

The AGAPE NEWS (#11)

A WEEKLY "BLOG-LIKE" NEWSLETTER FROM PASTOR ZEUCH

ST. MATTHEW LUTHERAN CHURCH - CALGARY AB – December 8, 2020

Hello dear SMLC Family and friends!

How have you been these days?

"The night will soon be ending, the dawn cannot be far". This is Advent hymn # 337 in our hymnal, and it brings us HOPE. And this is what you and I need to keep: our hope and our faith that things will get better and that the darkness of the night cannot last forever. The pandemic we are experiencing for eight months now is literally making people "sick and tired". However, as a roaring storm that falls on our city, it may linger for a painful while but then it will eventually go away! The winds will calm down and the sun will shine again. Our Lord Jesus was not only present with his disciples in good times and sunny days, but he was also in the middle of the storm, the strong winds, the threatening waves.

In the words of Rev. Tim Teuscher, president of the Lutheran Church-Canada, who cited this same Advent hymn in his letter that you are invited to read in our website, "the Advent hymn proclaims to us in these uncertain and difficult times: "God dwells with us in darkness, and makes the light as day; yet we resist the brightness and turn from God away. But grace does not forsake us, however far we run. God claims us still as children through Mary's infant Son" (LSB 337:5).

x-x-x-x-x-x-x-x

In the meantime, "do you hear what I hear?" Alberta Health Services came up with new mandatory health measures, or stronger restrictions today. They affect our daily lives, as everything related to the pandemic. You may [click right here](#) to read about all the new mandatory measures. As I mentioned in my last *Agape News*, we have been cautious during the whole pandemic nightmare. We have followed all health and safety protocols when physically gathered at church. I

thank all volunteers and ushers for making sure that all is sanitized every Sunday, that members keep social distance etc.

Regarding Holy Communion, we will continue to offer the sacrament as we have done so far (for the time being), every first and third Sunday of the month. There will be no communion in our Christmas services.

As your pastor, I would ask you to PLEASE do not sit together at church with other members if you are not in a cohort situation. This applies even to family members from different households.

I ask you once more to trust God's promises that HE IS WITH US in every situation and a stronghold in every trouble. Please continue to pray for our church, our families and for the world.

And now...

Happy reading!

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A SMALL DOSE OF GOD'S WORD FOR YOU TODAY:

(From this upcoming Sunday's lectionary – the Second Sunday in Advent)

PSALM 126:3

The LORD has done great things for us; we are glad.

IN GERMAN:

Der HERR hat Großes an uns getan; des sind wir fröhlich.

PREVIOUS BIBLE TRIVIA:

Last trivia question was: **What was the goddess in Ephesus called who was worshipped the most?**

The answer is Artemis. Thank you to those who sent me the answer.

NEW BIBLE TRIVIA QUESTION:

John the Baptist was put in prison for declaring that Herod had broken what Law? Send me your answer!

NEWS FROM SMLC.

We repeat some of them every week for those who haven't read it before.

1 – ONLINE BIBLE STUDY: We offer weekly bible studies over “zoom”, every Wednesday, at 7 p.m. Due to the Advent/Christmas activities, we have only one more bible study in December and that will take place **tomorrow (Dec 9)**. The password to log in to zoom meeting for Dec 9th will not be posted here, because of safety reasons. You may find it in the email you got from me, pastor Zeuch. If you are reading this newsletter out of the website and have **NOT received** the email, and wish to participate on the bible studies, please call the office to get the ID and password. The bible study is meant for all members, please feel free to join us!

2 – ONLINE YOUTH BIBLE STUDY: Is offered every Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. on Zoom. Please call Liz 1 (306) 715-1191 to ask for the password to log in. Please encourage your children/grandchildren to participate.

3 – ONLINE SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR KIDS: Our head of Christian Education, Koreen Graumann has started an online Sunday School over zoom once a week. The days may vary, but if you are interested and have children age 6 to 12 who could have some fun moments in a Christian environment with other kids in our church, please contact us to be included in Koreen's list. Thank you Koreen, for this wonderful initiative to keep our children connected with God's Word and Christian fellowship!

4 – BOARD OF EVANGELISM: Volunteers needed to help send out cards and make calls to our congregation. **Prayer Chain** – prayers for our members and their petitions. We have had a prayer chain box at the back of the sanctuary for years. Let's use it! Prayer warriors will gladly pray for you! There will be a sign-up sheet at the back of the church for volunteers for card writing and the prayer chain or contact Lorraine Duncan. **Bridgeland Women's Centre Food Drive** – we are collecting non-perishable food. They are not receiving food from the Calgary food

bank since COVID changes. Their pantry is empty. There will be boxes set out for the food. If anyone can help with the delivery during the week please let me know. Thank you. Lorraine Duncan, Board of Evangelism.

5 – OFFERINGS VIA E-TRANSFERS: If you are so inclined to send your offering via e-transfer please use: smlccsecretary@shaw.ca to send your donation. E-transfers are automatically deposited into the bank account, thus no need to send a password to the office. We appreciate your continuous support of our church. Thank you for your generosity,

6 – ADVENT/CHRISTMAS 2020 (the Sunday services are at the regular times):

Dec 13 (Sun): Third Sunday in Advent services

Dec 16 (Wed): Advent Midweek Service @ 7 p.m. (please sign up)

Dec 20 (Sun): Fourth Sunday in Advent services (with communion)

Dec 23 (Wed): German candlelight service @ 5 p.m. (please sign up)

Dec 23 (Wed): English candlelight service @ 7 p.m. (please sign up)

Dec 24 (Thurs): German candlelight service @ 5 p.m. (please sign up)

Dec 24 (Thurs): English candlelight service @ 7 p.m. (please sign up)

Dec 27 (Sun): First Sunday After Christmas, regular services.

7 – SOCIAL ISSUES: The president of Lutheran Church-Canada, Rev. Tim Teuscher has sent a letter this week to all congregations affiliated to LCC, about the latest decisions of the federal government regarding social issues that contradict the values that we, confessional Lutherans stand for. All members are invited to read the document. You may [click here to](#) read the letter. You may also find the synod's position on those topics in the [LCC's website](#).

8 - BIG THANK YOU! I want to thank those who use their talents, time and treasures to keep our congregation afloat. This week I thank brothers and sisters from **the recent past**, who have sat on the boards and did so much for our church: **Hilton Hack** (chairman and elder for many years, served also on worship committee), **Fred Butler** (Properties, elder, usher), **Theo Dillenberg** (various special committees, Vice-chairman), **Bernd Halwas** (treasurer, reader), **Irene Heggert** (envelope secretary), **Heather Graham-Navis** (Christian education, confirmation classes, VBS, vegetable garden, community kitchen), **Sherry Luft** (PPC secretary, properties, caretaker of our flower and vegetable gardens etc),

Andrea Dean (Sunday school teacher), **Warren Ohlhauser** (treasurer, church website), **Sabine Dillenberg** (who organized and catalogued our whole library collection), **Myrna Knoll** and **Drinda Weitz** (Sunday School, youth group). Thank you all for your faithful service. "I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy". Philippians 1: 3 & 4

BIRTHDAYS OF THE WEEK

Dec 10 – John Dalmoro

Dec 11 – Gordon Lemke

Dec 12 – Megan Smallwood

Dec 13 – Dana Salter

NEW BIRTH (BAPTISM) ANNIVERSARIES:

Dec 10 – Emilie Graumann

If any name is missing, please let me know. We pray for you! God bless you all!

FEASTS, FESTIVALS and COMMEMORATIONS IN THE CHURCH YEAR THIS WEEK:

December 7 – Ambrose of Milan, *Pastor and Hymnwriter*

December 13 – Lucia, *Martyr*

You may look them up on the internet to find out more about those faithful women and men!

OUR CALENDAR THIS WEEK

Tuesday, Dec 8 – Youth bible study (zoom) 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Dec 8 – Sunday School (zoom) 4:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Dec 9 – Bible Study (zoom) 7 p.m.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

Please send us your prayer requests. We now have a "prayer chain" where a group of people (the "prayer warriors") pray for your needs. Your requests will be shared with Lorraine Duncan, from our board of evangelism, who will include them in the prayer chain.

DIE DEUTSCHE ECKE!

Christliche Lieder auf Deutsch

Enjoy this Advent song on YouTube: **Macht hoch die Tuer**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BAJ-059Vdwc>

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AND NOW...THE "CLEAN JOKE": :-D

A Sunday school teacher asked the children just before she dismissed them to go to church, "*And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?*"

Annie replied, "*Because people are sleeping.*"

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Thank you for taking your time to read our newsletter. "Talk to you" next week again, God willing. Feel free to read my previous Agape News in our website. God bless you all. Stay safe everybody, but MOST IMPORTANTLY: stay faithful to the Lord!

In His service,

Rev. M. Zeuch, on Dec 8, 2020 Anno Domini