

## 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 1, 2020

## Gold Hill News

### VBS/Day Camp cancelled

Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp (FLBC) is not sending counselors out this year for Vacation Bible School. So VBS is off the schedule and will not be held this summer.

FLBC may send out some packets to hand out later in the summer. If they do, Julie Corbin will let us know.

Thank you for your understanding.

## 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](#)

## 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 several important reminders for you and your congregations:

**PPP loan** is not automatically forgiven. Congregations must apply for loan forgiveness; you can [download the form here](#).

**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** will go back to regular office hours June 1.  
**Also beginning 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**

### 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**

*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.*

Presiding Bishop Eaton will share a sermon for June 7th for use in your congregations if so desired. Pastors, this is a good opportunity to take a Sunday off.

---



## **Words from the Bishop: Happy Birthday Church!**

Pentecost Sunday is the day we celebrate the Church's birthday. On Pentecost, a chaotic wind blew through the lives of the disciples hidden in a room in Jerusalem and changed their lives forever. That wind filled the disciples with the flame of the Holy Spirit, and they began preaching the good news of Jesus Christ in languages they'd rarely heard much less spoken. "In the last days, God declares, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy..."

And suddenly everything is changed. There is a new normal, a new way of relating to God, a new way of being God's community. Even though some people dismiss the birth of this new way of experiencing God as the slurred speech of men drunk on new wine at nine o'clock in the morning, the Spirit doesn't care! The Church, Christ's Church, the body of Christ in the world is born through the power of the Holy Spirit! And throughout the book of Acts we watch the Church grow from 11 men plus some women hiding in a room (Lk 24:33) to 120 people (Acts 1:15) to 3120 people (Acts 2:41) to 8120 (Acts 4:4) and beyond. All by the work of the Spirit!

Today, over 2000 years later, we find ourselves in a similar situation that those disciples were in -- in a world of change and chaos, of new normal and transformation, of unpredictability and the uncontrollable work of the Holy Spirit in our midst.

No, the Church is not dead as some might suggest. Nor has the Church been closed during Covid-19 as others might suggest. The Church is alive - for the Body of Christ is risen and will live eternally! But the Church is changing. Whether we want it to or not, whether we dismiss it as the work of drunkenness or see it as God's possibilities being made real, the Church is becoming new. This was already happening pre-Covid-19; it's just that the virus and its consequences have moved up the timetable a lot.

During the past 2000 years, Christ's Church has looked and functioned in many and various ways in different times and different places. We as the body of Christ, gathered and empowered by the Spirit, have explored, experimented with, even rejected different ways of being Church. Some of those ways needed to be rejected and buried for they were (and are) not images of Christ in the world. Other ways simply morphed into a new way of being Christ's Church that was more able to fulfill its mission in the world.

The question before us today yet again is: What does it mean to be

Church, the body of Christ? For the past weeks, we have been discussing this question publicly and privately (whether we knew it or not) as we struggled to determine how we were/are going to open the doors to our worship spaces. Even the president weighed into this conversation.

But as many Christians across the denominations have pointed out, Christ's Church never closed. Church has been open and fulfilling its mission the whole time. Church has been worshiping and hearing the Word differently and serving others differently and helping the Spirit form faith differently and supporting and loving one another differently, but the Church never closed! Because Christ's Church never closes! The Church lives as Christ lives!

What does it mean to be the Church, Christ's body in the world, during and post-Covid-19? I think it is time we revisit this question as congregations as well as synods, as laity as well as clergy. We need to ask hard questions about things like: Where is the Spirit moving in the Church? How do we follow Christ as the Church? What is the role of our buildings and property as we live as Church? Is the church a place/space or is the Church a community empowered by a Spirit that blows us out of our doors like a chaotic wind so that we can proclaim Christ in word and deed?

One thing for sure is that the Church isn't going to be God's community in the same way as we were pre-Covid-19. The Spirit is working among us and yes, it's frightening, uncertain, and uncontrollable, the same way it was for those disciples in that room 2000 years ago. But we do have choice in the transformation that the Spirit is bringing among us. We can choose to resist the Spirit's work, putting up roadblocks at every turn to hang onto what has always been done before. We can choose to leave or hide, pretending this isn't happening. Or we can take faithful risks, stepping out little by little (or sometimes a lot) to explore and experiment with what God might be doing with Christ's Church in 2020 and beyond.

Over the next week as you celebrate Pentecost (and search through your drawers for something red to wear that day), I'd like you to ponder and pray about what it means to be Christ's Church in the world? And try to remove the building from the center of your definition. For the Church is not a place or a space. The Church is a community, the community of Christ through which we hear and (hopefully) experience how much God loves us and then in turn, loves God's love into the world around us.

Happy Birthday Church! Come, Holy Spirit, Come! Bishop Laurie

---

### **Check with your insurer:**

As you decide to reopen your worship space, please check with your insurance company for liability coverage. Insurance companies that have been consulted by congregations have indicated that if a congregation does not follow federal (CDC), state, and local guidelines closely, the insurance company may drop coverage and will not cover the congregation in the case of a lawsuit. Also remember that if a lawsuit for a Covid-19 related death is filed, it will most likely include not only the congregation, but also the individual pastor and individual council members and perhaps even the synod. While it may be difficult for any

plaintiff to prove "gross negligence," just the hassle of being named in a lawsuit and responding to it may be enough to deter you from opening before you are ready. So, consult your insurance company before you open!

## Message Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp

Update: FLBC & COVID-19  
May 27th, 2020

Dear friends in Christ,

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



Oh, what a time we are in! A time we need to be reminded of Christ's grace, love and peace more than ever! On May 26, 2020, the Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp Board of Directors met and made the difficult decision to change the focus of our programming for the Summer 2020 session. Instead of the children and youth programming "as normal", we will be hosting family and small group focused retreat- style programming. This decision comes after careful discussion, research, advice from health agencies, and with copious hours of prayer.

Our goal of providing campers and guests with transformative, Christ-centered, fun, adventurous, camping experiences, has not changed, and we are determined to make this an awesome summer of ministry. Under the guidelines established by the CDC and the local health department, we will do our best to maintain a safe and clean camp environment, as well as enforcing all the directives for social distancing, group size etc. We will be in constant communication with the health department, and will make changes as necessary.

We will be transitioning into hosting family camp style retreats, where a family or other small groups experience camp together. While here, a camp staff member will guide guests through the various activities that camp offers (swimming, Bible study, worship, canoeing, archery, etc.!) If this is something that your family or your church's congregation, women's group, or youth group would be interested in learning more about, please reach out to our office.

We know this is difficult news for many. We are praying for you. And thank you for remembering FLBC in your prayers and with your gifts, during this difficult time. If you have any questions, feel free to contact us at [office@flbc.net](mailto:office@flbc.net) or 406-752-6602. God be with you.

God's love endures forever!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Margie P. Fiedler".

Margie Fiedler  
Executive Director



[www.flbc.net](http://www.flbc.net)

Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp | 603 S. Main Street, Kalispell, MT 59901 | 406.752.6602 | [office@flbc.net](mailto:office@flbc.net)

## *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.***