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UPCOMING EVENTS
AT A GLANCE

**Spring Break in
Vancouver BC
(March 17-24)**

Our group will journey to Vancouver and explore its culture and community through service projects, learning and worship.

Year-End Banquet

We hope you will join us May 3rd at St. Paul Lutheran for dinner, music, thank-yous and news on upcoming programs/events. Contact us with your RSVP to attend.

Beyond the Binary

Welcoming Rev. Dr. Megan Rohrer for a celebration of Trans Visibility Week.

Confluence meeting at UCC Church



Reclaiming Faith

by John Lund

We live in a time when many of our young adults are very nervous to claim Christianity as their own faith. A decade ago, students would often perceive themselves to be Christian, but would downplay that fact in public and with friends.

Today, the trend is that even fewer are identifying themselves as Christian at all. The perceptions that Christians are judgmental, hypocritical, anti-science, anti-gay, anti-Muslim and so on and so on, coupled with a disbelief in a literal hell or a three-layered understanding of creation, has left more and more people on the outside of our tradition. Most, however, are not leaving Christianity for anything else. They are not converting to Buddhism or Islam or any other religion and are in the “none” category. But “none” doesn’t capture what is happening. I would say many are what we might call “Disillusioned Christians.” That is to say they grew up possibly in a church, or at least with a Christian identity, but along the way have disclaimed that identity. To me, this is a very different place than “none” and gives church leaders more to work with.

In our work to build this new faith community called Confluence we are realizing most of our focus group of participants land in that “disillusioned Christian” category. As we work through the needs and desires of the group, reclaiming Christianity with a different narrative than what is “out there” is high on the list. There is a desire and a yearning to have a faith story and tradition that they can believe and trust and that will help them be healers in the world.

In my own journey as a young pastor I remember the time when I realized that I finally trusted the Gospel story to be about deep compassion, liberation, reconciliation, and rebirth for all people all the time, and especially for the poor, the unclean, the broken hearted, and the outsiders. For me it only took 4 years of seminary and at least 4 years of regular preaching and teaching before I could get to that point. I also had to learn how to read the Gospel stories through the lens of liberation.

Our faith story is often read and interpreted through the lens of purity, judgement, and “after you die” salvation. This is what I believe our people are disillusioned by and are rejecting. Ironically, purity and judgment is what Jesus himself fought against in his own mission and ministry.

(Continued at the bottom of page 5)

EMMAUS

CAMPUS MINISTRY
ecmum.org

STAFF

Rev. John Lund

ECLA Campus Pastor
(406) 396-4974

john.lund@umontana.edu

Bethany Youngblood

Payroll and Accounting

Alicia Fowler

Communications, Finance, Development
(406) 549-7821

ecmumt@gmail.com

Eamon Ormseth

Interfaith work and SALAM coordinator

Lindsey Buck

Friends In Need Coordinator

Abby Huseth

Faith & Climate Change

Outreach Worship

Alishka Gusky
Maya Overman
Colter Murphy

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Many thanks to Peter Olsen and
Charlotte Alonas for their service on the
Emmaus Board!

We are grateful for their involvement
with Emmaus Campus Ministry.

Emmaus Campus Ministry
is a ministry of ELCA Lutherans in
partnership with the Episcopalians
and United Church of Christ.
We are a Reconciled in Christ
Ministry, welcoming students of all
perspectives and identities.



Spring Programs

Confluence is our new faith group that is working to build community, recover Christian narratives and teachings, engage with justice, service, and organizing work, and practice spiritual grounding for the journey. Young adults, students and others are welcome to join. Meets 2nd and 4th Sundays from 6-8pm at UCC Church.

Spring Break Service Trip to Vancouver BC March 17-26 to serve the community and explore culture and faith.

Understanding White Privilege: A 6 session study helping people and communities understand systems of power and privilege and confront systematic racism. Co-sponsored by University Congregational Church. Meets Sunday nights at Emmaus House (532 University Ave.) March 19, April 2, April 16, April 30, and May 7. Dinner is included each week! All ages are welcome.

A Meal with Words: Friday, April 7th at Emmaus House: a night of dinner and Missoula writers sharing live readings of poetry, prose and story. Dinner starts at 7pm, readings at 8.

UM Pride Week Workshop: Monday, April 17th: 2-3:30pm, UC 333: Dealing with the Hard Text: how Bible based Christians can move from judgement to full embrace of LGBTQ friends. With a panel of local clergy.

Emmaus Dinners and Discussion: Wednesday Nights for UM students and young adults at Emmaus House. Meets 6-8pm with Dinner.

-March 29: Gender, Sexuality, and Identity: how do we identify in a blurry world?

-April 5: Science and the Bible: How do we embrace evolution, astronomy, genetics and the Bible?

-April 12: Making Sense of Good Friday and Easter: Going beyond Jesus' death as a payment for our sins.

-April 19: Social Media and Messaging: How do we do justice work in this emerging digital age?

-April 26: Vocation: What are the voices and messages that help guide us to a life of meaning and fulfillment?

LAVENDER GRADUATION

This year, University of Montana will have its first ever Lavender Graduation put on by Emmaus Campus Ministry, the UCC Church, and Lambda.

Lavender Graduation is a graduation ceremony for the queer communities and allies that is celebrated across the country.

Graduates will receive special honors from a cord presenter of their choosing, a lavender cord, and a certificate recognizing their accomplishment. A dessert reception will be held following the ceremony. To graduate at this ceremony, students must submit a special application form. This form can be obtained by emailing lindseybuck95@gmail.com

They will then receive a quick form to fill out and a formal invitation to attend the event. Please feel free to invite friends to this event and post your emails below or message them. More details will be provided as the event gets closer. Also, check out the HRC's page on Lavender Graduation for more information on how the event got started: <http://www.hrc.org/resources/lavender-graduation>

Beyond the Binary



Emmaus Campus Ministry, the University of Montana University Center and UM Allies welcome Rev. Dr. Megan Rohrer, pastor of Grace Lutheran Church in San Francisco, to Missoula to celebrate the International Trans Day of Visibility. Pastor Rohrer is the first openly transgender pastor ordained in the ELCA. An award winning filmmaker, writer, musician and historian, Pastor Rohrer is known for transforming trash into community gardens, cardboard into icons and for elevating the voices of the homeless, vulnerable and hungry. We are hosting several events while Pastor Rohrer is with us that are open to the all in the UM, Missoula, and surrounding communities.

Thursday, March 30th: 12noon at University Congregational Church (405 University Ave.): "Trans Inclusivity: A Training for Leaders and allies on how to be a welcoming community." Lunch will be served. Welcoming leaders and allies from all communities and groups.

Thursday, March 30th, 7pm on campus: "Beyond the Binary: Understanding the Full Spectrum of Gender Identity." Location TBA. Welcoming students, faculty, staff, faith community members, and all from Missoula area.

Friday, March 31st: 6pm in the Payne Family Native American Center Rotunda: "Trans and Ally dinner and discussion with Pastor Rohrer" This event is limited to 50 people. Please RSVP with John at John.lund@mso.umt.edu or 396-4974.

Sunday, April 2nd: 9am and 11am worship at St. Paul Lutheran Church: Pastor Rohrer will be the guest preacher at both services and will lead an adult education with question and answer in between. Welcoming people from all perspectives and identities.

Sunday, April 2nd: 6-8pm at Emmaus House (532 University Ave.): "Understanding privilege and power in regard to race, gender identity, sexual orientation, and social class." Dinner will be served. All are welcome!

You can read more at: www.meganrohrer.com | Twitter: @mmrohrer | Instagram: @mmrohrer | Facebook: Rev. Dr. Megan Rohrer

Faith and Climate Action

Earth Day Tree Planting at McCormick Park: Sunday, April 23rd 1-4pm. We are planting 5-7 larger trees at the park. There will be kids activities and a ceremony to honor the earth. Lunch will be served as well. We are looking for 7 faith communities to sponsor at tree at \$150 each.

This group of clergy and people of faith is working to engage Missoula congregations around climate change and environmental issues.

Current efforts include helping congregations start Green Teams, and offering opportunities for collective education and action.

Interested in getting involved or learning more? Contact Abby Huseth, coordinator: abby.huseth@gmail.com

Celebrate Islam Week Schedule

Please join Standing Alongside America's Muslims (SALAM), Emmaus, and many other faith communities for a week of engaging educational events about the beautiful faith of Islam, practiced by millions of Americans and 1.6 billion people.

Monday, 4/24 | Opening Banquet | 5:30-7:30PM at First Presbyterian Church

Kick off Celebrate Islam week by enjoying dishes cooked by local refugee families, listening to a few short speakers, and engaging in discussion about topics of interest.

Tuesday, 4/25 | The White Helmets | 7PM at UC Theater

Watch The White Helmets, the Oscar-winning documentary about volunteer rescue workers caught in the middle of Syrian civil war. Following the 40-minute film, listen to a panel discussion on the conflict in Syria.

Thursday, 4/27 | Muslims in America: Past and Present | 7PM at UC Theater

Listen to Dawood Yasin of Zaytuna College, the first Islamic liberal arts college in the US, speak about Islam's long history the US and what the Muslim community in America looks like today. Join us at Emmaus for a luncheon the same day at 12PM on "What do Muslims need? How Allies Can Help."

Saturday, 4/29 | Dances of Universal Peace | 6PM at Congregation Har Shalom

Move to live music in harmony using short phrases from the world's sacred traditions. No musical or dance experience is required, everyone is welcome, partner or not.

Sunday, 4/30 | Crossing the Bridge | Time and Location TBD

Take part in this interactive workshop created by two Holocaust survivors. It is designed to facilitate human connection and help us overcome the barriers that separate us.

Questions? Contact Eamon Ormseth at 406-799-8889 or Eamon.ormseth@gmail.com

STUDENT



Catholic and Emmaus shared study on Christianity

SNAPSHOTS



Worship team at Immanuel Lutheran Church



Worship team at Bethel Lutheran in Great Falls



Choose your Thrivent Choice Dollars by March 31st

Eligible Thrivent Financial members have until March 31, 2017, to direct any remaining 2016 Choice Dollars. After that date, Choice Dollars expire. In 2016 we received over \$3,400 in Thrivent Choice Dollars!

Thank you for your support, and consideration of ECM in your Choice Dollar Decision!

For more info about directing choice dollars to Emmaus Visit

<https://www.thrivent.com/making-a-difference/living-generously/thrivent-choice/>

and

<https://www.thrivent.com/making-a-difference/files/26087.pdf>

Thrivent Action Team Grants

Thrivent Financial members can apply for two Action Team project grants of \$250 each year. These can range from many different projects and events, many of which Emmaus does on a regular basis. If you are a Thrivent member and want to support Emmaus with an Action Team grant please let us know. We will definitely find the right project for you!!

OTHER WAYS YOU CAN SUPPORT EMMAUS

Donations are always needed and welcomed! In 2016 our ELCA Montana Synod grant was reduced by \$10,000 due to budget constraints. We are making that up through donations and grants, operating much like other non-profits in our world. Your gift always goes to an engaged ministry!

* Sponsor a program or student : Emmaus is the Fiscal Sponsor for Confluence, SALAM, and Faith and Climate Action Montana, which means we hold special accounts for all three. We also hire young adults and interns to be the organizers for all three groups. If you would like to sponsor one of these programs or interns please write a check to Emmaus with a note of intent.

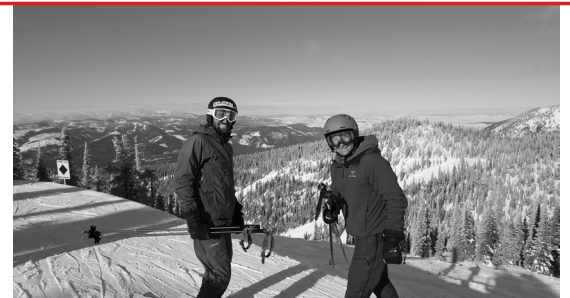
* Volunteer: We are looking for cooks on Wednesday and Sunday nights to either drop off, or join our group for the evening. We are also looking for people with carpentry skills for maintenance projects. You are also welcome to join SALAM or Faith and Climate Action monthly meetings.

(Continued from article on page 1)

Part of our work needs to be about rebuilding and reclaiming that story which gave new life to the woman at the well, the tax collector, the man with the unclean spirit, and to that early band of women and men who followed Jesus. Together they learned to imagine a different way of living which gave dignity and possibility to all people and was grounded in humility and compassion and the deep love of God for all of life.

Together we can learn and imagine a different way of living in our time and place, also grounded in that deep love of God and in the story of liberation for all.

I don't know where our new group Confluence is heading for sure, or if everyone will claim Christianity anytime soon, but that is not the goal. I am encouraged by a strong desire of this group to learn and grow and go deeper together. They are willing to pray and listen, serve and seek justice, and somehow live into the ancient story of God's love and liberation for all people. That, I think, is a pretty good start.



Alums Casey Bailey and Peter Metcalf



Confluence leaders Eamon, Erik, and Abby

EMMAUS
CAMPUS MINISTRY
538 University Avenue
Missoula MT 59801

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Emmaus Campus Ministry at the
University of Montana.

You're Invited! YEAR-END BANQUET

Wednesday, May 3rd
6pm-8pm

St Paul Lutheran Church

Join us for dinner, music, year-end thank yous and a preview of upcoming programs, events, and our guest speaker Rev. Stacey Siebrasse, pastor at First English Lutheran in Billings and Emmaus alumni.

Please contact us with number of attendees so we can plan our food accordingly.

RSVP

john.lund@umontana.edu
406-396-4974

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