person.

God's Word has three interconnected and incarnate forms. (There's that three-in-one thing again!) The first form and the criteria for all the other forms of the Word of God is discovered in the Gospel of John, Chapter 1:1 -- "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God." This is the central way we understand the Word of God as Lutherans: as Jesus Christ!

Jesus Christ is the Word of God, made flesh, who dwelt with us, ministered to and taught us, died because of and for us, and rose again to give us new life. Everything Christ said, is and did is the fullness of God's Word. And in Christ who lives, God's Word is and always will be a living Word. Ultimately, Jesus - all he has done and all he calls us to do -- is the Word of God who your preacher is called and expected to proclaim.

The second form of God's Word is Scripture. Scripture too is God's

living Word, inspired by the Spirit, written down by ancient preachers and proclaimers who were called by God to preach the Word. Scripture is God's Word as it proclaims Jesus and the new life Christ brings out of death.

The third form of the Word is the proclamation from your pastor, SAM and/or LPA on Sunday mornings as well as the Word you hear in devotions, Bible Studies, prayer, testimonies of faith from your neighbor, creation and so many other ways. God's Word is made real and present every moment of every day when we open our mind, hearts and spirits to him (Christ) through the words, experiences and lives of our fellow human beings and in creation.

When you hear the Word of God proclaimed, whether in Christ, in Scripture or in preaching, it comes to you in two ways: Gospel and Law. Both are necessary and useful to the life of the follower of Christ and the body of Christ in which they live.

First, the Gospel. The Gospel is the proclamation of the good news of what God does for you, directly, as a gift. You, singular and plural, only receive. You do nothing except open yourself to the gift of love God pours into you.

In God's Word as Gospel, God proclaims Jesus Christ who is the deep, abiding, agape love God has for the whole world and for you. The Gospel tells you: "God loves you. God accepts you. God passionately desires to be in life-giving relationship with you. God forgives you. God saves, redeems and reconciles you." The Gospel is never what you do or think you should do. The Gospel is always what God does. And God has already done and continues to do everything you need or could want. (See [Luther's explanation](#) to the Apostles Creed in the Small Catechism.)

But there's another part of God's Word, a part that we don't like to hear very much, at least not to apply to ourselves in this day and time, though we do enjoy applying it to other people. This second part of God's Word is the Law. God's Law. God's Law spoken first and foremost to me, myself and I for my life here and now, not simply to someone else back then. And this is the part we resist when we come face to face with it.

In the Lutheran tradition, we believe that God's Word comes to us as both Gospel and Law; neither should be forgotten, neither should be ignored. And God's Law is all about what God calls, asks, and commands us to do and be; it describes how God wants us to live with each other in this world. The heart of this Law, the law that governs all of God's Law, is of course to love and serve others - everyone. "...through agape love, become slaves to one another. For the WHOLE law is summed up in a single commandment, 'You shall love your neighbor.'" [1] (Gal 5:13b-14)

Why does God insist this Law of Love be preached? Well, first because we still sin. We still turn away from God at every turn and we still try to be god over others. "If we say we're without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." (1 Jn 1:8) And so we need protection from our own sin and one another's sin. God gives us the Law of Love to help us order our lives in the safest way possible in the midst of sin.

But the Law also functions on us another way, whether we want it to or not. It points out to us when we are not following God's Law and invites, pesters and demands that we follow it.

And we don't like to have the things we're not supposed to be doing but do anyway (or the things we are supposed to do but don't) pointed out to us, do we? We get defensive, feel guilty, push back because we think we're pretty good people. And we are...in and through Christ. But alone we turn away from God into our self-centered ways and into sin.

This is the Word of God, the Law and Gospel that the pastor, SAM and/or LPA is called to preach to you. So before you get mad at the preacher for saying things you don't want to hear, stop and ask yourself if they are in fact are proclaiming God's Word by calling upon you to love and serve your neighbor - all your neighbors -- even when you don't want to hear it or do it.

And if that's the case, then don't get mad. Instead, listen. Because they are doing exactly what God and the body of Christ has called them to do: proclaim God's Word in both the Gospel and the Law, given to you in Christ, inspired by the Spirit, and guided by the Scriptures. For it is through listening to God's Word in Christ that the Holy Spirit will transform you into who God calls you to be.

And then say "thank you pastor, SAM, LPA for reminding me that as a follower of Christ, I'm called to love everyone. And thanks and praise be to God that Jesus died for me and rose again so that I can be forgiven in grace, turn back to God, and live the life of agape love God wants me to live."

In Christ's love,

Bishop Laurie

[1] Get used to me harping on this love thy neighbor command. God, Jesus, and the Spirit never stop harping on it so neither will I.

---

## *Gold Hill Lutheran Church Welcomes You!*

***Are you looking for a place to connect with a faithful community, grow in faith, and put your talents to work in serving others? Look no further, we welcome you at Gold Hill Lutheran Church! To learn more about the mission and ministry of Gold Hill Lutheran Church, please contact us at 406-723-4242.***