



# AGAPE # 4 of 2023

March 16, 2023 (THE SEASON OF LENT)

A "BLOG-LIKE" NEWSLETTER FROM PASTOR ZEUCH

**ST. MATTHEW LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**110 years proclaiming Christ in Bridgeland!**

Hello again, peace and joy in Jesus!  
 We are having **Confirmation** this year!

I thought I would elaborate on this topic for this issue. We haven't had the confirmation rite since April 2019 among us. After two years of studying the Small Catechism (M. Luther, 1529) and the Bible, we will welcome five kids on April 2<sup>nd</sup> (Palm Sunday) as our new communicant members (members of the church who are eligible to take Holy communion)! They are **Salma Herchen, Melissa Zeuch, Jordan Felde, John and Emily Pfeifer**. It will be a total of twenty kids that I had the blessing to confirm since I was installed as your pastor at SMLC. I want to take this opportunity to thank our two volunteer teachers for the faithful and tireless teaching during this period, **Koreen Graumann** and **Heather Graham-Navis**. We are so blessed to have these volunteers to do this important job, that, in many churches, is done by the pastor. They can now "rest from their labors". Mission accomplished! You sure did a great job!

Now, I know that most of you, dear readers, were confirmed in the past...you come to receive the body and blood of Christ at the altar, so you must be a confirmed member. My confirmation was back in 1976 in Brazil, which sounds like ancient history to my kids! I was confirmed by my father. It doesn't matter how long ago you had your confirmation day. Let me ask you a few questions: Do you know the date you were confirmed? The name of the church and the pastor who confirmed you? Next question: Do you still remember and hold dear to your heart your confirmation Bible verse that you were supposed to keep for your entire life? If you forgot, please go ahead, and do some digging and find out what is your confirmation verse. It should be always guiding you through life's journey.

My next question to you: Do you really know why we have confirmation in the Lutheran Church? What is the purpose of it? Allow me to help you by having us all think about this Christian rite. Just to clarify, it was not ordained by God in Scripture, nor is it a sacrament.



**What happens in confirmation?**

Confirmation means "saying yes". In confirmation God's promise to the individual made at baptism is confirmed: God confirms his promise to be with the baptised always and he or she receives the blessing and a special greeting from the church in the form of a Bible verse that is thought of as a kind of life companion. Confirmation is not a sacrament in the Evangelical Lutheran Church but a rite that also marks the passage from childhood to youth.

**Preparing for confirmation**

Confirmation presupposes baptism and a time of preparation. Together with his or her classmates or other teenagers from the parish the candidate for confirmation meets with a pastor or another teacher once a week for two school years to learn about the Christian faith and to talk about life's big questions and about what it means to believe in God. Confirmation is something you choose and not something you need to celebrate if you have been baptised as a child. It is not a condition to be saved!

**Part of the church service**

Confirmation usually takes place during the church service on special Sundays during spring. Traditionally, the Christian churches have done baptisms and confirmations on Palm Sunday, as we are doing as well this year (April 2nd). After the ceremony in the church, most families gather to celebrate. Note that this is NOT a graduation, where the 'student' is now ready with his/her obligations and leaves the school, going away for life. The confirmed kids are invited to STAY in church, to be an active member of our fellowship, to have a living relationship with God.

**After the day of Confirmation**

They are now eligible to take Holy Communion with all other communicant members of the church. They are also encouraged to join the youth group of our church. The congregation expects them to be faithful to their vows, after all, they will be promising to be faithful to God all of their lives.

We wish our five children God's richest blessings as they take this important step in their faith journey, so that they may walk with Jesus for the rest of their lives.

As for you, member of our congregation, please welcome these kids and encourage them to keep coming to church, they need your support! To finalize, remember the promises you made at the altar when you were confirmed in your Christian faith. Amen.

Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life. Rev 2:10

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**OUR EVENING SERVICES:**

We have been offering midweek evening services



every Wednesday during Lent, where several pastors came to speak. We still have two to go, as I finish this newsletter. I want to encourage you to keep coming to meet these pastors and to worship the Lord in this final stretch of the Lenten journey, giving him thanks for laying down His life so that we could have new life in Him. I also want to thank **Lori Salter** for providing us with the delicious soup suppers.

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## MARK IT ON YOUR CALENDAR!

**Mar 16 (Thurs):** Last confirmation class (online)!

**Mar 19 (Sun):** Fourth Sunday in Lent. Worship services: In German @ 9:30 a.m. In English @ 11 a.m. Luncheon with confirmands and testing with elders.

**Mar 20 (Mon):** Vernal Equinox (Spring begins)!

**Mar 21 (Tue):** Birth of Johann Sebastian Bach (kantor, composer). You can celebrate him by listening to either St. Matthew's Passion or St. John's Passion (YouTube).

**Mar 22 (Wed):** Pastor leads Bible study for pastors at the winkel in Torrington, AB

**Mar 22 (Wed):** Soup supper @ 6 p.m. & Lenten evening service (7 p.m.). P. Zeuch (me) leading the service.

**Mar 23 (Thurs):** Parish Planning Counsel meeting @ 7 p.m.

**Mar 26 (Sun):** Fifth Sunday in Lent. Worship services: In German @ 9:30 a.m. In English @ 11 a.m.

**Mar 29 (Wed):** Adult Instruction for new members

**Mar 29 (Wed):** Soup supper @ 6 p.m. & Lenten evening service (7 p.m.). Guest speaker: P. Eric Moffett (Foothills Lutheran Church).



**Apr 2 (Sun):** Palm Sunday (*Palmarum*). Worship services: In German @ 9:30 a.m. In English @ 11 a.m. **Confirmation of five candidates!**

**Apr 6 (Thurs):** Maundy Thursday evening service with Communion @ 7 p.m.

**Apr 7 (Good Friday):** German worship @ 9:30 a.m. / English worship @ 11 a.m.

**Apr 7 (Good Friday):** Tenebrae Service @ 8 p.m.

**Apr 9 (Easter Sunday):** The resurrection of the Lord. Worship services: In German @ 9:30 a.m. In English @ 11 a.m.

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**Bible Study:** We are resuming our Bible studies after Easter, on April 12. We will still meet on Zoom every Wednesday after that, always at 7 p.m. The topic for this year is the Lectionary (the readings for each Sunday). Please join us and be blessed!

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**WORSHIP TERMINOLOGY: THE "GLORIA PATRI"**

Latin for "glory to the Father." A trinitarian doxology used to conclude a psalm or introit .

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**HIGHLIGHTS & CHRISTIAN RITES** – Births, baptisms, confirmation, weddings & funerals

**FUNERALS:** We had to say goodbye to **John Forrester** on March 15<sup>th</sup>. He is now with God and we shall see him again in the resurrection!



**UNSERE DEUTSCHE ECKE!**

Es ist wieder diese besondere Zeit, die Passionszeit, wenn wir an Jesu Tot und Auferstehung denken und was es eigentlich fuer uns bedeutet. Es ist auch die Zeit wenn wir Bach's wunderschoene Johannes Passion hoeren! Wenn Sie dies auf einem Computer lesen, koennen Sie auf dem Link klicken und dann den Video anschauen.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3VjBXhqxm20>



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## OUR 110th ANNIVERSARY

St. Matthew Lutheran Church is celebrating its 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year with thanksgiving to our God. We are so thankful to our Lord for his presence, His providence, and His blessings, nourishing His people with Word and Sacraments all over those years! Get to know what happened and where did we come from. "Thus far has the Lord helped us" (1 Samuel 7:12). Here are some highlights (continuation from last issue) of our rich history, in chronological order:



- 1953 (May) Basement completely excavated to provide more room for the auditorium.
- 1955 (Dec.) Rev. Fred Stark serves as pastor until 1988.
- 1956 (Nov.) Carillonic bells installed.
- 1958 (May) Neon Cross placed on spire.
- 1959 (Fall) Modern Kitchen built and more Sunday school rooms provided.
- 1959 (Fall) Robert Holst serves as vicar until July 1960.
- 1960 (Jan.) Name officially changed to "ST. MATTHEW" Lutheran Church.
- 1960 (Fall) Parents' room provided.
- 1962 (June) East balcony built to accommodate choirs and pipe organ.
- 1962 (July) Pipe organ purchased.
- 1962 (Sept) Otto Brillinger served as a vicar until July of 1963.

More to follow on our next edition of AGAPE!

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**A FEW ANNOUNCEMENTS** (just in case you missed our Sunday bulletin):

**ENGLISH SUNDAY SCHOOL:** We are very excited to have some new members joining our church. We are blessed to have some beautiful children joining as well. The Christian Education board is looking for

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volunteers to begin a Sunday school program. No experience necessary and all materials will be supplied. Sunday school will run during the service, beginning at the start of the sermon and returning back to the congregation for communion. If you have some time to commit and want to help in this blessed service, please contact Koreen at 403-275-2166 or [kgraumann@shaw.ca](mailto:kgraumann@shaw.ca).

**CARPET UPDATE:** The Properties Board has been busy meeting with contractors and getting quotes for the carpet replacement. They are welcoming the congregation to give feedback on three carpet choices. There will be carpet samples in the parish hall for the next three Sundays with an anonymous voting system in place so members can be involved in the selection process. Thank you for your support.

**LADIES MONTHLY BAG LUNCH:** Hello ladies, I am wanting to see if any ladies would like to meet monthly for a bag lunch and fellowship? The day and time of the month are open for discussion. Contact Lorraine, Evangelism Chair. Thanks.




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## FROM OUR SYNOD (Lutheran Church-Canada)

### *Prayer for Turkey and Syria:*

Almighty God, merciful Father, Your thoughts are not our thoughts, and Your ways are not our ways. In Your infinite wisdom which is beyond our understanding, You have permitted this disastrous earthquake to befall the people in Turkey and Syria. Direct all efforts to attend to the injured. Console the bereaved. Protect the helpless, deliver all who are still in danger, and give courage and steadfastness to the relief and aid workers. Bring hope and healing to the suffering that they may find relief and restoration. Open our hearts that we would provide necessary aid to those who are afflicted and distressed by this disaster. All this we ask through the bitter sufferings and death of Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You, one God, now and forever.

***Prayer for Ukraine:***

Please continue to remember in prayer our brothers and sisters of the Synod of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in Ukraine (SELCU).

**Concordia Lutheran Seminary** (Edmonton, AB) is having an on-campus open-house for prospective students of any age, interested in pastoral or diaconal formation. The day (Saturday April 22 from 9:30am - 1:30pm) includes a tour of the building, a sample of courses, a chapel service, time to get acquainted with faculty and current (and future) students ... and food: coffee and donuts, and lunch later.

**LWMLC** would like to extend an invitation to all ladies to attend the seminar "Oaks of Righteousness" at **Grace Lutheran Church, Calgary, AB**. The seminar is being presented in each of our districts. Registration information can be found on our [website](#). Learn of God's wonderful exchange, how creation depicts the glory of God, and how women of the Bible exemplify the strength of an oak.



Thank you, again, for taking your time to read this new edition of the Agape. I hope you enjoyed it. If you want to read the previous Agapes, just go to our website and you will find all editions there. May God bless you richly. Come join us for worship on Sundays!

In His service,

**Rev. Markus Zeuch**

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