

Gold Hill Evangelical Lutheran Church

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



The Nugget E-News

July 6, 2020

Gold Hill News

Canopy Cover for Outdoor Services

We are looking for a canopy cover to use outdoors while services are held in the North parking lot. If anyone has a canopy they are willing to let the church use for the foreseeable future, please let us know (723-4242). Thank you!



Calendar:

**Worship Service
Outdoors:
North Parking Lot
at 9:30 AM
Sunday, July 12th
+++++**

Bible Study Opportunities:

**Group Study
every
Thursday
at 6:30 AM
Hanging Five
Restaurant**



Help with cleanup after services

The Worship team is looking for people to help with clean up after services on Sundays. Please call the church office (723-4242) to sign up if you can help out, or talk to Chris Ketchum (team leader) on the Worship team.

Looking for ushers and lectors

The Worship team is also looking for folks who can help usher or lector for outdoor services on Sundays. If you feel called to this ministry, please let Mary or Pr. Carrels know (723-4242), or talk to Chris Ketchum.



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.

Important Reminders:

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.

CHURCH COUNCIL 2020

Mike Lawson-
President

Curt Quist -
Administration Director

Revonda Stordahl -
Treasurer

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

As Covid-19 cases continue to rise the Synod Staff will not be traveling this summer unless it is an emergency and absolutely necessary.

Covid-19 Recommendations for Congregations

Dear Beloved in Christ,

Covid-19 is here in Montana/Northern Wyoming and it is spreading fast. And that spread is requiring us to change our lives yet again in order to follow Christ's command to love one another. We may not be able to control the virus through a vaccine or a cure yet, but we can limit how, when and where Covid-19 spreads. And for those of us who are followers of Christ and caretakers of all the members of Christ's body, the church, we have a responsibility to slow the spread of Covid-19 in our congregations even as we gather again in limited ways for worship.

As I have done before and will continue to do, I urge you to follow all the best safe practices for your context. And be ready to pivot on a dime as the virus enters your communities in more evident ways. As our nation celebrates its independence this weekend, here are some ways you can live out your freedom in Christ:

1. Exercise your freedom in Christ to love one another by wearing a mask which reduces the spread greatly, especially in closed-in areas where we share the air. See link [HERE](#).
2. Take some control over Covid-19 by forsaking coffee fellowship after worship (no, coffee is NOT the third Lutheran sacrament).
3. Love and serve your pastor and council by following their guidance instead of pushing back.
4. If Covid-19 comes to your town, be as ready to shut your worship space down as you were to open it up.
5. If Covid-19 is getting close to your town, take some steps back by not having communion for a few weeks or singing softly or having worship outside.
6. Take attendance at worship so that you can help your county health department do any contact tracing as necessary.

Remember, Christ's church is never closed; we just need to do our part to find new ways to be church together, to love and care for one another, and to follow Christ into God's future as this virus moves through our lives.

So hang in there, beloved, and care about one another. Don't be the cause of someone's suffering. Instead, be the reason someone stays alive and well. We are in this together and God will get us through it. For God is with us always, bringing new life out of death. Always!

Bishop Laurie



Words from the Bishop: Christian Freedom

This year marks the 500th Anniversary of Martin Luther's writing of his famous essay "On the Freedom of a Christian" (aka "On Christian Liberty"). In my opinion, this essay should be required reading for all Lutheran Christians, perhaps with some help from their pastors, for it describes clearly what freedom truly means for followers of Christ. And that meaning is very different from what our culture tells us freedom means.

In short, Luther tells us that in Christ we are indeed free -- free from all the

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Secretary**

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

**Chris Ketchum -
Worship Ministry
Team Leader**

**Lynn Aniksdal -
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Team Leader**

**Dale Schultz -
Outreach Ministry
Team Leader**

Pastor Marlow Carrels

things that prevent us from having life-giving relationship with God and neighbor. We are free from fear, despair, rage, hate, apathy, lostness, anxiety, oppression, and oppressing. We are free from having to climb the ladder to God, from earning our way past God's wrath into God's love and acceptance. We're free from sin. In Christ, and only in Christ, we become lords over all these things.

But this freedom doesn't just mean we're free *from* something. It also means we're free *for* something. Free *for* abundant life in God, truth in Christ, and empowerment by the Spirit. Free *for* peace, joy, wisdom, grace, right relationship with God and others. Free *for* receiving into ourselves and our communities God's every blessing.

And in this "freedom for living in abundant relationship with God," we're free to love, care for, and stand in solidarity with our fellow humans and all of creation! Finally, that's what freedom means for Luther and Lutheran followers of Christ: freedom to love others as God has first loved us.

To put the Christian understanding of freedom in terms of the independence day we celebrate this weekend, we indeed have many rights, but every one of those rights comes with responsibilities and duties. Someone once said that "my freedom stops at your nose." In other words, my freedoms and rights only extend to the point where they begin to interfere with or deprive you of your freedoms and rights (and *vice versa*). It's at that point when my freedom becomes a responsibility to serve your freedoms and rights. **While we may have the rights to free speech, assembly, religion, etc. that we honor this weekend, they immediately turn into responsibilities the moment they reach another person and begin to interfere with their rights.**

Martin Luther states something similar, only the responsibility for the follower of Christ is even greater, for the duty of a Christian is not just to protect the basic rights and freedoms of others but to love one another. Christians are called to the responsibility of loving others, all others, friend and enemy, people of different races, ethnicities, religions, genders and political ideologies, people who are next door and people who live across the country or even the world. **For Luther, God frees us in Christ so that we can love our neighbor in faith empowered by the Spirit.**

This freedom of Christians has been happening right here in the MT Synod during these past weeks and months. I've seen images of this freedom. For instance, you may have heard that together we raised over \$14,000 for the Bolivian Lutheran Church in their time of hunger and need due to Covid-19. Because of your generosity, the Bolivian Lutheran Church has been able to expand their ministry beyond La Paz to surrounding communities, providing food baskets and hygiene kits to families in need in Cobija, Caranavi, Tarija Cochabamba, and the Lutheran schools in El Alto and Santa Cruz totaling over 150 families. And there is some leftover for continuing to help these and other families in the future months. Thank you, MT Synod, for using the freedom to love God has given you in Christ to love your neighbors in Bolivia.

Another image of the freedom of Christians I've seen in the past few days is the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Ordination of Women in the Lutheran Church. Because of an openness to transformation by men and women 50 years ago, women were finally after 2000 years given the freedom to proclaim the gospel as ordained leaders in the Lutheran Church. Every time I remember that military chaplain telling me "no, you can't become a pastor because you're a woman," I giggle with delight that my church said, "Yes, you can. Yes, you can!" Though it has been a difficult struggle at times, and there is still work to do, I celebrate with the many female pastors, bishops, deacons, and LPA's of our synod and church the freedom we now have to follow God's calling into the ministry. Thank you, God, and thank you fellow Lutherans for using the freedom to love that God has given you to speak and hear the Word of God through women's voices.

Finally, I see images of the freedom of Christians in the difficult choices

you've made to restrain your civil freedoms for the sake of caring for others during this time of pandemic. Wearing masks in worship and community, limiting fellowship and coffee hours, social distancing in worship and beyond your facility's doors, reaching out to one another through phone, live stream, letters, mask-making to show that the church is never closed, only functioning in God's new ways...all of these are ways you are using your freedoms that God gives you in Christ to love the neighbors you live with day-to-day.

To conclude, I offer Paul's words from Galatians once again as he proclaims what it means to be a Christian follower of Christ: "For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become servant's to one another."

In Christ's abundant love, we are made free; let us use that freedom in Christ to love one another.

Bishop Laurie

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.