

MEET OUR PASTOR

Pastor Markus Zeuch was born on August 7, 1963 in the small tourist town of Canela, located in the beautiful mountains of Southern Brazil. He was the second of three children born to Hermann (German citizen) and Erica Zeuch (Brazilian citizen). His father was also a Lutheran pastor who served as a missionary in Venezuela and Guatemala as well as a pastor in Brazil and, later, in Germany.

Markus Zeuch grew up in Brazil and as a child he lived in Braunschweig, Germany for almost three years when his father served as pastor there. Then the family returned to Brazil. His first spoken languages at home were Portuguese and German. His father died of cancer at an early age (48) and, on the day of his death, Markus felt in his heart that he should continue his dad's vocation of teaching and preaching God's Word. He was just eighteen when he felt this call and he is the fifth person in his family to be called "Pastor Zeuch". Markus followed in the footsteps of his grandfather, Rev. Heinrich Zeuch (who served as pastor in Germany, Venezuela and Brazil), his father, his uncle, Rev. Gerhard Zeuch (who served in Argentina), and his brother Rev. Dr. Manfred Zeuch (who served in Brazil and France).

So, in 1982 Markus enrolled at the Concordia Seminary in Sao Leopoldo, Brazil to pursue his Theological Studies. He then married his first wife, Silvana, with whom he had two sons, Matheus and Filipe. He was ordained as a pastor in 1988 and took his first call to shepherd a parish in Boa Vista, located in the most northern state of Brazil. After having served two congregations, he became a teacher, professor and assistant chaplain at the Lutheran University in Manaus, Brazil from 1996 to 1999. In the meantime, Markus got divorced and his boys went to live in the South with their mother. In 2000, he married Thais. In that year, he was transferred to another campus of that university in a different state (still in North Brazil) where he continued to work as a teacher, professor, and assistant chaplain. He also worked as a choir director, having founded a choir at that university, as well as assisting the local congregation with preaching when needed. He



undertook a further degree in education and also enrolled in a doctorate program in Systematic Theology through a partnership between the Lutheran University and Concordia Seminary St. Louis, U.S. But God had other plans for him and he did not finish his doctorate program because in 2004 he received a call to come to Canada, something that he somehow “knew” would happen some day in his life! He is certain that this was a divine call. He was called to serve as pastor at a small Hispanic congregation in Ottawa ON, where he served until 2008 in Spanish language.

In 2006, Pastor Zeuch and Thais had their first child, Lucas, born in Ottawa. During that period, Pastor Zeuch had the opportunity to travel to Nicaragua and teach systematic Theology to the seminary students there and visit several congregations and projects that were part of LCC mission for that country. The seminary students and the local pastors were happy to receive a pastor coming from Canada that didn't require a translator!

The Ottawa Hispanic mission had to be disbanded due to lack of subsidy for monolingual missions. Pastor Zeuch received a call to serve as Missionary-at-Large at the East Canadian District in 2008. His ministry shifted between Ottawa and Kingston, ON. This ministry wouldn't last too long, in fact, it became almost like a “summer job” because in that same year, he accepted a call to serve as pastor at St. Matthew Lutheran Church Calgary, where he serves in both German and English to this day! He was installed at SMLC on October 5, 2008. In 2010, Thais and Markus were blessed with their second child, Melissa, who had an emergency baptism right there at the hospital in Edmonton because of her heart condition and underwent surgery when she was only 5 days old! It was a very challenging time for Thais and Pastor Zeuch, but God blessed them by placing Melissa in the hands of an amazing medical team and Melissa is growing up healthy. She is now 11 years old and attends confirmation classes.

It's been thirteen years since Pastor Zeuch was installed at SMLC and there's so much to thank God for. Among the many blessings he can count, here are some personal milestones during his time in Calgary: In 2014, he went to Brazil to bless his oldest son at his wedding. He had to travel and do the ceremony using a cane because he had broken his leg shortly before his trip! In 2015, he proudly became a Canadian citizen! A month after the citizenship ceremony, he had open-heart surgery and went on long term disability while recovering. The congregation was very supportive and was able to continue its ministry until Pastor was able to return to his office. In 2019, he went to Brazil again to baptize Thomas Zeuch, his first grandchild!

At our church, Pastor Zeuch has seen countless moments of joy and sorrow: Our centennial celebrations, people coming and going, receiving new members, presiding over lots of weddings, baptisms, confirmations and funerals. He now can see children at confirmation age that he baptized as infants. He has a passion for using languages and

music in his ministry. He has used the four languages he speaks to proclaim God's love in Christ to others, having preached in Portuguese, Spanish, German and English.

As for his personal interests, he loves music, playing the guitar, stargazing, aurora chasing, linguistics & languages, studying theology, reading about history, philosophy, and psychology. He also loves travelling, enjoying the mountains, spending time with family, biking, hiking, reading a good book and watching documentaries. And of course, cheering for Brazil at the FIFA World Cup every four years!

Pastor and his family love to live in Calgary and they are thankful to God for the amazing support and love that our congregation has given to them during all these years!