

Gold Hill Evangelical Lutheran Church

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



Montana Synod News

**Words from the Bishop:
Story-Telling during Holy Week**

"Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee...'" (Mt 28:7)

This is a week of stories. No doubt you've been hearing a lot of stories recently, mostly about COVID-19. No doubt some of those stories are sad or frightening. No doubt some of those stories make us want to turn off the news and watch a 1980's sitcom. But I'm betting that some of these stories are good news stories. Some

stories are about kindness and compassion as people share with one another and care for each other. Some stories are fun and full of the delight of people trying to make the best of a tough situation. (I'm noticing a lot of online dancing!)

On the evening of April 8, our Jewish sisters and brothers begin their holy days of Passover. These siblings from the Jewish faith also are focusing on story-telling this week, speaking the goodness of God into a time of suffering. They too are struggling to find ways to come together as families and friends across the internet and over the phone so that they can eat together and tell the stories of freedom and God's deliverance.

What are the good news stories you're hearing around your community or phone tree? What are the good news stories that are inspiring you this week? For me, one of the good news stories comes out of Libby MT where the members of Christ Lutheran put together an Easter Parade using their vehicles and drove past the church with signs wishing the interim pastor and the secretary a "Happy Easter." Or the one from Powell WY where Hope Lutheran (Powell) and Trinity Lutheran (Cody) are using the local drive-in theater for stay-in-your-car worship. (Honk your horn to share the peace! I love it!) If you have a good news story from your congregation, please share it with us. We'd love to hear it!

"Go and tell," the angel says to the women at the tomb. "Do not be afraid. Go and tell," Jesus says to them minutes later as they race to tell the disciples. (Mt 28:10)

This is the week we tell the core story of the Christian faith - the story of Jesus' ride into Jerusalem and his meal with his disciples and the washing of their feet. The story of the new commandment that Jesus himself gave us: "Love one another." The story of Jesus' arrest with a kiss from his betrayer. The story of his so-called trial, his torture, suffering and long walk to his execution. The story of Jesus' death on a cross in a garbage dump called Golgotha. And yes, the story of his resurrection. On Easter Sunday, we will shout "Christ is risen. He is risen indeed!"

But this year, telling this story -- the story that someone once dubbed "The Greatest Story Ever Told" -- will be different. Many of us will be hearing this story from home, perhaps online or on the radio. Some will be reading it for ourselves from the Bible. In fact, I encourage you to read Matthew 26-28 and/or John 18-21 for the full "rest of the story." Most of us will be staying at home to receive the story rather than "going and telling" anyone. But one of the amazing things about this story is that no matter where we hear it and no matter where we tell it, the story remains our greatest good news story ever, the gospel of Jesus Christ. In this story we are reminded that Jesus went through suffering, death and resurrection to give us new life in him. We are also reminded that we too are called to take up our



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cross and follow him through this path of suffering, death and resurrection -- not to celebrate suffering and death but to stand up to it, face it and celebrate Christ's victory over it.

In this Holy Week story of Jesus' life, death and resurrection, we hear the good news that Christ's new life is our new life whether we congregate in the same physical place or not. And neither COVID-19 nor the devil himself can take this new life away. We can walk through our own Holy Week journey - Christ's journey - with him, trusting with our whole selves that just as "we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his." (Rm 6:5)

Blessed Holy Week to you all!

Bishop Laurie



Montana Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

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.

Synod Assembly Cancelled

With regret and in light of current circumstances around the world, the synod council has chosen to cancel the 2020 Synod Assembly. Our constitution requires that we meet a minimum of once every three years, so we have this option. As this was to be a theological assembly year, the business is minimal, and the council will act on behalf of the assembly until we can meet again next year. It is our hope that this decision will not only keep everyone safe, but also provide a little financial relief to congregations at this time.

The next assembly is scheduled for June 4-6, 2021 in Billings and will be a business assembly

~Rev. Amanda Liggett
Montana Synod Secretary

~Dick Deschamps
Montana Synod Vice President

~Rev. Dr. Laurie Jungling
Bishop, Montana Synod

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.