



PO Box 1259, Livingston  
MT 406-222-0512

# ALC November 2021 Newsletter

## [A Message from Pastor Melissa...](#)

Dear beloved children of God at ALC,

Gratitude is a word that gets thrown around a lot, especially in November as Thanksgiving approaches. According to Morgan Harper Nichols, gratitude is “the quality of being thankful in mindful, intentional ways, even when it seems that nothing has changed...it is the readiness to perceive how beautiful this life can be, even in uncertainty.” I really appreciate the way this definition brings out the complexity of gratitude.

This past month as I’ve been settling in and starting to get to know the community and ALC, I have been overwhelmed by so many moments of gratitude. It seems like everything has changed in my life and maybe that has made me more open to perceive the beauty all around me. The physical beauty of the mountains that restores my soul and brings me such peace. The beauty of everything you all have done to help welcome me (from unloading my moving trailer to helping me get acquainted with the best shops and restaurants in town). The beauty of Spirit-filled conversations we have had. The beauty of voices lifting up in song as we gather together for worship. The beauty of the ways you care for one another and this church. Even in the uncertainty of everything that is ahead of us on this journey together, I am ready to seek out the beauty, the beauty of what already exists and the beauty of all the possibilities ahead of us.

So many of the Psalms are filled with praise and gratitude for all that God has done and all that God is. Yet, there is one Psalm that does not turn to praise. Psalm 88 reminds me that there are some days (or weeks or months or years) when it is incredibly difficult to have gratitude. There is this expectation in society that we should always be thankful. Even or especially when it feels like life is falling apart, others expect you to find that silver lining and focus on that. Striving to be thankful isn’t a bad thing but there are certainly times when being thankful is

incredibly difficult or maybe even impossible. There are also times when being thankful can feel dismissive of the difficult circumstances you are in. On those days, there is grace for the fact that some days you just can't experience gratitude. And there is a promise that things won't always be whatever way they are. God is making all things new, although we don't know how or when or in what way.

May you discover the courage and openness to perceive the beauty of life, even in the uncertainty that surrounds us daily.

Peace,  
Pastor Melissa

## [A Message from President Dennis Springer...](#)

Dear American Lutheran,

This past Sunday (11/14) Pastor Melissa was installed as the Pastor of American Lutheran. Bishop Laurie led in worship, highlighted with a wonderful sermon. The sermon was followed by the installation rite, again led by Bishop Laurie. It was an interesting and beautiful process to witness. There were a number of guests that attended, former friends and clergy from Billings, and pastors from Big Timber and Bozeman, all were there in support of and to celebrate with Pastor Melissa and American Lutheran Church.

Having had Pastor Melissa leading worship so often, we must remember that she is only half-time and that she will only be leading worship, henceforth, two Sundays per month. We are in a season of rebirth at ALC. With that, the council is urging all members of the congregation to share their talents and abilities in some capacity with church activities. So many of you already do so much, and we are blessed by that, but there is still much talent yet to be tapped into. It does not have to be a large time-consuming and involved activity by any means. It could be something as simple as providing cookies and coffee for fellowship following worship. Remember we all are members of one body, all with different talents and abilities to share. If you have skills and or experience in bookkeeping, the council is looking for a bookkeeper. The bookkeeper works hand-in-hand with the treasurer (Diane M.). Please contact the pastor or any council member about the position.

With 2022 just around the corner and the time for the church council election, we ask that you consider serving ALC in a 3-year commitment as a council member. This would be an exciting and rewarding time to be on the council and teaming with Pastor Melissa in leading ALC in new ventures. The current council did commit to retain their positions, first until a new pastor was selected, and secondly, to guide ALC through the COVID-19 pandemic. I want to sincerely thank them for their outstanding time commitment and leadership during those uncertain times.

Yours in Christ, Dennis Springer

## A Message from LPA Dale Guidi.....

Greetings to everyone and may the Grace of the Lord be with you all!

After church service Sunday, Gloria and I took a short drive on East River Road to Pine Creek, just to beware of the splendor of God's creation by the beauty of His mountains, river, valley, forests and sky. What a sight! The fresh snow, the midday sun shining on the peaks, truly a gift He shares with His people. A scene forever imprinted in our minds! Thank You, Lord!

Coming into the Thanksgiving season, We have so many things to thank God for, starting with the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. The gift of a new pastor, Melissa Johansen, the gift of having in person worship again; we can now be with our church family again, friends ready to unite together in time of plenty or in need. The Good Shepherd has truly tended to His flock. Until we are separated, we don't realize how much our families, our home, and our church mean to us.

We are quickly coming into the season of Thanksgiving and advent. I look forward to the lefse and meatball preparation, salad making and cookie baking. We will decorate the Church on November 28th after service. I look forward to these times of happiness and fellowship. I'll see you there!

May the peace and love of God be with You all in His special season!

Dale Guidi  
LPA

## Council Notes From November 7, 2021.....

PASTOR' REPORT- Pastor Melissa reported she has been enjoying getting to know members of ALC and the Livingston community. She recently attended a zoom convocation with Bishop Laurie, met with the Livingston Ministerial Association and will meet with the Crazy Mountain Cluster. She will be attending a gathering for First Call pastors in Great Falls in December. She will be sending out a weekly update to the congregation. Tena asked that we consider live music as we approach the Christmas season. Pastor Melissa is working on this. A Pastoral Support Committee has been appointed by Dennis.

BUILDING AND GROUNDS REPORT-Facia and gutters will be painted this spring. Lighting in the fellowship hall will begin installation this month. The elevator is working properly now.

NEW BUSINESS- Pastor Melissa is working on ways to expand the worship service and increase lay leadership. When Pastor Melissa is not available for pastoral care, Dale Guidi will be the first contact. ALC's current internet service was discussed. LoAnne's role as secretary was also discussed. Diane brought up the need to look into financial processes and controls. Pastor's housing allowance was discussed. Dale is organizing the Salvation Army Bell Ringing on Wednesday, November 24<sup>th</sup>.

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**The next ALC Council Meeting will be held Sunday, December 5 following worship.**

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ALC/WELCA has scheduled workdays for the preparation of items to be ordered and sold. The lower level allows for social distancing, while preparing meatballs, lefse, and cabbage salad. Norwegian cookies will be made at home by our members. The proceeds for the sale items again will go to local non-profits.

WELCA will give their **Thankofferings** during worship, Sunday, December 12.

Nov. 18 – Thursday – 9 am Meatball Preparation  
Nov. 23 – Tuesday – 9 am Salad Preparation  
Dec. 2 – Thursday – 9 am Lefse Making  
Dec. 3 – Friday – 9 am Packaging items  
Dec. 4 – Saturday 9-Noon – SALE & Pick-up



### **November Birthdays**

5 Tena Versland  
9 Larry Hildebrandt  
14 MaryEllen Johnstad  
20 Billie Kaye Harms  
22 Randy Mogen  
25 Gus Bueling

## OFFERINGS AND BENEVOLENCE

Weeks may have passed since you walked through the doors of ALC and worshiped, face-to-face. Despite all of this, we are called to be church together. Our church continues to minister to its members, to those hurting and to those in need. Please know that your offerings are part of the lifeblood of this congregation and its work. We want to continue to be good stewards. Your offerings may be sent to:

**American Lutheran Church  
PO Box 1259  
Livingston, MT 59047.**

October will go to the Warming Center and November benevolence will go to the Thanksgiving Community Dinner. Simply indicate this on the memo line. If you have a suggestion on a community need that would benefit from ALC benevolence please let a council member know.

## PRAYERS FOR SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE

**+ For all first responders and our military + For medical and support staff + For Fire Fighters + For those we have a lost from COVID-19 and those friends and family who have lost a loved one.**

## PRAYERS FOR HEALING

+ <b>Lynnette Evanson</b> , for continued healing.	+ <b>Carol Fagerli</b> , for healing.
+ <b>Linda Holland</b> , for healing.	+ <b>Eddie Huber</b> , for healing.
+ <b>Deanna Egeland</b> , for healing and recovery.	+ <b>Carol O'Dell</b> , for healing.
+ <b>Vicky &amp; Mike Ryles</b> , for healing.	+ <b>JoAnn Hillard</b> for healing.
+ <b>Clarke Smith</b> , for healing.	
+ <b>Lovie Hanson</b> , for healing.	

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION.....

[www.alclivingston.org](http://www.alclivingston.org) for Sunday Service bulletins and monthly newsletters and council minutes

[www.montanasyndod.org](http://www.montanasyndod.org) For more information regarding the Synod activities, resources, staff, etc. check out

[www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org) We are church together and there is new information about Future Church with the ELCA.

(Coffee & Fellowship) .... is temporarily suspended due to COVID)

There is a sign-up sheet on the table at the back of the sanctuary for those of you who feel comfortable and willing to provide coffee and simple goodies for our fellowship time when we begin again. Choose a Sunday that works best for you. Keep the "goodies" simple! We will continue to have fellowship upstairs in the back of the sanctuary. Thank you for volunteering for this joyful task.

**AGAPE CIRCLE** – will meet Sunday, November 28 at 2 pm at the home of Diane Mueller. We will be using the Gather magazine Bible Study for November.

**WEEKLY EMAIL UPDATES FROM PASTOR MELESSA**

Pastor Melissa has been sending out weekly email updates. If you haven't received an email from her, check your spam folder and/or make sure we have your correct email address. Contact the church office or Pastor Melissa (pastormelissaj@gmail.com) to update your email address.

**THANK YOU ALC MEMBERS FOR ...WEARING MASKS, SOCIAL DISTANCING, AND KEEPING EVERYONE SAFE. WE APPRECIATE YOUR CONCERN FOR THE ALC CHURCH FAMILY AND YOUR COMMUNITY.**

**EVERY DAY THANKSGIVING**

Even though I clutch my blanket and growl when the alarm rings.  
Thank you, Lord, that I can hear. There are many who are deaf.  
Even though I keep my eyes closed against the morning light  
as long as possible. Thank you, Lord, that I can see. Many are blind.  
Even though I huddle in my bed and put off rising.  
Thank you, Lord, that I have the strength to rise. There are many who are bedridden.  
Even though the first hour of my day is hectic, when socks are lost,  
toast is burned, tempers are short, and my children are so loud.  
Thank you, Lord, for my family. There are many who are lonely.  
Even though our breakfast table never looks like the picture in magazines  
and the menu is at times unbalanced.  
Thank you, Lord, for the food we have. There are many who are hungry.  
Even though the routine of my job often is monotonous.  
Thank you, Lord, for the opportunity to work. There are many who have no job.  
Even though I grumble and bemoan my fate from day to day  
and wish my circumstances were not so modest.  
Thank you, Lord, for life.  
-Author Unknown

## American Lutheran Church

Statement of Financial Position Summary For All Funds as of 09/30/2021

### Assets

#### General Funds

American Bank Checking	\$	6,745.34
ELCA Money Market 286045	\$	266,151.96
American Bank Savings	\$	22,783.02
Accounts Receivable	\$	34.25

TOTAL General Funds	\$	295,714.57
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#### Endowment Funds

ELCA Endowment Fund - E272580	\$	32,331.87
Thrivent Mutual Funds Endowment Funds	\$	18,979.82
Mission Endowment MM Fund 9794	\$	19,349.24

TOTAL Endowment Funds	\$	70,660.93
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Total Assets	\$	366,375.50
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### Liabilities

Visa Ccredit Card	\$	-
Payroll Taxes	\$	49.00
ELCA Montana Synod	\$	-
Local Benevolence	\$	-
Estate Gifts	\$	7,277.43
Sunday School Memorials	\$	198.94
Unrestricted Memorials	\$	1,385.00

Total Liabilities	\$	8,910.37
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Total Net Assets	\$	357,465.13
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Total Liabilities + Net Assets	\$	366,375.50
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## American Lutheran Church

Revenue/Expense Report for YTD Sept 30, 2021

	SEPT 2021	YTD 2021
<u>Account</u>		
Revenues		
General Contributions Revenue	\$6,625.00	\$63,160.00
ALC Building Usage Revenue	\$0.00	\$0.00
Bank Interest	\$117.58	\$6,313.64
Thrivent Choice Auto Deposit	\$0.00	\$287.00
Total Revenues	\$6,742.58	\$69,760.64
Expenditures		
Building Maintenance Expense	\$22.22	\$1,364.95
Charities Expense	\$200.00	\$1,800.00
Convention Expense	\$0.00	\$0.00
ELCA Benevolence Expense	\$662.50	\$6,316.00
Insurance	\$1.37	\$4,997.24
Misc. Expense Account	\$111.00	\$340.29
Office Expenses	\$68.50	\$2,203.72
Outreach	\$0.00	\$90.16
Supply Pastor	\$584.85	\$5,778.45
Staff Taxes/Insurance	\$29.46	\$537.55
Staff Salaries	\$385.00	\$2,231.00
Telephone/Internet Expense	\$117.72	\$1,059.51
Utilities	\$280.28	\$4,427.47
Worship/Education Expenses	\$72.38	\$1,568.30
Bank Service Charges	\$0.00	\$20.00
Total Expenditures	\$2,535.28	\$32,734.64
Total Revenues	\$6,742.58	\$69,760.64
Total Expenditures	\$2,535.28	\$32,734.64
Net Revenues	\$4,207.30	\$37,026.00

