



The “AGAPE” #25

ST. MATTHEW LUTHERAN CHURCH, CALGARY AB

June 17, 2021

Proclaiming the love of Jesus Christ in Bridgeland since 1913

THE SEASON AFTER PENTECOST – THE NON-FESTIVE PERIOD OF THE CHURCH YEAR

A “BLOG-LIKE” NEWSLETTER FROM PASTOR ZEUCH



Hello dear SMLC Family and friends!

Welcome to another edition of my blog / letter / newsletter, for some, an “e-newsletter”, whatever we want to call it. I have once more waited to send this edition out because I was waiting for the government’s new guidelines about the reopening of things. We are slowly getting closer to what we call “normal”.

Isn’t it wonderful that we are having worship services at church again? The Psalmist says: I rejoiced with those who said to me, “Let us go to the house of the LORD.” Psalm 122:1

I wish more and more members will feel comfortable to come for in-person worship services. I have missed so many of you who used to be there, an active and faithful part of the fellowship. We pray that no one will get lost or “slip through the cracks” after the pandemic is over. I want to **encourage you** to not abandon your church family, because this is what we are: a family in Christ!

In our recent survey we handed out to you, there was a comment from someone saying that “church is for prayer and worship, not for fellowship”. I will have to kindly disagree with the anonymous brother or sister. Fellowship is a particularly important part of the Church of Christ. It is called “koinonia” in Greek and it promotes a “oneness in Christ”, the “communion of saints”. Hence the family aspect of any Christian church. We need each other and we were meant to be together not just for worship but sharing and celebrating life and how God has blessed us. In Acts chapter two we read that the first Christians of the early church were always together and shared food and even their possessions. So, I

encourage you to get involved with our Mission and Ministry, be active in this fellowship and be blessed! And, speaking of **encouragement**, maybe you are asking yourself what that picture on the first page means. This is Barnabas, the apostle – or St. Barnabas, if you will. We commemorate his life on June 11. His name means “**son of encouragement**”. He was a helper in the ministry of the apostle Paul. We could describe him with three words: ENCOURAGEMENT, SUPPORT and GENEROSITY. You can read about Barnabas in Acts, chapters 4, 11, 13, 14 and 15.

Encouragement is the word for today. I encourage you to continue steadfast in your faith by being nourished. You find spiritual nutrition in the “means of Grace” – God’s Word and the sacrament. If you haven’t been to church since pandemic hit us, I encourage you to consider joining us again. I also encourage you to not lose faith and hope in rough times like these, knowing that God looks after us and He is the Jehovah-Jireh: “the Lord provides” for his children. I encourage you to quench your spiritual thirst in God’s Word, to keep your prayer life alive, to connect with your brothers and sisters in Christ. Give them a call! Finally, I encourage you to pray for our congregation, for me as your pastor, to support your church with your “triple t’s”: time, treasure, and talents. I do hope to see you at church – don’t forget to sign up for services!

Let us start a “Barnabas Ministry” of general encouragement! May God help us to follow the example of St. Barnabas, encouraging each other.

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PASTOR’S TWO CENTS

One of the comments of our survey was this: “Current events should be part of the sermon”. I commend the anonymous person who wrote this. It is true: we should be more engaged in what is happening in the world and in our local society to go out there and be the “salt of the earth”. Maybe not only in sermons, but here in my letter as well! Remember: this is not the official opinion of the congregation. The views expressed here are just part of this pastor’s humble opinion or interpretations of current events. I will try to highlight a few of them.

The Holy Scriptures takes the “golden rule” very seriously. “Love your neighbour” is a summary of God’s Law, after “love the Lord your God above all things”. That’s the second tablet of the Ten Commandments. **Intolerance**, Xenophobia, any other kind of prejudice or “phobia” including “islamophobia”, anti-semitism, “homophobia”, “christophobia” etc, they are all hate crimes. You may say: “oh, those are trendy words”. Yes...and they are also called SIN in the biblical viewpoint. So are racism, social injustice, and the list can go on and on. All those sinful attitudes should not be tolerated by us Christians. And we should not remain silent on these things. Prophets of the Old Testament did not remain silent to those matters either. They spoke out.

It deeply saddens my heart to hear about that family of Muslim immigrants being killed in Ontario by some hateful and Islamophobic “dude”. Only a 9-year-old boy survived this hate-motivated crime! May the merciful God bring healing as he tries to survive his injuries. May the Lord give him a home where he can be accepted with love. Likewise, I also weep when Christians are persecuted, tortured, and executed as I write this newsletter. I know too well that the world Media does not give the same attention to that kind of news. But hate is always hate...the opposite of love. By the way, June 20 (Fathers’ Day) is also World Refugee Day – let us reach out for them, pray for them, and welcome them. We have helped a family from Sudan in the recent past. Many of our members came to Canada as refugees themselves. Jesus was also a refugee and had to flee a deadly persecution from Herod. For opportunities to help out, you may check out the Canadian Lutheran World Relief website by clicking [HERE](#).

Residential schools: Another topic from the news is the findings of the mass grave of 215 indigenous children from the Kamloops “residential school”, just one among many. A feeling of disgust filled my heart as I think of how many times has “organized religion” (not Christ’s teachings) used the holy name of God to commit atrocities and unspeakable hate crimes with the government’s support. When Jesus gave his church the Great Commission (“Go, make disciples from all nations”) in Matthew 28:18-20, he did not mean “go and catechize the native pagan people against their will by forcing them to adopt the new teaching through cultural brainwashing, torturing and killing”. This must bring tears to God’s heart. As Lutheran Christians, we are not directly involved historically, but we are Canadian citizens, and we are nevertheless also seen as “the people with a cross”. I once was told by a female elder of the Blackfoot tribe that the cross was

a terribly negative symbol for them, a symbol that represents pain and shame. That is very hard to hear for a Christian like myself.

As Lutherans, we should pray for the victims and survivors and try to establish a better relationship with the First Nations. I have asked for an official statement from our synod, and we finally have received one from Rev. Tim Teuscher, president of the Lutheran Church Canada. I have included his letter here.

A Statement on the Legacy of the Residential School System

A few weeks ago, the devastating and heartbreaking news spread across Canada and throughout the world of the discovery of the remains of 215 children in unmarked graves at the site of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School. What was revealed in Kamloops is not unique; many more indigenous children and their families suffered greatly as a result of the residential schools which were operated by various church denominations with support from the Canadian government.

We—the pastors, deacons and congregations of Lutheran Church—Canada—lament the tragic death of these children, and the devastation the residential school system has caused to so many indigenous families and communities. We acknowledge the grief, anger, and trauma that still prevails among many First Nations, Metis, and Inuit people as a result. And we lament that these atrocities were committed in the name of Christ, and yet are completely contrary to the work and teaching of Christ who suffered and gave His life for every sinner “from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages” (Revelation 7:9) and who has commanded through His apostles that those who bear His holy name by virtue of their baptism are to “do good to everyone” (Galatians 6:10).

As President of Lutheran Church—Canada, I ask that our church family across the country call upon our gracious and merciful Father in heaven in prayer: that He would bestow the comfort and peace and healing of Christ upon our indigenous sisters and brothers who have been traumatized and impacted by the legacy of the residential school system; and that would He instil in us all the desire to seek opportunities to share the love of Jesus with those who

suffer.

I encourage our congregations to regularly remember in prayer the ongoing pain and devastation which indigenous peoples in Canada experience as a result of the residential school system.

LCC President Timothy Teuscher

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

1 – SUMMER BREAK FOR ONLINE BIBLE STUDIES: We still have our last Bible study on June 23 and then we will take a break for the summer.

2 – FUNERAL SERVICE FOR FRED BUTLER: You are invited to watch the funeral service for our brother Fred Butler on Zoom. Fred was called home on last May 17. It will take place on Friday, June 25 at 1 p.m. You may log in at 12:30 p.m. Here is the invitation:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89267693704?pwd=M1JYRVZnTGtiWFJURUxzTGJyTnYzUT09>

Meeting ID: 892 6769 3704 / Passcode: 304575

Or by phone: +1 587 328 1099 Canada

3 – MEMORY BIBLE VERSE: Colossians 3:23–24

“Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ”.

Auf Deutsch: “Alles, was ihr tut, das tut von Herzen als dem HERRN und nicht den Menschen, und wisset, daß ihr von dem HERRN empfangen werdet die Vergeltung des Erbes; denn ihr dienet dem HERRN Christus.“ Kolosser 3, 23-24

4 – BAPTISM ANNIVERSARIES FOR JUNE:

We thank God and celebrate the new birth in Christ of the following members:

June 1 – Rudy Sieb

June 20 – Irene Hergert

June 3 – Theo Dillenberg	June 22 – Thomas Weitz
June 4 – Halle Butterwick	June 23 – Sabine Dillenberg
June 6 – Edith Dreifke	June 24 – Ed Derheim
June 7 – Melissa Zeuch	June 24 - Emilie Grant
June 11 – Duke Luft	June 24 – Thais Zeuch
June 11 – Lily Luft	June 25 – Vanessa Dean
June 11 – Elli Zippel	June 25 – Mark Sander
June 15 – Randal Haynes	June 28 – Salma Herchen
June 19 – Siegrid Robak	June 30 – Marian Williams

5 – WHAT IS PLANNED FOR THE NEXT DAYS?

- June 20 (Sun): German & English services with Holy Communion
- June 23 (Wed): Online Bible Study led by Pastor @ 7 p.m.
- June 24 (Thurs): Online PPC meeting @ 7 p.m.
- June 25 (Fri): Online Funeral service for Fred Butler – On Zoom @ 1 p.m.
- June 27 (Sun): German worship service @ 9:30 a.m./ English service @ 11 a.m.

6 - NAMES OF UPCOMING SUNDAYS, CELEBRATIONS, FEASTS & FESTIVALS

- June 20 – Fourth Sunday after Pentecost, Fathers’ Day, World Refugee Day
- June 24 – The Nativity of St. John the Baptist
- June 25 – Presentation of the Augsburg Confession
- June 26 – Jeremiah
- June 27 – Cyril of Alexandria, Pastor and Confessor
- June 27 – Fifth Sunday After Pentecost
- June 28 – Irenaeus of Lyons, Pastor
- June 29 – St. Peter & St. Paul, Apostles
- July 4 – Sixth Sunday after Pentecost
- July 6 – Isaiah

7 – PASTOR’S VACATIONS: I will be away from June 29 to July 8. If there’s any emergency, please call our office or our chairman, Peter Graumann.

8 – ATTENTION: SERVICE ON JULY 4. From now on, most of the times when your pastor is on vacations, we will have only one joint reading service led by elders & lay members.at **10 a.m.** July 4th is a reading service.

9 – CONGREGATIONAL MEETING: Our online voters meeting took place on last June 13. The results from the questionnaire were discussed and some action plans came out of those discussions. If you are interested in reading the minutes of that meeting, please call our office and ask Andrea for a copy.

10 – PRAYER REQUESTS: Send us your prayer requests. We will share them with our prayer chain.

SYNOD & REGION NEWS



† If you would like to receive news from the Lutheran Church-Canada every week, you can sign in to be in the mailing list and conveniently get the “Info Digest” in your email box. For “the weekly news and the views beyond the pews”, you may click directly here:

<https://www.lutheranchurchcanada.ca/news/infodigest/>

GEISTLICHE LIEDER AUF DEUTSCH



Anbetung. Was fuer ein schoenes Lied! Bitte zeigen Sie dieses Video Ihrem deutschsprachigen Familienmitglied. Ich hoffe dieses Lied wird etwas Freude in ihre Herzen bringen!

Wenn Sie diesen Newsletter am Computer lesen, können Sie hier unten klicken. Genießen Sie es!

ANBETUNG – Janz Team

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H_lojwTXO1M&list=PLaoyYdMHPjXkYL213pVGdAUHH7KH265cW&index=5

BIBLE LITERACY FOR CHILDREN:

A SUMMARY OF THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

(in a very simple language)

Ruth

The Book of Ruth is a beautiful story. It is in the Old Testament.

The Book of Ruth is about a young widow, Ruth. Ruth was a foreigner. But she came to Israel to help Naomi. (Naomi was Ruth's husband's mother.) Ruth left her own gods, to serve the real God. Naomi and Ruth were very poor. But Ruth could collect any grain that remained after the harvest. This was God's law. And one man who respected this law was called Boaz. So, Ruth came to Boaz's field to collect grain. Boaz saw Ruth and he loved her. He agreed to pay her family's debts, so that he could marry Ruth.

Ruth was just a poor foreigner. But her family became Israel's royal family. Both King David and Jesus belonged to this family.

Adapted from <https://www.easyenglish.bible/>



And now, our "clean joke":



Moses' first and last day as a lifeguard.

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CLOSING WORDS

Thank you for taking your time to read my newsletter. If you don't wish to receive it anymore, just let us know. See you (some of you) at church on Sundays. May God's peace fill your days ahead. And, before I forget, have a blissful, relaxing, peaceful and blessed SUMMER!

In His service,

Rev. Markus Zeuch

On June 17, 2021 Anno Domini

Ph: (403) 837-4600

Visit our website: www.stmatthewlutherancalgary.com

THE STAFF OF ST. MATTHEW

Organist/Pianist: Johnson Philip

Cantor: Dana Salter

Youth Leader: Elizabeth Schieman

Secretary: Andrea Sovary (403) 266-1458

Chairman: Peter Graumann (403) 275-2166

Head Elder: vacant

Church Office hours are 9:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M. Monday-Thursday

