The Nugget

EMPOWERED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT, UNITED TO SERVE

September 2026

Gold Hill Evangelical Lutheran Church
934 Placer Street - Butte, MT 59701
(406) 723-4242

We are a Stephen Ministry Congregation and
a Congregation of the Montana Synod of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

"We're Listening"

This article is an excerpt from the e-newsletter "Stories from Your Nebraska Synod." Used by permission from the synod, Tic Tac Toe Marketing and Erick Hill.

On a Monday morning not long after a small wooden structure appeared along the sidewalk at Messiah Lutheran Church in Ralston, Neb., Erick Hill stepped outside to see if anyone in the neighborhood had noticed. Inside the prayer box, the pastor found a handwritten card from an aunt, asking the congregation to pray for her niece who was struggling in a broken home. She carefully wrote out the situation, entrusted the card to the little box and walked away, trusting that someone would actually pray.

Members did what they promised. They lifted that child and her family in their intercessory prayers during worship the next Sunday.



A few days later, Hill checked the box again. Another card. This time, it was a thank you from the aunt: "You really did what you said you were going to do." She had watched worship online, heard the prayer spoken aloud, and needed the congregation to know how much that faithfulness mattered.

"For me, that's why we do what we do," Hill said. "People are putting their trust, their faith in us to follow through. In a world where churches aren't always as trustworthy as they should be, they need every little bit of evidence that they can be."

The prayer box began with a conversation in the men's group. "We take on Bible studies, book studies, all sorts of things," said Neil Smith, a lay leader. "One Sunday we were talking about rituals of the church, especially confession."

One group member, who had grown up Catholic, shared how much he missed the active, embodied practice of confession. That led to a bigger conversation about what it means to bring our burdens before God—not just silently but in community.

"In the middle of all that, Stan, who usually sits and listens, spoke up," Smith recalled. "He said, 'We should put that out in the parking lot where [community] members can participate.'"

The prayer box "invites us into a different kind of conversation with our neighbor."

Smith heard that comment as more than just a nice idea. A home builder by trade, he began looking up designs and sketching out possibilities. Over the next several weeks and months, a handful of men gathered to build. Some showed up with tools and time; others contributed cash or materials.

What emerged was more than a little wooden box. It's a visible, physical invitation for the neighborhood to bring their prayers to God—and to know that the people of Messiah will carry those prayers together.

The box sits adjacent to the sidewalk at the edge of Messiah's parking lot—close enough to the church to feel connected but clearly meant for the community.

"We wanted it to be more than just a slot in a wall," Smith said. They made it big enough to feel like a small "outpost" of the church. They painted Scripture passages on the outside—verses that members said were important to their prayer life. They added the word "prayer" in multiple languages to reflect the neighborhood's diversity.

The box also includes a clear invitation to leave prayer requests; a promise that these prayers will be lifted up every Sunday in worship; and a QR code linking to Messiah's website.

"It's us putting our footprint beyond just the walls of the church," Hill said. "People may drive by and never walk inside. But the box says: we're here, and we're listening."

"Prayer is foundational"
For Hill, the prayer box is not a one-off project. It's part of a much larger reimagining of what it means to be church in this time.

"We're getting ready to celebrate our 70th anniversary," he said. "If we're going to be around for the next 70 years, it's going to depend on how well we integrate ourselves into the community—our neighbors, small businesses, nonprofits, schools."

Like many congregations, Messiah has wrestled with declining numbers and the temptation to simply "keep the programs going" and hope people show up. "I keep telling the congregation: the people you want to minister to are here," Hill said. "They're just not necessarily in the Sunday school rooms. They're in your neighborhood. They're down the street. They're in the schools."

The prayer box, he added, "invites us into a different kind of conversation with our neighbor."

It also keeps prayer at the center of everything else. “How can we expect our congregation to start a grocery store, launch a laundromat or create affordable housing if we don’t truly understand the magnitude of the God we worship?” Hill asked. “Prayer is foundational. It’s how we remember that all things are possible through Christ, and that we’re not doing this work alone.”

“I hope the box becomes a beacon not just for the community but for our congregation. A reminder that we can step out into the community in simple, faithful ways. It doesn’t always have to be some huge event.

For Smith, the prayer box is as much about obedience as it is about outreach. “I think that’s where I’m at in my faith journey right now—making sure that as God drops something in, we respond, not just by saying, ‘Oh, that was interesting,’ and then moving on,” he said.

The project wasn’t quick or smooth. There were moments when the partially built structure sat untouched. Weeks when the painting didn’t get done. Times when it could easily have been abandoned.

“That’s how I know it came from God,” Smith said. “Because as it hit those valleys, God kept putting it on our hearts, and we kept stepping forward. We don’t have to do everything. God does the heavy lifting. We just get to be his hands and feet at particular points in time.”

For now, the responses in the box have been “positive but slow.” A few cards. A few stories. A beginning. Hill planned to spend an afternoon outside by the box in the spring, inviting passersby into prayer and conversation. “Even if I just pray with one person, that counts,” he said.

And he is already thinking about a “phase two”—smaller versions families could take home and place in their neighborhoods, or even mobile prayer boxes that go to community events.

“I hope the box becomes a beacon not just for the community but for our congregation,” Smith said. “A reminder that we can step out into the community in simple, faithful ways. It doesn’t always have to be some huge event. Whatever God calls you to do, you listen, you respond, you take action. And then you let God multiply it.”



Prayer Concerns

Please call the Church Office (723-4242) or email us: (goldhill.elca@gmail.com) with your prayer requests. Only prayers given to the entire congregation will be included here.

Robert McDowell- prayers for health and healing.
Patricia Coleman- prayers for health and healing.

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September Birthdays /Anniversaries:

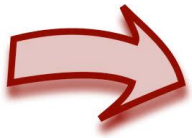


David Stordahl	September 4
Kayla Harvey	September 6
Brittany Campbell	September 6
Lynn McGlynn	September 7
Ruschelle Tyvand	September 7
Pat Gruss	September 30
Paul & Kay Vang	September 17
Mike & Sheilah Vincent	September 19

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If your birthday or anniversary is missing, please notify the church

Please help us to stay updated and notify the church office with any address, phone, or Email address changes!



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Check it out!

Please make sure to like and follow our Facebook page so that you can stay up to date on announcements!

https://www.facebook.com/Gold.Hill.ELCA/

If you have anything that you would like to have posted on our Facebook page please email the office at *goldhill.elca@gmail.com*

Important announcements or pictures of the services are always welcomed!

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If you have any announcements or changes you would like to have in the Bulletin please submit them **no later than Thursday morning**.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School begins Sunday September 13th immediately following the service. Sunday school will be held at the church the service is at and we will meet in the designated youth rooms at each church. All ages (including confirmation youth) welcome to join. This will be a great time for confirmation students to get together to work on service projects.

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Fall Youth Group: Youth Group will be held the 3rd Wednesday of the month during the school year at Gloria Dei from 6-8pm.

First Youth Group Wednesday September 16 6-8 pm

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A Quick Note

Fred DeMotts thanks you for your prayers for recovery and health. He had a successful surgery and recovery.

Friends in Christ,
Fred's sister Susan Repola

We Deliver-Sack Lunch Ministry



Volunteers for August were: Annette Lawson, Patty Callaghan, Nick Elings, Carter Ellings, Carol & Larroll Leach, Machelle Keim, Lynn Aniksdal. Thank you!

Food supplies & donations for food provided by: Annette Lawson and Patty Callaghan. Thank you!

We will be meeting September 21st at 9:00 am. If you have any questions, please feel free to call Annette Lawson, at 406-490-7751.

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Save the Date!

The annual Stephen Ministry Harvest Auction will be November 1, 2026 following the regular church service. We will have a potluck, silent auction and a special raffle. Please remember the auction as you are canning, knitting, and crafting. If you have any questions, please see any of the Stephen Ministers that are serving the Copper City Parish.

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God's work. Our hands.

God's work our hands is the ELCA's annual day of service, taking place Sunday, September 13th 2026. It is a blessed opportunity for all congregations to celebrate who we are as a church. We are asked to engage in projects and activities that explore our convictions as Lutherans: that all life in Jesus flows from a living, daring confidence in God's grace. The ELCA is one church, freed in Christ to love and serve our neighbor every day.

With this in mind, the Gold Hill Outreach Committee invites all members, as well as any Gloria Dei members who would like to join us, to gather at the Butte Rescue Mission for two hours of service on Sunday, September 13, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. Projects will be available for all ages and abilities. Examples may include sorting clothing or shoes, helping the chef prepare the evening meal, folding books for centerpieces at the October banquet, or painting or staining a deck.

We will have yellow sign-up sheets at both churches for those of you that will be able to help. The Rescue Mission needs an approximate number attending so they can be sure to have enough projects ready to go. Keep in mind that it is possible that you might sign up under one category and be asked to do something else when we get there. We will need to be a bit flexible.

Please wear your yellow shirt. If you do not have one, extras are available at Gold Hill in the fellowship hall. This will be an amazing way for people of different abilities and ages to work alongside one another!

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Outreach Opportunities
Linda Moore

Thank you to all of you who have so generously supported summer happenings with your donated items and $$. We are holding on to July's donations of kitchen items and linens until the Furniture Bank gets moved to their new location. They will then pick everything up. Also, thank you for the school item donations in August. We will plan a day to put the school kits together so they can be shipped along with our Lutheran World Relief quilts in May.

September begins a big opportunity for outreach. We would like to sponsor a table again at the Butte Rescue Mission banquet on October 15, 2026. The cost is $500, so we are asking for donations to help cover it. I would also like to invite you to attend and sit at our table, especially if you have not gone before. It is a wonderful event with great food, and it offers a meaningful chance to learn more about the Rescue Mission and the important work they do for people in our community. The banquet also includes a keynote speaker and testimonials from clients. As the Rescue Mission's biggest fundraiser of the year, it is an event I am proud our congregation continues to support by sponsoring a table and sending members to attend. Talk to me anytime if you would like to go.

Gold Hill Lutheran Church Council Minutes – August 11, 2026

Council meeting was held at Gold Hill at 5:30 p.m. MST.

1) **Call to Order**
- President David Stordahl called the meeting to order.

2) Attendance
- David Stordahl (President)
- Ty Inglis (Administrative Director)
- Kolby Sukut (Secretary)
- Shelly Anderson (Worship)
- Jody Bickford (Leadership)
- Kyleen Fuller (Spiritual Growth)
- Linda Moore (Outreach)

3) Devotions
- Ty shared the devotion.

4) Approval of the Minutes: July 14th, 2026
- It was motioned, seconded, and carried (MSC) to approve the Council Meeting Minutes for July 14th, 2026.

5) Treasurer's Report
- Jim was absent; the July Financial Report will be shared and approved at a later date..

6) President's Report
- Nothing to report.

7) Administrative Director's Report
- Ty provided the daycare lease to the Council and it will be reviewed.

8) Worship Ministry
- Shelly reported on Worship Ministry activities; the Stodden Park service is scheduled for August 30th and will be a music-centric service.

9) Leadership Ministry
- Jody reported on church grounds maintenance; she will follow up on striping the parking lot.
- The Council discussed cleaning during months when services are at Gloria Dei and various church maintenance items.
- Randy will be hosting an event at the church on September 5th.
- Melissa will be hosting an open house for new daycare families on September 9th.

10) Spiritual Growth Ministry
- Kyleen reported on Spiritual Growth activities; including the Lock-in event on Saturday (8/15).

11) Outreach Ministry
- Linda updated the Council on the Outreach Ministry's efforts; $415 is left over from the Ridgewater Swim Day which will be saved for next year's event; and the God's Work Our Hands event is tentatively scheduled for September 13th to support the Rescue Mission which may include serving meals, sanding/staining a porch area, and addressing other needs.
- The Rescue Mission dinner is scheduled for October 15th; the Council agreed Gold Hill will sponsor at least one table with the possibility of a second. An announcement will be made for interested members at Sunday service.

12) Other Business:
- Dave provided an update on the insurance claim.
- Dave provided an update on Call Committee activities.
- The Council reviewed a proposal from Capstone Accounting & Tax for providing accounting services to replace Mark Rule & Co.
- The annual Stephen Ministry Harvest Auction fundraiser is scheduled for November 1st; the Council will inquire about opportunities to support other ministries with the funds raised.
- It was MSC to combine the Gold Hill and Gloria Dei directories into a single Copper City Parish directory.

The meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

September 2026 Prayer Ventures

1 *National Suicide Prevention Month* Suicide impacts people of all ages, especially youth and young adults. Pray for hope, relief from suffering and skilled, compassionate care for people who struggle with loneliness, depression and mental illness. Pray that they will find comfort and encouragement in knowing that God abandons no one. Ask God to bless and further the work of Lutheran Suicide Prevention Ministry and other organizations engaged in suicide awareness, education, collaboration and advocac

2 Pray that we will remember and affirm the diverse contributions of those who have helped shape and reform our nation throughout its history, especially as we celebrate its semiquincentennial. Ask the Spirit to help us learn from and change the laws, decisions and attitudes that oppress our neighbors, our siblings in Christ and all children of God.

3 Remember in prayer children whose families lack safe, consistent shelter, that they will find care, stability and security in school among their peers, teachers and school staff.

4 Ask God to stir nations and their leaders to seek peace where there is conflict and war, no matter how complicated or unattainable peace seems. Pray that peace accords, ceasefires and negotiations will foreground those who are displaced, terrorized and treated unjustly.

5 Pray for congregations' fall programs and ministries, that their leaders and volunteers will strengthen people's faith, deepen their understanding of Scripture, discern their gifts and nurture their sense of community.

6 Pray for the Spirit to give us patience, wisdom and an open mind when we clash with others, including our siblings in Christ. Pray that we will use wisdom and care in forging agreements, creating solutions and reaching compromises that are respectful and forgiving of one another.

7 *Labor Day* On this day, pray for the work people do to sustain themselves and their families and to benefit their communities and society. Pray that all people will receive fair wages and benefits and work in safe environments; that they will know respect, gratitude, joy and fulfillment through their labor; and that they will be renewed through times of sabbath. Remember in prayer also those who seek employment or who cannot work.

8 Remember and pray for young adults who forego higher education in favor of skilled trade work, military service or volunteering. Give thanks for programs that engage young adults in volunteer and work opportunities, including Urban Servant Corps, Lutheran Volunteer Corps, outdoor ministries and Young Adults in Global Mission.

9 "Let them praise his name with dancing, making melody to him with tambourine and lyre" (Psalm 149:3). There are many ways to praise God through song and music; some are passed down through church tradition and others are created in response to culture and context. Give thanks to God for endowing us with diverse gifts and creativity to express our faith, love and awe.

10 Remember in prayer immigrants, asylum seekers and families pulled apart by immigration issues and political division. Give thanks for ministries that help us provide hope, relief, compassion, advocacy and accompaniment, including Global Refuge, Lutheran Disaster Response and the ELCA's AMMPARO strategy (Accompanying Migrants with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities).

11 Pray for youth, adults and volunteers participating in the Gathering Expedition event at Carol Joy Holling Camp in Nebraska, a time for them to explore faith, purpose and leadership together in their journey toward the 2027 ELCA Youth Gathering in Minneapolis.

12 Ask the Spirit to renew our faith and give us strength that we might tirelessly bear love, hope, peace and justice into the world.

13 *"God's work. Our hands." Sunday* Praise God for 10 years of this annual Sunday of service. Rejoice in the ELCA's history of proclaiming that we are one church, freed in Christ to love and serve our neighbor every day.

14 Give thanks for special education teachers, school psychologists and others who help children and youth develop skills and confidence in academic settings.

15 *First Day of National Hispanic Heritage Month* Give thanks to God for the gifts, contributions, traditions, languages and rich cultural diversity of our

Latiné neighbors and siblings in Christ. Pray for the ELCA's Latiné congregations and ministries, the Latino Ministries Association and the Latinx Lutheran Leadership Initiative of the ELCA.

16 Remember in prayer ELCA missionaries accompanying our companions in Latin America and the Caribbean and young adults serving as volunteers in the ELCA Young Adults in Global Mission programs in Mexico and Argentina/Uruguay.

17 Thank God for the ELCA's special relationship with the Moravian Church in America, a full communion partner since 1999. Pray for the church, its members and its leaders, that together we will find strength and resources for the work of sharing the gospel and serving our neighbor, especially in these challenging times for the church and society.

18 "Peter came and said to him, 'Lord, if my brother or sister sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?' Jesus said to him, 'Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times'" (Matthew 18:21-22). Who are you finding difficult to forgive right now? Pray for them and for yourself, that you will be patient, resolve your differences, forgive each other and strive for healing and a closer relationship.

19 Give thanks and pray for spiritual directors, coaches and companions in synods and congregations who deepen our faith and vocation, guide our discernment and equip us to help and encourage others.

20 Give thanks for Jesus' parables — simple, illustrative stories that reveal God's word, demonstrate how to be a faithful disciple, and explain what it means to love and serve our neighbors in need. Ask God to be gracious, forgiving and patient, especially when we are puzzled, doubtful, defensive and full of questions.

21 Lift up prayers of joy and thanksgiving for autumn and the changing seasons, which remind us of God's creative presence and the complex interconnection of humankind and all creation. Let us express our gratitude and praise by wisely and responsibly stewarding all that has been entrusted to our care.

22 Give thanks and pray for our 65 synod bishops as they gather for the ELCA Conference of Bishops, that the Spirit will inspire their support of one another and guide the work and mission of our church through their prayer, worship, study, reflection and counsel.

23 Give thanks for our deaf neighbors and siblings in Christ. Pray for Deaf congregations, Deaf ministries, the Evangelical Lutheran Deaf Association and ELCA Disability Ministries as they work to develop local ministries, train leaders, provide resources and build relationships.

24 Aloud or silently, recite this prayer attributed to Martin Luther: "Lord, grant that anger or other bitterness does not reign over us, but that your grace, genuine kindness, loyalty and every kind of friendliness, generosity and gentleness may reign in us. Amen."

25 Pray for leaders of the ELCA, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and other ecumenical partners as they gather for the Stewardship Kaleidoscope conference in Baltimore, that they will deepen their understanding of stewardship, discover new resources and be equipped and encouraged to nurture generosity in congregations.

26 Pray for young adults who provide short- and long-term service to our church, our communities and the world through congregational ministries, outdoor ministries, disaster relief organizations and other groups (including Lutheran Volunteer Corps, Urban Servant Corps and Young Adults in Global Mission). Give thanks that they respond to God's call to serve by sharing their faith, compassion, gifts and hunger for justice.

27 Ask the Spirit for words we might use to share with every generation the stories of God's presence in our lives and in the world throughout history.

28 Pray for ELCA Lay Schools for Ministry, which help individuals deepen their faith, explore theology, grow as leaders, discover opportunities for serving in congregations and communities, and continue their baptismal journey of doing God's work in the world.

29 Pray that, united in mind and spirit with our siblings in Christ, we might express our commitment to love, mercy, peace, justice, humility, generosity, caring for neighbors in need and sharing the good news of Jesus Christ, the son of God and Savior of humankind.

30 "You have come down to the lakeshore seeking neither the wise nor the wealthy, but only asking for me to follow. Sweet Lord, you have looked into my eyes; kindly smiling, you've called out my name" (*ELW* 817; *WOV* 784). Praise God for seeking us out wherever we are and inviting us to follow as Christ's disciples, called to trust, learn and serve — just as we are.

September 2026

Church Office Hours: 11:30 AM-2:30 PM, Mon. – Fri. CLOSED Sat. – Sun.
Contact: (406) 723-4242 or goldhill.elca@gmail.com
Gold Hill Lutheran Church: Empowered by the Holy Spirit, Unite to Serve.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 **10:30 am** Women's Bible Study	**2** **10:00 am** LWR Quilters	**3**	**4**	**5**
6 **10:00 am Worship** **11:00 am Coffee Hour**	**7** **Office Closed** **Labor Day**	**8** **8:30 am** Perkins Bible Study **10:30 am** Women's Bible Study **5:30 pm** Council Meeting	**9** **10:00 am** LWR Quilters	**10**	**11**	**12**
13 God's Work. Our Hands. **10:00 am Worship** **11:00 am Sunday School** **11:00 am Coffee Hour**	**14** 6:00 pm Stephen Ministry @ Gold Hill	**15** **8:30 am** Perkins Bible Study **10:30 am** Women's Bible Study	**16** **10:00 am** LWR Quilters **6-8 pm** Youth Group @ Gloria Dei	**17** **10:00 am** Prayer Shawl Knitters	**18** **12:00 pm** 55+ Lunch Bunch	**19**
20 **10:00 am Worship** **11:00 am Sunday School** **11:00 am Coffee Hour**	**21** **9:00 am Sack Lunches**	**22** **8:30 am** Perkins Bible Study **10:00 am** Gather Bible Study **10:30 am** Women's Bible Study	**23** **10:00 am** LWR Quilters	**24**	**25**	**26** **1-3 pm** Confirmation @ Gloria Dei
27 **10:00 am Worship** **11:00 am Sunday School** **11:00 am Coffee Hour**	**28** 6:00 pm Stephen Ministry @ Gold Hill	**29** **8:30 am** Perkins Bible Study **10:30 am** Women's Bible Study	**30** **10:00 am** LWR Quilters			

Date	Ushers	Lector	Acolyte	Worship Asst.	PowerPoint	Communion Asst.	Coffee Hour
Sep. 6	Revonda Stordahl & Annette Lawson	Patti Chain	Josie Harvey	Chris Ketchum	Ron Gruss	N/A	Dorothy Tallon Karen Galpin
Sep. 13	Pat Gruss & Nancy DeBarathy	Paul Vang	N/A	N/A	Elaine Fuller	Jeff Williamson	Machelle Keim
Sep. 20	Sukut Family	Chris Ketchum	Tavia Broudy	Julie Corbin	Brieson Campbell	N/A	Linda Moore
Sep. 27	Dorothy Tallon & Byron DeWaay	Julie Corbin	N/A	N/A	Aaron Hoffenbacker	Linda Moore	Peggy Probasco