

Congregation to District and Synod Support Contributions as of 31 December 2010:

? = No 2009 Congregational Statistical Report on File at Synod or District Office

Circuit	City	Congregation	# Confirmed Mbrs.	2010 Intention	Remitted December 2010	Remitted for Year 2010
Southern #1	Belfry	St. John	?	\$2,200.00	184.00	2,208.00
	Billings	Christ the King	127	\$3,000.00	0.00	3,000.00
	Billings	Hope	79		0.00	1,950.00
	Billings	Mt. Olive	523	\$36,000.00	2,988.19	39,925.41
	Billings	Our Savior	?	\$10,140.00	845.00	10,140.00
	Billings	Trinity	942	10%	4,974.16	67,776.63
	Bridger	St. Paul	63	\$1,200.00	325.00	1,380.00
	Crow Agency	Crow Ministry	29		217.60	1,488.06
	Hardin	Redeemer	117		0.00	600.00
	Hardwood	Trinity	29	\$300.00	0.00	310.00
	Lame Deer	Circle of Life	?		0.00	0.00
	Laurel	St. John	423	\$22,000.00	4,514.44	25,834.63
	Park City	St. Paul	?	\$1,000.00	500.00	1,000.00
	Roundup	St. Paul	10		0.00	200.00
	Worden	Our Redeemer	45		0.00	1,500.00
Total			2387		14,548.39	156,413.73
Western #2	Condon	Faith	?		175.13	2410.62
	Hamilton	Grace	263	\$21,600.00	2,132.13	21,658.38
	Missoula	First	638	\$56,000.00	10,344.78	57,665.76
	Missoula	Messiah	?	\$10,000.00	910.73	11,441.49
	Salmon, ID	Shepherd/Valley	?	10%	1,467.22	10,004.15
	Seeley Lake	Holy Cross	?		349.87	5,058.78
	Stevensville	Our Savior	?	\$7,500.00	1,875.00	9,375.00
	Superior	Trinity	77	15% or \$7,000.00	721.95	7314.47
Total			978		17,976.81	124,928.65
Eastern #3	Angela	Trinity	11		0.00	168.00
	Colstrip	Mt. Calvary	152	5% or \$3,444.00	383.45	3,365.01
	Farview	St. John	?	\$2,000.00	0.00	2,000.00
	Fallon	Grace	?		785.00	1,000.00
	Forsyth	Concordia	170	6% or \$4,500.00	900.00	3,940.00
	Glasgow	Faith	?		0.00	888.89
	Glendive	Our Savior	?	\$28,500.00	4,750.00	28,530.00
	Hytham	Trinity	54	6%	0.00	728.00
	Miles City	Trinity	317	6% or \$10,000.00	2,066.20	10,099.23
	Plentywood	Trinity	55		250.00	3,000.00
	Sidney	Trinity	?	\$6,000.00	1,090.00	6,595.00
	Williston, ND	Concordia	213	4% or \$5,000.00	963.31	6,372.48
	Wolf Point	Trinity	?		0.00	300.00
Total			972		11,187.96	66,986.61

Visit our website to see the current budget, and expense and income reports.



January 2011

INTO THE WORLD

Montana district—LCMS
30 Broadwater Avenue
Billings, MT 59101

Two year old squeals of delight drew my attention to a common sight in the Denver airport terminal. Three sparrows were interested enough in a discarded hot dog bun that they were able, temporarily, to ignore the happy intruder. As predators go he was relatively toothless. So they pecked another mouthful and then skittered away, just far enough to cause him to lose attention, while maintaining their own.

I see them often, these tiny planes inside the airport. At first, I somewhat envied their lives. They do not have to worry about heat or cold, wind, rain or snow. They have plenty of food. (I do not know if sparrows can develop heart conditions from crumbs of airport fast-food.) There are virtually no predators, two-year-old tousle-haired tykes notwithstanding. With thousands of people dressed in who-knows-what coursing through the airport every day, there is no end of entertainment. What an idyllic life.

It didn't take me long to reconsider. What must it be like to live in a world where you can fly from one end to the other in five minutes? How does an artificial diet affect their lives? Does airport air ever make them sick? What happens if, by chance, a real predator threatens them? Do they ever long to be free? Do they miss the rest of the birds?

I suspect that each one of us builds our own little terminal from time to time. We like the idea of getting away from the world, of creating a safe place. We may use books, or food, or sports, or work, or the internet, or money, or the "Church" to build the walls. It feels safe to avoid dealing with the annoyances of this world. The problem is that most of those

annoyances come in the form of people. The world is alright. It's the people that bother us. So we build terminals of our own. In my terminal I'm right and everyone dresses the way they should.

But terminals are not good places to live. They are not the life God intended. They are the end of life. They prevent us from sharing the love of God in Christ Jesus with the rest of the world. On the night before Jesus death, as He was seeking to prepare them for His departure, Jesus prayed about His disciples and the world. Here is some of what He said:

And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you...Now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. (John 17:11-18)

Jesus came to free us from our self-imposed terminals. By His holy life, His death and resurrection He has given us the joy of real life. Annoyances linger since, chances are, someone is going to hate us because we bear his name. Yet the life He has created for us is in this world. And He promises to love and protect us as He sends us out, with His name, into the world.

Fire in St. John Lutheran Church, Belfry

A fire in St. Johns in Belfry was discovered on Dec. 16, two days after the Advent service where the fire likely originated. How it went unnoticed is nearly as inexplicable as how it extinguished itself - three separate people went upstairs again following service and noticed nothing amiss. The fire had begun in the advent wreath, burned up the wall and along some pews, until it somehow burned out, taking nothing more than a pew or two with it.

The intense heat melted the ceiling fans, blistered the paint on the pews, and burnt one hymnal, though not the one next to it. All the windows were cracked or broken, and the theories run that either the breaking of the window closest to the fire helped in extinguishing it. And while the organ also had blistered, the sheet music sitting on it was fine, as was the undamaged alter cloths touching the melted flags.

While contractors replace the ceiling tiles and sand down and refinish the smoke-damaged pews, the St. John's congregation is meeting in the senior citizen center until repairs are completed in February. And while members at St. John's do not downplay the role of the church building itself, it's afforded them the opportunity to see how God works through the consequences of a sinful world.

The president of the congregation, Gordon Aisenbrey, could only note the many reasons for the Church to have burned down rather than out. This, he feels, can only work to make the church stronger. "The church may not be worth a lot of money," he said, "but there's a lot of strength."



"The Church," Pastor Goetz added, "is a group of people who confess the Lord Jesus Christ. The people who gather around the Word and Sacraments."

Should repairs stay on track, they will be done by the middle of February. However, two organist books were ruined: TLH liturgy for the organist, and a

spiral-bound organist edition of TLH. If anyone in the district should have any unused copies, please notify Pastor Goetz at 406-662-3776, or congregation president Gordon Aisenbrey at 406-664-3117.

The Belfry fire could have been much worse than it was, and even now members can only marvel at how the fire extinguished itself. When asked how he felt the church was handling the situation, Aisenbrey only smiled:

"If you ever want to have a witness, and see God's hand at work, there it is."

SYNOCDICAL UPDATES

Harrison sends appeal about 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell'



LCMS President Rev. Matthew C. Harrison sent the following e-mail message to LCMS pastors and commissioned ministers Dec. 17 in response to the U.S. Senate's pending vote on the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy:

"In a surprising turn of events in the waning days of the current Congress, the effort to repeal the U.S. military's 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' policy has gained new momentum with the announcement today of support from Republican senators Scott Brown (Mass.), Lisa Murkowski (Alaska), and Olympia Snowe (Maine). The repeal may be voted on in the Senate as early as tomorrow [Dec. 18]. For a number of reasons, we encourage you to let your elected leaders know that The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod has a clear biblical position on this important issue.

"In terms of our spirituality, we are all alike sinners (Rom. 3:9ff.) in need of repentance and forgiveness. For 2,000 years the church has welcomed sinners, but refused to affirm sin. The saving grace of Jesus Christ and His Gospel are for all people (2 Cor. 5:19), and the only thing that separates us from this forgiveness is a lack of repentance or sorrow over our sin. We believe the repeal of the 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' policy will sorely inhibit our military chaplains' ability to call all sinners to repentance.

"If the government normalizes homosexual behavior in our military branches -- a behavior that we believe God's Word identifies as intrinsically sinful (Rom. 1:26ff) -- the implications are profound. Military chaplains striving to carry out their responsibilities for preaching, counseling and consoling will find themselves under the strain of having to question whether to obey God or men (Acts 5:29).

"Lastly, we express our concern as citizens that a move by the government to essentially affirm homosexual behavior within the armed forces will endanger the morale or esprit de corps -- the unit cohesion and the primary mission of the military, namely, to prosecute and win the war -- of the men and women who serve and willingly place themselves in harm's way on our behalf.

"Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, we urge you to share this message today with your colleagues, congregational members and any others whom you believe would benefit from it and be moved to contact their government representatives.

"You may find the contacts for your senators and representatives here: <http://www.senate.gov/> and <http://www.house.gov/>.

"For more information on this issue, see *The Lutheran Study Bible*, Page 1911, on Romans 1."

The e-mail is signed by Harrison and Dr. Mark J. Schreiber, CAPT, CHC, USN, (Ret.), director of Ministry to the Armed Forces with LCMS World Mission.

DISTRICT BUSINESS



Editor's Corner

As you may have noticed, the Reflections format has changed drastically from the newsprint. As the print costs have escalated, so has the subscription costs, and as a result we have many congregations that receive very few copies and some congregations that receive none. Beginning with this January issue we will be absorbing the costs into the District budget. Each congregation will be sent a certain number, based on their average attendance. In order to help the District absorb the cost, it will be up to each congregation to print or copy more as needed.

Our recommendation, in order to make the Reflections a more effective communication tool, is to place the Reflections either in the bulletins or in the members' boxes. We also intend to put the Reflections on the Website and to send each congregation an email copy. You might consider forwarding the Reflections to those who are on your church email list and interested in receiving it this way. We would like to get District news into more hands.

In other news, while the space has gone down, the amount of material I've been receiving has gone up. This means that, should you not see an article you sent in to the Reflections, fear not (for I bring you good tidings, etc.). Next month's issue will be its new home—I have my own articles I've been putting off until room allows ("*Pastor Arlo Pullman Admits to Stealing Hobson Church!*"), a follow up to the search for the missing Hobson church, for one—and I have to admit now, for the record, that he didn't really, though parts of the Hobson church are in his family's cabin in the Little Belt Mountains; but more on that in another issue) and every piece of material I receive I appreciate.

So tune in next time! More on the translated history of Lewistown, an article about Christian radio for Lutherans, recap from the District Board of Directors, and further updates on the Thompson Falls missions, to name a few articles in the pending pile.

God always blesses in abundance!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JANUARY

- 16 Official Visit, Trinity Billings
- 23 Life Sunday
4:30pm Rev. Forke Installation
- 25-27 Quad Circuit, Peace Great Falls

FEBRUARY

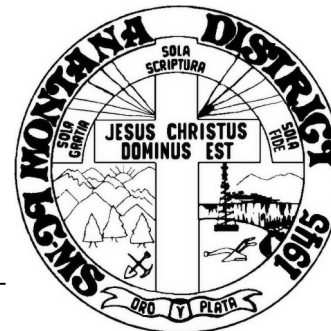
- 21-24 Council of Presidents, St. Louis
- 23-25 Business Management Conf.

Threads of Gold

Department of History and Archives

Rev. J.C. Menagh, Archivist

A continuation of the translation of the Lewistown Archives



My first Christmas sermon I held in Lewistown on Christmas day at three o'clock in the afternoon before 18 listeners. The Christmas collection brought \$5.30. Two days after that I had my first wedding, namely Mr. Emil Marx and Ms. Myrtle Patterson, which brought me \$10.00. My first New Year's Day worship service I held likewise in Lewistown on 1 January at three o'clock in the afternoon. I preached in English language and had 35 listeners in the worship service. The New Year's Day collection brought \$6.70.

In 22 January, 1912 at two o'clock in the afternoon I held my first German and English worship service in the house of Mr. Herman Weinhold, almost 11 miles north of Roundup. There were 18 adults altogether in the collection brought \$2.50. On the following Sunday, 28 January I had my first baptism in Montana in Harlowton. I baptized the child of Mr. and Mrs. Rodney J Anderson who was given the name Mona Lenora. The worship service was visited by 27 adults and five children. This was a good rise in attendance.

On 18 February 1912 I held my first communion service in my parish in Lavina. There were 10 communicants.

On my return to Lewistown I found out, that I must begin looking for another room in which to live, not that I had not paid my rent, but rather that the lady of the house, where I lived, had swept everything clean and had rented out all the rooms. I found another room with a Mrs. John Kinzel, where I lived for 2 1/2 years.

In the month of March of that year I found it yet another preaching station north of Roundup. On 15 March I preached in the English language at the Lake Mason 3

school house before 30 listeners. The collection brought two dollars.

At the end of March, on the 27th at three o'clock in the afternoon I held the first German worship service in the Methodist Church in Hobson. People from Dwight, Illinois had purchased land here and wished to donate. In this worship service there were 12 listeners altogether. The collection brought three dollars.

From here I traveled over to Great Falls, where on Thursday evening I met Pastor Wachsmuth and had lingered with him for several days, traveling to Helena where on Palm Sunday in the Helena German Lutheran church I preached in German in the morning and in English in the evening. The morning worship service I will never forget, for shortly before the sermon Mr. P Becker suddenly died in the church. I remained until Wednesday and buried Mr. P Becker on Tuesday afternoon. This was my first death in Montana.

On the 17th and 18th of April 1912 I visited the first English conference in Montana, which was being held in Livingston.

Shortly after this Pastor Martin Mertz died in Helena and I traveled there for the funeral. Pastor Rauh, O Hendrickson and I were pallbearers.

On 10 May I preached again in Helena, and after the morning worship service I received my first call to the Helena congregation. On 6 June I received the second call from the Helena congregation, but I had to return it.

Continued Next Issue

Thompson Falls and Clark Fork Missions



Num. 6:27 "So shall they put my name upon the people of Israel, and I will bless them."

That was how God told Moses to tell Aaron to bless the people. From that we get the Aaronic Benediction which we hear at the end of most worship services. However, we have other ways of placing God's name on His people, and bringing His blessings to them. One such occasion is a baptism in which we place the name of the Triune God upon a baby, child, or adult.

This was one of the great highlights of the Clark Fork Lutheran Mission, meeting at Thompson Falls on Sunday, Dec. 5. Elisabeth (Norwegian spelling) Marie Weedeman became a child of God through Holy Baptism, thus becoming the first "official member" of the church to be formed there in the near future. This was our first "official act" recorded in the church's Record Book, and there was great excitement in the group of the forty six gathered for worship that morning.

To the right: Your Clark Fork Valley Lutheran Mission participated in the Thompson Falls annual Christmas parade this year for the first time. Dr. Lundgren volunteered his brand new Kubota as the frame for the float pictured above, decorated to look like a hunting blind, with the question: "Are you hunting for a church?" Eleven people worked on the float and walked the parade route handing out brochures and oranges. The Holy Spirit works. There were two new people visiting the church the next Sunday.



By birth she is a Weedeman. By the gift of Holy Baptism she is, in Christ, Elisabeth Marie, washed by the blood of the Lamb and the waters of Holy Baptism, His for time and eternity.

The mission continues to reach into the valley with invitations to Word and Sacrament ministry. What a great joy it is to see new faces, and, recently, families with children to be lead by our Sunday School teacher.

In your name, and in the name of Jesus, the mission serves the entire Clark Fork Valley from Paradise, through Plains, Thompson Falls, Trout Creek, Noxon, and beyond. It's a long, narrow parish. We continue to ask for your prayers.

If ever you are visiting in the valley, look us up, worship with us on Sunday, and have lunch/fellowship with us.

If you are in the area and need to be in touch, Rev. Nicolaus can be reached at 827-8223.



December 19, 2010 was a busy day at Zion in Chinook. Baptized that morning was Ian Ernest Roseleip.
Pictured: Brother Brennen, Mother Alisha, Pastor Mark Schultz, Father Derek Holding Ian, Sister Reagan, Great Grandmother Dorothy Roseleip.

Later that evening the Sunday school (15 members strong) performed their Christmas Program. Pictured are: Amelia Miller, Kadia Miller, Kirsten Freide, Jamie Roth, Chase Moxley (Back)
Second Row: Yelena Miller, Sasha Gallus, Brydon Freide, Britten Elliot, Martin Nuesbaum, Benton Elliott.
Front Row: Brockton Elliott, Amanda Mord, Jenny Mord, Laurie Mord.

