



PO Box 1259, Livingston
MT 406-222-0512

ALC July 2024 Newsletter



Striving for Connection

Dear Children of God at ALC,

The Surgeon General, Dr. Vivek Murthy, has been working tirelessly to educate the public about the rise in loneliness, disconnection, and social isolation in our country. His work has made research more visible that demonstrates the significant negative effects loneliness has on physical and mental health (and I would guess spiritual health as well). Over the past couple of years, I have been startled and disturbed as I've learned more about the impact of loneliness. If you are curious to learn more, you can search online for the Surgeon General's report from 2023 "Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation: The Surgeon General's Advisory on the Healing Effects of Social Connection and Community."

Livingston and Park County are certainly not immune from the epidemic of loneliness. A very recent survey of Park County residents by the Health Department revealed 1 in 3 people in our county experience loneliness. The survey also revealed 1 in 5 people don't feel part of the community and 28% of people said connections have worsened in recent times.

Now you might be wondering why I'm telling you all this and what it has to do with our church... The church council, as well as the weekly Bible Study, has been having some conversations around loneliness and the importance of relationships. Many people within the congregation have experienced the power of belonging within this community of faith. Historically, ALC (as well as many other churches) were the center of the community and a place of belonging for hundreds of people. Society has changed, especially in the perspective many people hold towards organized religion, but it remains true that a faith community provides a place where people can experience belonging and connection to both people and God.

There are conversations happening within our community by a number of stake holders to explore what can be done about loneliness in our county. On June 19th, I attended a special planning session hosted by LiveWell49. There were 40+ people who attended, representing most of the non-profits in the county as well as a few businesses, government agencies, and one church (us!!). LiveWell49 was founded in 2017 with the purpose of improving the overall well-being of our community. Over the past year of analyzing quantitative and qualitative data from a variety of sources, the theme of loneliness kept bubbling up. So, the coalition gathered to work on creating goals to begin to take action to address loneliness.

It was such an amazing experience to be in the room with all these brilliant, wise people who are doing so many wonderful things in our community. I was inspired by their passion for their work and their deep care for the people in the communities of Park County. Even if the others might not have articulated it in this way, I definitely felt God at work through bringing all these people together to work for a common purpose of caring for all God's children. It also felt like the Spirit was moving in the way that the themes of relationships and belonging keep coming up within conversations at the church as well as in the community around us.

The coalition still has some work to do to fine-tune the goals and then determine what actions will help us reach those goals. But I'm already thinking about more ways that we as a church might be more intentional about fostering a sense of belonging through things we already do as well as explore new ways we might be a place where people are able to better connect with each other and God. The needs in our broader community are so great and we as a community of faith have so much to offer our community. I'm curious to see where this all leads!

Peace,

Pastor Melissa



Randy and Linda Holland
Mike and Vicky Ryles
Mollie Waldum Holly Happe
Carole Fagerli Anita Bueling
Lynnette Evanson
Carol O'Dell Bea Huber

Hospitality. Community. Relationships. Hope.

On Friday, June 21st our church hosted 27 cyclists and support staff from The Fuller Center for Housing. The group that stayed with us were on a Wild West tour from Moab, Utah to Columbia Falls. For four weeks they travelled around 62 miles/day. The Fuller Center for Housing is a nonprofit ministry dedicated to the elimination of poverty housing. The purpose of their ride was to raise money and provide a few workdays along the way. Through individual and corporate sponsorship, this group raised over \$280,000. Impressive!

27 individuals rested in various places in our church. Each person found their space to sleep and renew for the next day. They ate dinner and breakfast provided by us. They had fellowship with us, shared stories, and for a moment we were able to connect with them. In that short time, we offered what we often do so well, our hospitality, kindness, and food. I was able to be part of our church team that worked to give that group of riders a sample of what American Lutheran Church represents.

When I was talking with one of the support staff, I asked him how they selected where to stay in each community. He said they look for a place that is large enough to have such a large group stay overnight. Then they begin to contact the places, mostly churches, and he said that it usually takes about 50 to 60 contacts to get a yes. And we said YES! And in that moment, we became part of this group's mission, to end poverty housing. Did we ride with them. No, but we gave them safe space, sustenance, fellowship, and encouragement to continue their journey. I believe that God used us as a church to further a purpose greater than us.

Perhaps, just perhaps, this is a way that God continues to find new ways for us to be part of his plan. I just know that it was good, and I am convinced this was the Holy Spirit nudging us to do something different.

The group of riders continually thanked us repeatedly for what we offered to them. They also wanted to let the whole congregation know how grateful they were to be able to spend a night in our church. Here again we have this incredible asset of our church home with all the space it offers.

I want to give special recognition to the people who helped; Cookie Linsted, Leslie Beffert, Don Sheen and the organizer, Lana Sheen. What a blessing to have this group give of their time and energy!

So, as we contemplate, pray and wonder what God has in store for us, we saw a glimpse again of the possibilities. Let us continue to expand our hospitality to our community. Let us continue to find ways to build and establish relationships with each other and with those in our community. Let us be willing to share the good news of what God has given us, so that hope can a reality in this place we call home.

Yours in Christ,

Randy Mogen



1 Dale Guidi	24 Jace Johnson
7 Myrna Dehn	24 Vicky Ryles
8 Diana West	27 Marilyn Burdick
20 Rodney Olsen	

Adult Education

Join us on the following Sundays as we reflect and discuss discipleship. What is God asking of us? Of our congregation? July 7, July 21, and August 25.

Loaves & Fishes

We continue to serve the evening meal at Loaves and Fishes on the third Monday of each month (that's **July 15th** this month). 45 meals were served on June 17th. If you would be willing to help, please let Pastor Melissa or Cookie Linsted know or just come down to Loaves & Fishes at 10am and/or 3:30pm.



Faith

While preparing for my sermon on June 23rd, I was looking at a lot of faith stories. A man of great faith was football coach Tony Dungy. Along with coaching his team to a Super Bowl win, he prepared his team spiritually as well as physically and mentally. He set aside a time each week for his coaches and players to have bible study and prayer services. He felt that this was important to preparing for the game. He used the words of apostle Paul to proclaim this from Hebrews 11:8. "It is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to Him must believe that God exists, and He rewards those who sincerely seek Him."

Do you have moments of doubt? Doubt always seems to stick its ugly head into all that we are trying to do. That's where faith comes in. Faith isn't the absence of doubt, but it reaches beyond doubt and toward that which we believe to be true; or as the writer of Hebrews puts it: "faith is the confidence that what we hope for will actually happen, it gives us assurance about things we cannot see."

I read a story of a man whose friends knew of his extreme faith. He was working on the roof of a ten-story building and suddenly tripped and fell over the side. He still had a smile on his face as he passed a fifth-floor window on the way down. Someone yelled out the window, "How are you?" He answered, OK, so

far!" I know this is an unrealistic faith that flies in the face of scientific knowledge--gravity. But it's still faith.

Many of us don't know how a plane takes off, stays in the air, and then lands; yet we step on the plane in faith that it will fly. Doesn't it make even more sense to believe the promises of the Creator of the universe, whose work is all around us. The moment you feel doubt overtaking you, pray for an extra measure of faith. God's guidance will lead you through the situation. May God bless us all.

Dale and Gloria Guidi

LPA and his mentor

Lutheran World Relief Drive

Thanks to the dedication of people like you, the gifts from the Lutheran World Relief Drive are well on their way! From churches in Helena, Butte, Anaconda, Deer Lodge, Townsend, Belgrade, Bozeman and Livingston, 528 baby care kits, 36 fabric kits, 1310 quilts, 548 personal care kits, and 765 school kits were received.

Billye Roselip, Vice President of Servant Resources would like to thank everyone for their hard work and looks forward to seeing everyone next year.



Shout Outs!!



A Shout Out and thank you to those who are making a difference in our community and church! These people and their stewardship are examples of God's loving grace. (Remember you can submit something for the shout outs at any time to

alclivingston@gmail.com).

Shout out to...

- Dennis Springer and Randy Mogen for attending the Synod Assembly in Billings. Thank you for being willing to engage with this important way that our broader church is governed to ensure that the good news continues to be shared with all.
- the volunteers who helped with the meal for young families: Lana, Cookie, and Billie Kaye. And to everyone who donated food for this meal so that our young families could enjoy a meal together while they got to know one another.
- the young families who came to the young families' meal. Thanks for making the drive and for being willing to come and get to know one another!
- the volunteers who helped host and feed the group of cyclists from the Fuller Center who stayed at ALC: Lana, Cookie, Doug, Leslie, and Randy M. Thank you to Billie Kaye and Dennis H. for helping the church get a Thrivent Action Grant to cover the cost of the food for the meals for the riders. And thank you to Annette who communicated back and forth with the leaders of their group leading up to their stay. Thank you all for helping us to show hospitality to these riders and help them with their mission to provide housing for people in the US and around the world.
- Lana for all her incredible planning and work to organize the meals for the young families, the Fuller Center bicycle group, and the celebration meal for the Dough for Daily Bread bicycle ride! Thank you for making it possible to have fellowship and nutritious food!

- the volunteers who delivered Meals on Wheels this month: Dale and Gloria, Larry, Don and Lana, and Dennis S. Thank you making sure our neighbors are fed and see a friendly face!
- Nancy Curtis for donating a table for our fellowship area (and to those who helped move it!)
- Jane for all her work in communicating with Elevate Montessori as they have been settling in their space at ALC. Thank you for helping us extend this hospitality to the staff, infants, and their families.
- everyone who has met with Pastor Melissa. Thanks for being willing to connect with her so she can get to know you better. Special thanks to all those who have shared treats with her!
- Tracy, Linda, and Randy Holland for the beautiful flowers in the window boxes. Thank you for helping our church to look beautiful! Thank you to those who helped remove and re-install the planter boxes. And thank you in advance to all who will water the flowers this summer.
- Jane and Dana for making sure the church grass stays green even though the heat.
- The Faithful Innovation team for their continued wrestling with the concepts and practices of the faithful innovation process and their willingness to help the congregation listen for how God might be calling this congregation to join in with what God is doing in our community.

Newsletters and Bulletins

If you know of anyone who would like a hardcopy of the newsletter, please let the office know at 406-222-0512 or alclivingston@gmail.com.

Bulletins are now available online! Weekly Announcements, weekly bulletin, monthly calendar, and current newsletter are available online at <https://www.alclivingston.org/copy-of-calendar>

Benevolence

May benevolence went to Farm to School in the amount of \$1530. June benevolence goes to Dough for Daily Bread.

July Benevolence will go to Livingston Food Resource Center to help pay for Summer Lunch in the Park meals. In collaboration with Farm to School of Park County and the Livingston School District, the Summer Lunch program provides nutritious lunch to all Livingston school-age children in need. Many of the children served receive free and reduced meals during the school year but face food insufficiency during the summer when the school meals are not available. The service is provided Monday through Friday, June through August, at multiple sites throughout Livingston. The LFRC manages Sacajawea Park, Gateway Museum and Green Acres Park, serving an average of 350 meals per week. \$200 will feed 2 children lunch for the entire summer. Mark "benevolence" on your contribution if you would like to assist in this endeavor.

Text **FOOD** to: 304-304 to find free summer meals near you!

LIVINGSTON MT

2024 SUMMER LUNCH IN THE PARKS

MONDAY-FRIDAY
JUNE 17 - AUG 9
(NO MEAL SERVICE JULY 1-5)

- Tasty, fresh-made, nutritious meals
- FREE FOR ALL KIDS! (18 and under)
- To-go options



FIND A CONVENIENT LOCATION BELOW:

MARS PARK: 11:30am-12pm
SACAJAWEA PARK: 11:30am-12:30pm
YELLOWSTONE GATEWAY MUSEUM: 11:30am-12:30pm
GREEN ACRES PARK: 11:30am-12:30pm
G STREET / MIKE WEBB PARK: 11:30am-12:30pm
RESERVOIR PARK: 12:30-1pm
PARK HIGH SCHOOL: BREAKFAST 8-9am | LUNCH: 11:30am-12:30pm

MONDAYS: "Mac & Cheese"	TUESDAYS: "Southwest"	WEDNESDAYS: "Asian Fusion"	THURSDAYS: "Italian"	FRIDAYS: "Chef's Choice"
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Brought to you by
Livingston Public Schools
in cooperation with:



SCAN CODE
FOR SITE
LOCATIONS

LIVINGSTON SCHOOL ERCHEN:
406.222.0209
LIVINGSTON FOOD RESOURCE
CENTRE: 406.222.5350
FARM TO SCHOOL
OF PARK COUNTY: 406.217.8086

Council Minutes Summary from June 9, 2024

- Direct deposits by members is not recommended at this time because of the difficulty of tracking the giver and the amount given.
- Pastor Melissa:
 - Has met with 14 members
 - The grief support group has concluded
 - Preached at the Baccalaureate service
 - Participated in the 2024 Festival of Homiletics
 - Acting co-chair of the MT Synod Hunger Team
 - Vacation August 2-10, continuing education August 11-18
- Young families' dinner was June 10
- Randy Mogen greeted the Fuller Center Bike group.
- Benevolence: June-Dough for Daily Bread
 - July-Livingston Food Resource Center Summer Lunch Program
 - August-Counterpoint
- Flashing for the ridge cap on the steeple is ready to be installed
- A mason looked at the chimney and made recommendations for stabilization.
- MSLA/ASPEN is unable to work in their rented space since Elevate Montessori moved in with infants.
- The audit committee commended Diane Mueller for her meticulous bookkeeping and organization. It was recommended that another member or two become familiar with books to provide backup assistance to Diane.
- ALC Paid Leave Policies for Rostered Ministers was adopted.
- President Mogen highlighted the workshops he attended at the Montana Synod Assembly.

Christikon Clips

July 2024



We are grateful for all the hard work that our Work Weekend crew accomplished! Great group! Check out the pictures on our Facebook page. Follow us: <https://www.facebook.com/Christikon>

Thank you to one and all!

It's not too late to register for camp this summer! Space remains in most youth sessions and in those for families and adults. You can register online at www.christikon.org or call us at the camp office for further information.

Special guest speakers become part of the Christikon life this summer during sessions for adults and families. Continuing Education Retreat (July 29-Aug 1) – we welcome our speakers Dr. Jason Mahn Kent Claussen Gubrud– Go to our website for topics. Mountain Weekend (Aug 2-4) – watch our website for speaker(s) and topics as they become available.. Come spend a few days of relaxation, learning, and faith growth with us. Check out topic details on the website. www.christikon.org

Remember to pray for the staff and campers as they travel to Christikon. It is the mission of Christikon to awaken and nurture faith in Christ— exploring God's creation and the adventure of life together.

**CHRISTIKON • 1108 24th Street West • Billings, MT 59102
406 656-1969 • secretary@christikon.org • www.christikon.org**

July Worship Teams

- July 7 Billie Roberts, Anna Smith, & Karla Prettitt
- July 14 Bille Kaye Harms, Gary & Annette Hart
- July 21 Verne & Leslie Beffert
- July 28 Dennis & Kitty Springer

August Worship Teams

- August 4 Don & Lana Sheen
- August 11 Curt & Dee Gosda
- August 18 Tena Versland, Dale & Gloria Guidi
- August 25 Diane Mueller, Ian & Jenna Flatgard



American Lutheran Church

Statement of Financial Position Summary For All Funds as of 05/31/2024

Assets

General Funds

American Bank Checking	\$	4,350.51
ELCA Money Market 286045	\$	130,554.43
American Bank Savings	\$	7,820.13
ELCA MIF 24 Mo CD	\$	51,194.79
ELCA MIF 36 Mo CD	\$	51,206.90
TOTAL General Funds	\$	245,126.76

Endowment Funds

ELCA Endowment Fund - E272580	\$	202,480.68
ELCA MIF Term Deposit	\$	20,760.88
Thrivent Mutual Funds Endowment Funds	\$	19,644.99
Mission Endowment MM Fund 9794	\$	10,420.60

TOTAL Endowment Funds **\$ 253,307.15**

Total Assets **\$ 498,433.91**

Liabilities

Payroll Taxes	\$	325.02
Building Upgrades from Endowment Funds	\$	1,184.60
Building Usage Deposit	\$	600.00
Christikon Scholarship	\$	1,000.00
ELCA Montana Synod	\$	2,034.70
Emergency Fund	\$	1,750.00
Estate Gifts	\$	-
Sunday School Memorials	\$	-
Unrestricted Memorials	\$	-
Thrivent Grant - Welca LWR Quilting	\$	493.44

Total Liabilities **\$ 7,387.76**

Total Net Assets **\$ 491,046.15**

Total Liabilities + Net Assets **\$ 498,433.91**



Happy 4th of July!



Church Offices are closed on July 4th!

American Lutheran Church

Revenue/Expense Report for YTD May 31, 2024

Account	May 2024	YTD 2024
Revenues		
General Contributions Revenue	\$6,992.00	\$42,850.00
Special Contributions Revenue (End Fund)	(\$1,948.80)	\$0.00
Bank Interest/CC Rewards	\$2,499.85	\$21,606.48
Thrivent Choice Auto Deposit	\$0.00	\$56.00
Building Usage	\$871.00	\$4,301.00
Sale of Assets	\$0.00	\$400.00
Total Revenues	\$8,414.05	\$69,213.48
Expenditures		
Building Maintenance Expense	\$150.31	\$1,078.46
Building Maintenance - Custodial	\$358.75	\$1,566.25
Charities Expense	\$200.00	\$1,000.00
Convention Expense	\$402.87	\$1,107.87
ELCA Benevolence Expense	\$699.20	\$4,285.00
Insurance	\$0.00	\$4,127.00
Misc. Expense Account	\$0.00	\$65.52
Non Budget Building Improvement	\$5,181.13	\$20,788.63
Office Expenses	\$481.19	\$1,601.62
Outreach	\$0.00	\$416.40
Pastors Reimbursable Expenses	\$58.75	\$553.72
Pastors Package	\$5,332.78	\$22,756.42
Supply Pastor	\$230.61	\$1,872.44
Staff Taxes/Insurance	\$78.07	\$791.65
Staff Salaries	\$1,120.50	\$7,161.91
Telephone/Internet Expense	\$134.98	\$627.89
Utilities	\$713.02	\$4,018.83
Worship/Education Expenses	\$832.86	\$1,441.57
Total Expenditures	\$15,975.02	\$75,261.18
Total Revenues	\$8,414.05	\$69,213.48
Total Expenditures	\$15,975.02	\$75,261.18
Net Revenues	(\$7,560.97)	(\$6,047.70)

LCM Campus Ministry
www.lcmbobcats.org

