



The “AGAPE” #35

A “BLOG-LIKE” NEWSLETTER FROM PASTOR ZEUCH

THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD

ST. MATTHEW LUTHERAN CHURCH, CALGARY AB

January 11, 2022 Anno Domini

Proclaiming the love of Jesus Christ in Bridgeland for 108 years!

Happy New Year, everybody! Ein gesegnetes neues Jahr!

I am back with my first (news)letter in 2022, hoping that this year will be filled with good news, full of joy and peace, lots of blessings! We keep asking that God will deliver us from this lingering and tiring global pestilence. It has now affected our own household: our son Lucas got this omicron and is still in isolation as I write these lines. This should be over soon. My wife Thais, my daughter Melissa and myself tested negative. Thanks for your prayers for our family.

We had a busy (but blessed) end of year, a “Christmastide” filled with lots of opportunities to thank God for sending Jesus to us to be our Saviour. We had two midweek evening services: The Advent service at church and Epiphany service on Zoom. We had ten services in a week, including two “Christmas Eves”. Some people (members and non-members) attended church online, others at church. The weather was not inviting at all to leave the comfort of our homes, since it was a very long “cold snap” (a stratospheric polar or arctic vortex, to be more scientific) that hit North America in December and into the first week of January. Our youth group celebrated the “twelve days of Christmas” with short online meetings. They had daily devotions and little gift exchange.

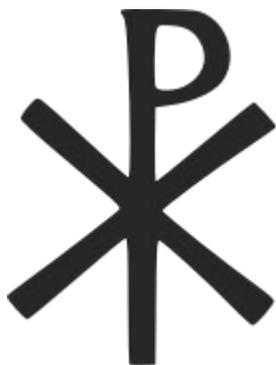
As a congregation, we haven’t planned very different things for 2022 since it all depends of this Covid pandemic. This year we will plan ahead for next year’s 110th anniversary! We will continue to live-stream our worship services, hoping to reach those who, either don’t feel comfortable in coming to church or are in isolation, in homes or even far away. We will continue to have our Bible studies online, as well as our board meetings. We hope we will be able to continue gathering at church and having fellowship in the in-person services.

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And, speaking of the pandemic, have you noticed that all variants of this virus have the name of a letter from the Greek alphabet? It started with Alfa (A α), first discovered in the UK. Then the Beta (B β), first discovered in South Africa. Then Gamma (Γ γ), first discovered in Brazil. Then Delta (Δ δ), first discovered in India. So far, it's all in "alphabetical order". Following the logic, the next letter to Delta should have been the Epsilon (E ε), but instead, the current variant is now the Omicron (O ο), first discovered in South Africa. Omicron is the 15th letter of the Greek alphabet. Why the use of Greek letters? And why were other letters left out? Well, according to what I have read, the World Health Organization named it this way to avoid confusion and stigma. The other Greek letters are being used for minor variants and don't make the news. Those that "make the news" are the "variants of significance". Only two letters won't be used in this system: the letter "Nu" (N ν), for example, remembers the word "new" in English. The letter "Chi" may be confused with the name of China's president, Xi Jinping.

Now, you may ask, what's my point? Well, still thinking of the Greek alphabet, the holy name of Jesus Christ (whose Sunday we celebrated on January 9) was represented by the 22nd letter, the "Chi" (Χ) and the 17th letter, the "Rho" (Ρ) (looks like a "P" but it's pronounced as an "R"). The **Chi Rho** is one of the earliest forms of christogram, formed by superimposing the first two (capital) letters—chi and rho (**ΧΡ**)—of the Greek word **ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ** (Christos) in such a way that the vertical stroke of the rho intersects the center of the chi. You must have seen this symbol in churches, paraments, furniture etc.

So, the letter Chi (represented as an "X") is indeed important...maybe not for the pandemic nomenclature, but for us. On that note, next time when you complain every time when people abbreviate "Christmas" with "Xmas", remember that there is nothing wrong with that. The "X" represents Christ anyways. Nobody "took Christ away" by writing like this, even if this was the intention. So, I hope you had a merry "Xmas".



The Chi-Rho symbol was used by the Roman Emperor Constantine (306–337 AD) as part of a military standard. Constantine's standard was known as the Labarum.

The Jesus of Nazareth we know from Scripture, was born in Bethlehem, Judea, we just celebrated his birth. He grew up in Nazareth, Galilea and died in Jerusalem, Judea. Much more than "the son of a carpenter", He was man and God. "On the third day, he rose from the dead and ascended into heaven". He could



only do this because he was the anointed Son of God, the CHRIST (“Christos”). Jesus Christ is the holy name with which we start another new year, the name in whom we were baptized, the name that was used engraved on Constantine’s ropes under this symbol (Constantine’s monogram). He is God, the Son who was at the beginning, before the foundation of the universe. And here we remember other two Greek letters: He said of himself: “I am the **ALPHA** and the **OMEGA**”, the beginning and the end (the first and the last letters). Revelation 22:13

He promises to be with us, to walk with us through another new year. He said: “And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matth 28:20).

Amen.

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WHAT IS PLANNED FOR THE NEXT WEEKS?

UPCOMING SUNDAYS, CELEBRATIONS, FEASTS & FESTIVALS

JAN 16 (Sun): The Second Sunday after Epiphany. German worship service with Holy Communion @ 9:30 a.m. / English worship service with Holy Communion @ 11 a.m.

JAN 17 (Mon): Martin Luther King Jr. Day

JAN 18 (Tues): The Confession of St. Peter

JAN 19 (Wed): Online Confirmation Class @ 4:30 p.m. Online Bible Study @ 7 p.m.

JAN 20 (Thurs): Online PPC meeting @ 7 p.m.

JAN 22 (Sat): Sanctity of Human Life Day

JAN 23 (Sun): Third Sunday after Epiphany. German worship service @ 9:30 a.m. / English worship service @ 11 a.m.

JAN 24 (Mon): St. Timothy, pastor and confessor

JAN 25 (Tues): The Conversion of St. Paul

JAN 26 (Wed): St. Titus, pastor and confessor. Calgary Circuit Winkel (SMLC hosting) 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. / Confirmation Class @ 4:30 p.m. / Bible Study @ 7 p.m.

JAN 27 (Thurs): John Chrysostom, preacher

JAN 30 (sun): Fourth Sunday after Epiphany. German worship service @ 9:30 a.m. / English worship service @ 11 a.m.

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2022 JANUARY						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION:

YOUTH GROUP: Our youth group will continue to have online Bible studies and (hopefully) some social activities, depending on the Covid situation. The frequency of the meetings and dates will be sent out to the group. Also, some of our youth are considering attending the National Youth Gathering. Here is the information: “**The 2022 National Youth Gathering** will be in Winnipeg from July 15-19, and registration is available now until April 15, 2022. The theme is “In Not Of,” based on Philippians 3:20. If you are a youth leader or a youth (between grades 7 to 12 in June 2022), please plan to join us! For more info, visit <https://lccnyg.ca/registration/>.”

CONFIRMATION CLASSES: teachers Koreen and Heather will resume their online classes with our five confirmands. The classes are now every Wednesday. Our confirmands are: Melissa Zeuch, Salma Herchen, Emilie and John Pfeifer, Jordan Felde. May God bless your time as you grow in Christ!

BIBLE STUDY: We will resume our Bible studies on the Augsburg Confession. We will continue to do this on zoom (online). We will also decide on a few things: 1) which topics should be study next? Any member may suggest topics, we will appreciate your suggestions. 2) How often should we have Bible Study? 3) Who is willing to help out the pastor by leading Bible studies?

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LUTHERAN CHURCH-CANADA’S SYNODICAL CONVENTION 2022

If you are reading this newsletter electronically, you may have access to the entire first pre-convention bulletin dating from Sept 2021 by clicking on the link below:

<https://www.lutheranchurchcanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/11/2021/10/2022-Pre-Convention-Bulletin-1.pdf>

Here is a summary of the letter: PRE-CONVENTION BULLETIN #1

CONVENTION DATES: The Twelfth Regular Convention of Lutheran Church–Canada will meet from June 10-13, 2022. **CONVENTION LOCATION:** The convention will be held at the Delta Hotels Edmonton South Conference Centre in Edmonton, Alberta. **CONVENTION THEME:** The theme for the convention is Stand Firm In The Faith. It is based on 1 Corinthians 16:13 and was chosen for our convention that was originally scheduled for 2021 in recognition of the 500th Anniversary of Martin Luther’s famous ‘Here I Stand’ speech at the Diet of Worms in 1521. Although our convention is being held a year later, the same theme has been retained since standing firm in the faith is probably more necessary now than ever as a result of Covid-19 ramifications.

Some important dates for congregations:

February 10, 2022 Deadline for congregations to return to the Synod office the Nomination Forms for President, Vice-President, and Regional Pastor

March 10, 2022 Deadline for congregations to return to the Synod office the Nomination Form for Circuit Counsellor

March 12, 2022 Deadline for congregations to return to the Synod office the Appointment Form for Pastor and Lay Delegates from the congregation.

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DIE DEUTSCHE ECKE: WAS BEDEUTET EIPHANIAS?

Epiphantias, Epiphania, Epiphanie („Erscheinung“) bzw. **Epiphantiasfest** ist der ursprüngliche und heute noch in der evangelischen Kirche gebräuchliche Name eines am 6. Januar begangenen Festes im Christentum; Es wird als „Fest der Erscheinung des Herrn: Epiphantias“ bezeichnet.

In der katholischen und Lutherischen Kirchen wird es als Hochfest der **Erscheinung des Herrn** bezeichnet und in vielen Kalendern auch als **Dreikönigsfest, Dreikönigstag, Heilige Drei Könige** und **Heiligedreikönigstag** , In Österreich wird dieser Tag auch *Weihnachtszwölfer* genannt. Diese Bezeichnung leitet sich vermutlich von dem alten Brauchtum ab, das Weihnachtsfest zwölf Tage lang zu begehen, wovon der letzte Tag das Fest der Erscheinung des Herrn war.

Das Fest wird von den Westkirchen der Anbetung des Kindes durch die Weisen aus dem Morgenland zugeordnet. In den orthodoxen Kirchen ist es das Hochfest der Taufe des Herrn und der Offenbarung der allerheiligsten Dreieinheit.

ZWEI LIEDER AUF DEUTSCH IN EIPHANIAS

Ich hoffe Sie geniessen es!

J.S. Bach - Chorus "Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern"



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gBfHemeJTfg>

DREI KOEN'GE WANDERN IN MORGENLAND

Lutherischer Chor aus Porto Alegre, Brasilien - 1983

Solist: Manfred Zeuch (mein Bruder)

In Chor singend: Markus Zeuch (Bass)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kRCrf4La3VM&t=7s>



A Lutheran minister is driving down to Edmonton and he's stopped in Red Deer for speeding.

The police officer smells alcohol on his breath and then he sees an empty wine bottle on the floor, and he says, "Sir, have you been drinking?"

The minister says, "Just water."

The sheriff says, "Then why do I smell wine?"

And the minister looks down at the bottle and says, "Good Lord, He's done it again!"

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Thank you for taking your time to read my newsletter. May God's peace fill your days ahead.

In His service,

Rev. Markus Zeuch

Ph: (403) 837-4600

Visit our website: www.stmatthewlutheranalgary.com

Follow us on Facebook and YouTube!

We offer pastoral care in English, German, Portuguese, and Spanish.

THE STAFF OF ST. MATTHEW

Organist/Pianist: Johnson Philip

Cantor: Dana Salter

Youth Leaders: Elizabeth Schieman & Emilie
Graumann

Secretary: Andrea Sovary (403) 266-1458

Chairman: Peter Graumann (403) 275-2166

Head Elder: vacant