



ALC

June 2025

Newsletter



Transformations

Dear Children of God at ALC,

From the beginning of April through the middle of May, the road up Hyalite Canyon to the Hyalite Reservoir and surrounding area is closed to cars. This provides a phenomenal biking, walking, and running situation for recreation during the spring thaw. This spring, my schedule and the weather cooperated with me to bike up the road quite a few times!

With 1,500 feet of elevation gain, the climb up isn't at all fast which gives me time to notice and reflect on my surroundings.

Each time I pedaled up, I noticed there was less and less snow. I breathed in deeply the smell of pine trees as they thawed. And I saw birds and squirrels enjoying a reprieve from winter.



The final time I went up, I witnessed something new. When I got up there, it took me a moment to get my bearings after the 8-mile climb, but for a second, I literally couldn't believe my eyes. The ice on the reservoir was completely

gone. When I had been up there just three days before, the reservoir was almost completely covered in ice. It had transformed so fast!

At first, I was frustrated that the ice had so quickly changed into water. There are so many things in this world that need to be transformed but are so slow and resistant to that transformation. But as I thought about it more, the ice didn't really just disappear in three days. For weeks the ice has been slowly melting and thinning. It took months for the ice to form and months for it to

melt. From the surface though, it was hard to tell. Although three days ago the surface was mostly covered in ice, it was a thin ice, slowly letting go of its frozen form. And with some very warm temperatures in the previous days, it made the final shift from ice to water.

What appeared to be a fast transformation really was a slow and deliberate transformation. Regardless of the speed, the transformations happened.

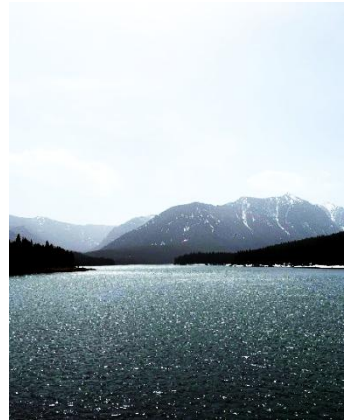
As I continued to reflect on this transformation, I sat on a large boulder eating some lunch before my ride back down. The part of this story about it taking three days to go from ice to water, drew my mind to the transformation Jesus made from death to life in three days. After three days, Jesus' closest followers witnessed this ultimate transformation. This new thing that Jesus did in rising from the dead is what makes it possible for us and all of Creation to transform.

In this Easter season, we continue to remember and celebrate that the Kingdom of God is already among us. Jesus came among us and began the work of bringing about a new kingdom; a kingdom that is unlike the kingdoms of this world. Before Jesus ascended to be with his Father, he entrusted his followers (that includes us!) with the work of continuing to bring about this new kingdom, to continue transforming the world.

So let us trust in the slow work of transformation. It is already happening in our congregation and in our community! Let us hold on to Jesus' promises that he will continue to work through the Body of Christ (you and me and ALL followers of Jesus) to bring transformation, restoration, and newness to each of us, our congregation, our community, and all the world!

Peace,

Pastor Melissa





Electronic Giving

Whether you choose to give online or in person, your support is vital to the continued ministry of our church community. We are so grateful for your generosity and commitment to our shared mission. Thank you for your continued support of ALC!

Donation envelopes are also available in the church hallway.



June Birthdays

5 Eric Bueling

17 Barb Vietz

20 Miles Bueling

Housekeeping Notes

Keep Randy in your prayers while he is on leave; Leslie is administering his duties. Montana Synod Assembly will be meeting in Great Falls on May 30 and 31; pray for their discernment. Pastor Melissa will be in Princeton June 7-13 for continuing education; contact Dale with any pastoral needs.

Thoughts on Changes

To my Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Now that I have had time to adjust to the fact I am interim president of the council, I wanted to take this time to connect with all of you. I want to assure you that the business of the council, council committees and the special committees that have been formed are still moving forward and working on the needs, projects and responsibilities of American Lutheran. The council as well as these committees are working diligently to accomplish the goals that have been developing in the last year. In June, you will begin to notice more work being done outside of our church building, especially in the parking lot. Other changes and updates

to the building are still in the planning stages, but soon you may see more of these needed changes taking place. We will continue to seek feedback from the congregation, and you will continue to be informed of the progress made.

There are many ways you can become involved in our community outreach, Loaves and Fishes, Meals on Wheels, Dough For Daily Bread, Treats for the Montessori Parents/Teachers, and our local Benevolence. Check out the bulletin board on the wall in the back of the sanctuary and sign up where you might be called to help.

We have a unique opportunity to reach out and help one of our neighboring congregations here in Livingston. Pastor Melissa with the help of the building usage committee has been in talks with Living Hope Church to see if American Lutheran might be a temporary home for them while they are constructing a new church building. The building usage committee has been working out the details of the proposed terms of Living Hope possibly using space at ALC. It was great to see so many of you at the information and question/answer discussion on May 11th after church. Updated information was provided in weekly messages from Pastor Melissa. On June 1st the congregation will vote as to whether or not we as a church body will enter into this agreement. I ask that all members of ALC prayerfully consider this proposal and be open to where God might be leading us.

I would like to thank the council members for so graciously stepping in to fill the gaps that I need help with or may not be comfortable in taking on without help. You have been a blessing. I assure you I will do my best to see that the needs of ALC are met and taken care of. The support that I have received has been appreciated.

I encourage all members of ALC to contact me, or any member of the council if you have concerns, questions or issues of any kind. We are here to listen and try and find solutions together with you.

God's Blessings,

Leslie Beffert

Information about the Possibility of Living Hope Church Using Space at ALC

Living Hope staff and members have approached this potential usage of space at ALC with the perspective that they will be guests in the ALC church building. Their hope and goal are to be a blessing to our community of faith and to leave the ALC building better than they found it.

Considerations that would be part of an agreement if we move forward with Living Hope Church using space at ALC:

- Living Hope will pay \$2500 per month for use of space at ALC. Living Hope will pay an additional \$500 for use of sanctuary and fellowship hall for funerals. Compensation for additional uses will be discussed as need arises. Living Hope will pay a security deposit of \$2500 at the beginning of their rental agreement.
- Living Hope will take care of the cost and labor of renovating the office spaces they will be using. Living Hope will first request approval from ALC for any changes made to ALC property. The renovations will remain ALC property after Living Hope moves out.
- Living Hope will have their custodian help with additional cleaning needs and snow removal at ALC. We will work out a schedule between Living Hope's custodian and ALC's custodian and snow removal volunteers. Living Hope will continue to assume the cost for this custodial (\$945 per month).
- Living Hope will have their own internet and landline phone contract and will pay for these services.
- We will be intentional about good communication between both churches. There will be weekly meetings initially to work through potential conflicts and point people for each church who will communicate with the other church.
- There will be a 6-month term for the agreement just in case it doesn't work out for whatever reason. We can renegotiate any terms at renewal times.
- Access to parking close to the ALC building will be reserved for participants in ALC activities during agreed days/times when

ALC has activities. Living Hope and ALC will send a joint mailing to residents surrounding the church to advise them of increased vehicles parking around the church and provide a method of contact to address any parking issues.

- Living Hope will use all their own kitchen supplies and will have use of one of the refrigerators.
- Living Hope staff and participants will take care to maintain a safe environment for other organizations using space at ALC and will respect space used by other organizations (especially Elevate Montessori).
- Living Hope will leave all spaces neat and in good order. Living Hope will make sure the building is secure after all activities and lights are off, etc. They will limit the number of people who have a key or the code to the back door.
- ALC reserves the right to change the regularly assigned rooms or spaces as need arises. When either church has a special event, the other church will be flexible about space scheduling. ALC events will have priority for scheduling.
- Living Hope will hold their own insurance with ALC named as additional insured.
- The agreement between the two churches would release ALC of any liability for anything that may happen at Living Hope events. Living Hope will pay for any damage their participants cause to ALC property.

Timeframe:

- Dependent on several of factors.
- Living Hope will put their buildings on the market in late June or early July 2025.
- There is a possibility that the buyer could allow Living Hope to lease back space for some time
- The earliest Living Hope might start using space at ALC would be August or whenever their buildings are sold
- They plan to begin building their new building in the Spring of 2026 (or later if their buildings haven't sold by then)
- They estimate it will take 18-24 months to build their new church home

- They are hoping their new building will be complete by Easter of 2028

What will the building usage by Living Hope look like?

- Sunday mornings
 - Worship service in sanctuary at 10:45
 - ALC would move fellowship and adult education time down to the fellowship hall
 - Living Hope has adult Sunday School before their worship service
 - Children Sunday School for Living Hope during their worship time in 3 different classrooms
- Offices to be used by Living Hope staff
 - Three offices: small room off the choir loft, a classroom upstairs, and “piano room” on lower level of classrooms
- Storage space for Living Hope
 - Worship supply storage in about half of storage room in sanctuary by elevator
 - Kitchen storage in little closet in fellowship hall next to elevator
 - Office storage in “piano room” classroom on lower level
- Activities during the week: children/youth ministries, fellowship meetings, prayer team, grief group, bible studies, and recovery ministry
 - Fellowship Hall: 12.5 hours over 4 different days
 - Back of sanctuary: 3 hours over three days
 - Sanctuary for 2 hours over two days
 - Conference/Council room: 1 hour one evening

Please contact Pastor Melissa or one of the members of the building usage committee (Leslie, Billie, Jane, Karla) for clarification or with any concerns or questions.



June 1, after worship, we will have a congregational meeting to discuss and decide on the building usage proposal of sharing space with Living Hope. The vote will be by paper ballot.

Thoughts from Nancy

Dear friends in Christ,

As one of the newest members of your council, I want to lend a few thoughts with you about sharing our building with Living Hope Church.

When my nephew was just learning to talk, he was SO enthused about going to church on Sundays. We would ask him, "Where are you going today, Sam?" and he would answer excitedly, "I'm going to GOD'S HOUSE!!"

Every Sunday, when we walk through the doors of American Lutheran Church we too are entering "God's House." American Lutheran is a building where we as a congregation have experienced some of the most emotional, significant and memorable events of our lives. We've been part of and witnessed baptisms, weddings and funerals. Our own personal histories are very much tied to what has happened over the years in this building. With some of the happiest and saddest memories of our past, we feel a deep emotional attachment to this building. Yet, we are merely stewards of this building. This building is God's House.

I feel the Holy Spirit is speaking to us as a congregation, as we consider the possibility of sharing our space with the people of Living Hope Church. How would God want us to best be stewards of His house?

Two of our guiding principles state that-

- ***We reach out and welcome all people with unconditional love.***
 - Shouldn't we welcome the people of Living Hope with unconditional love?
- ***We live with a generous spirit in our community and world.***
 - Shouldn't we be generous to others in our community and share our space?

Yet, change is difficult. We are comfortable with things the way they are, and sharing is never easy either! If we move forward and share our space with Living Hope will there be glitches along the way? Possibly - probably.

But we know that God is always with us. And what unexpected blessings may be ahead for all of us! I would encourage you to open your hearts, "to seek God's will through prayer" (another of our guiding principles) and to welcome the people of Living Hope Church to this place we love and call our church home, American Lutheran.

Blessings to you,

Nancy Curtis

Lasting Effects of Covid

In recent weeks we came across an article, actually an essay in the Rural Montanan, referencing the effect of the corona virus pandemic on our nation. The article was written by a student at Corvallis High School, and the student Rosalyn Schairer, did a masterful job of showing the impacts of the pandemic especially on the youth of the world. The pandemic has altered education, social skills, mental health, population, the economy, and racial ideals. Across the board, standard deviations were lower in math and reading. This shows how online schooling was not as proficient compared to "in person" schooling. Without attending school, participating in sports or other extracurricular events, social interactions were non-existent. Masks have impacted young children's, particularly preschoolers, ability to "read" emotions and develop social skills.

Adolescents assessed after the pandemic shutdowns were reported to have more symptoms of anxiety and depression. Also an example of a lack of social skills is the reported increase in bullying. The shocking revelation that is most frightening are the examples of neuroanatomical features more typical of older people's brains. In 2020 deaths for the total U.S. population increased by 19 percent.

Families were affected by the economic changes and businesses experienced major problems in the availability of workers.

The covid pandemic was the most important event that happened during this time. It changed lives due to the effects on the public as a whole. Even our Church worship changed as a

result of covid. Thank you, Lord, for our health and for protecting us.

With God's healing power,

Dale and Gloria Guidi

We continue to serve the evening meal at Loaves & Fishes on the third Monday of each month (that's **June 16th** this month). 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.



Thank you to our dedicated volunteers, Lana, Cookie, Jane and Dana who fed 48 hungry community members in May.

Council Minutes, May 4

Financials: Lana will be asking for volunteers to help with counting the offering on Sundays. April Financial Reports were reviewed and approved.

Pastor's Report: Elevate Montessori requested an Emergency Evacuation plan; these were prepared and given to Elevate. A gift card was purchased for John West for his work on snow removal this winter. A joint will have been held on May 6 with Hope Lutheran. Pastor attended the Chico conference in April that focused on Congregation Music. A breakfast was held for women in ministry that was part of a grant. The Hunger Team will continue fundraising this summer with Livingston's Ride coinciding with a congregation picnic on July 12. Pastor will be at a conference June 7-13.

Old Business

Benevolence: May, ASPEN; June, Livingston Summer Lunch Program.

Building & Grounds: Continued work around the church and parking lot will begin in June. *The Dream Team* asked Base Camp to walk through the building. The one major concern was the leaning

of the interior walls in the sanctuary. The review and report were free of charge.

Building Usage: A discussion was held regarding sharing facilities with Living Hope for 2+ years while their new church is being built. A congregation discussion will have been held May 11 with a final vote on June 1.

The Dream Team will meet with HRDC.

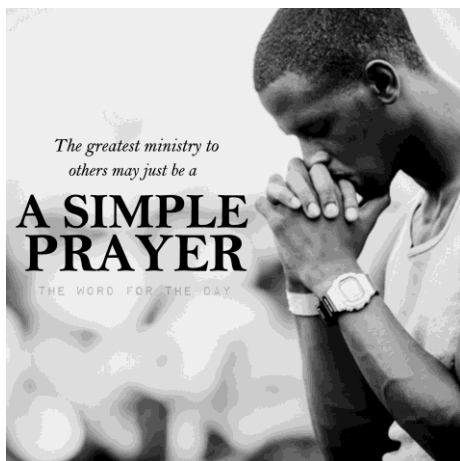
Child Protection Policy: The committee had an initial meeting to review and make changes to a sample policy. They will be meeting again.

New Business

ALC Member Roll: was updated and passed.

Montana Synod: Dennis Springer and Lana Sheen will be our voting delegates.

Next meeting: Monday June 16 at 6:30pm.



Remember In Prayer

Randy and Linda Holland

Mike and Vicky Ryles

Holly Happe

Carole Fagerli

Anita Bueling

Lynnette Evanson

Randy Mogen

Bea Huber

Rick Dyer

Women of the **ELCA** 



Enjoy your summer. Join us in the fall when we start meeting again.

Benevolence

April benevolence of \$1545 went to Lutheran Family Service in Billings. There is still time to donate to ASPEN for May benevolence.

June benevolence will go to Livingston Food Resource Center 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, and Green Acres Park, serving an average of 350 meals per week.

LIVINGSTON MT

2025 SUMMER LUNCH IN THE PARKS

Tasty, fresh-made, nutritious meals!
Free for all kids! (18 and under) | Adults: \$5.25



Monday-Friday
June 15-August 8
11:30am-12:30pm
(No meal service June 30-July 4)

4 CONVENIENT LOCATIONS:

- Mars Park
- Sacajawea Park
- Green Acres Park
- G Sreet/Mike Webb Park

Pasta Monday | Southwest Tuesday | Asian Wednesday | Italian Thursday | Chef's Choice Friday

Brought to you by Livingston Public Schools in cooperation with:



alclivingston@gmail.com).

Shout out to...

- Thank you for helping to offer hospitality to our guests as we continue to learn from each other and build relationships with our siblings in Christ from Bozeman

so that we can ensure we are protecting children who participate in ALC ministries, and we can equip our volunteers to do this work.

- Jenna for all her help with the Coffee and Play sessions. Thanks for your vision and help to make this possible to welcome and show hospitality to young families in our community! This ministry has already bore fruit in making our youngsters feel welcome during church services.

Christikon Clips

June, 2025

Information for our Congregations

We kick off the season with Staff Training on June 1st, followed quickly by our first camper session for Adults with Developmentally Disabilities.

Family Adult Camps: Our speaker will be **Dr. Dave Ellingson** for the **Continuing Ed.**

Retreat (July 27 – August 2). Dr Ellingson topic will be “Go Outside and Play”. He is also known as the “Paddle Pilgrim”. See more details about him on our website. www.christikon.org

Mountain Weekend (August 2-4) speaker TBD. Register for this fun and relaxing weekend on our website. www.christikon.org

New this year: We offer a Contemplative Artists Retreat July 7-10 open to adults 18+. Join **John Hermanson**, Christikon’s 2025 Artist-in-Residence, and **Maren Haynes Marchesini**, Director of Worship and Music at Hope Lutheran in Bozeman, for a restful artist retreat. See more details about Johnny and Maren and register on our website www.christikon.org

Campers! There is still room in our on-site programs and limited trails sessions openings. Register now. Go to <https://christikon.org/registration-individual-information/>

Remember to pray for your congregation’s ministry through Christikon this summer, for the summer staff who begin their journey soon, and for all who join in the Christikon life.

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



LCM Campus Ministry



weLCoMe to Campus Ministry

Rooted in God's grace, LCM provides a space for students to explore faith, engage in service, and encounter Christ's dynamic presence in community. www.lcmbobcats.org

Worship Teams

June 1	John & Diana West
June 8	Dennis & Billie Kay Harms
June 15	Billie Roberts, Anna Smith, Karla Pettit
June 22	Gary & Annette Hart, Myrna Dehn
June 29	Verne & Leslie Beffert
July 6	Dennis & Kitty Springer
July 13	Don & Lana Sheen
July 20	Curt & Dee Gosda
July 27	Tena Versland, Dale & Gloria Guidi



A Congregation Picnic is planned in conjunction with the Dough For Daily Bread fundraiser that is here in Livingston on July 12. Join us for the fundraiser and the picnic or both!

Picnic, Bike Rides, and Walks!

Save the date for a bike ride, walk, and picnic on Saturday, **July 12th**. Walkers can walk any distance they are able around Sacajawea Park. Bikers will have the option to ride from Chico to Sacajawea Park (25 miles), from Sacajawea Park to Carter's Bridge and back (10 miles), or just from Carter's Bridge to Sacajawea Park (5 miles).

Walkers, bikers, and picnic-goers will all come together for a picnic lunch and celebration. This will be an opportunity for us to gather together for fellowship with other area churches as well as fundraise for the Montana Synod Hunger Fund. All around the Montana Synod, more and more people are experiencing

DOUGH FOR DAILY BREAD

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DOUGH FOR DAILY BREAD

JOIN US FOR A FUNDRAISER

BIKE, RUN, AND WALK IN

LIVINGSTON

SATURDAY, JULY 12

TO HELP END HUNGER IN COMMUNITIES ACROSS MONTANA

Register online today:

For more information: montanasynodhungers@gmail.com

hunger. Congregations are responding to the hunger needs in their communities in a variety of ways from food pantries to community meals to community gardens. With ever increasing demand, the Montana Synod Hunger Fund provides grants to congregations working locally to end hunger. Watch for more details and registration information coming soon.

To guarantee you receive a t-shirt on the day of the event, register no later than June 28!

