



DECEMBER 2024

ST. MATTHEW LUTHERAN CHURCH

111 years proclaiming Christ in Bridgeland!

By Rev. Markus Zeuch

Hello SM family!

Advent: A Season of Hope and Expectation

Dear Congregation,

As we enter the sacred season of Advent, let us embrace this time of preparation and anticipation for the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Advent invites us to reflect on the hope, peace, joy, and love that He brings into our lives.

This period is an opportunity to renew our faith and deepen our relationship with God. Let us take these weeks to prepare our hearts and minds for the coming of Christ, not just as a historical event, but as a living presence in our daily lives.

May we all be filled with the hope of His promises, the peace of His presence, the joy of His salvation, and the love that He shares with us abundantly. Let us carry these blessings into our homes, communities, and the world, spreading the light of Christ wherever we go.

In this season of reflection and anticipation, may we find comfort and inspiration in the words of Isaiah 9:6: "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

Wishing you a blessed and joyful Advent season.

In Christ's love,

Rev. Markus Zeuch



PROFESSION OF FAITH - The following family from Eritrea will be received as new members at our church on December 15th:

Amanuel Tekleab Amanuel & Yordanos Yowhannes Hakin

Children: Hermela, Rai, Mefte, Essay, Nabel and John

John was baptized at our church on November 3rd.

BIBLE STUDY: We continue our Bible studies on Tuesdays, at 7 pm via ZOOM. All are welcome!

ADVENT EVENING DEVOTION – All are invited to our Advent Evening on Wednesday, December 11 at our church basement. We will have a soup supper at 6 p.m. followed by a devotional time. You are invited to bring some dessert!

TANNENBAUM LIGHTING FESTIVAL – For the fourth time we are hosting this wonderful event that brings many people together. Mark it on your calendar: December 14th at 5 p.m. Try to come early and our church fills up quickly. Additional parking will be available at the Riverside School. We will have 4 choirs, a children’s choir, St. Nicholas will show up again and, of course, the delicious German Christmas baking (“Kuchen” and cookies!). A free will donation will be accepted and it goes to the Calgary Food Bank.

CANDLELIGHT SERVICES DEC 24 - As we traditionally do every year on Christmas Eve, we hold a candlelight service in German at 4:45pm and in English at 6:45pm.

HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS: Our office will not have regular hours between December 24, 2024, and January 5, 2025. Emails and voicemails will be checked daily and will be responded to. Regular office hours will return on Monday, January 6, 2025. Thank you.

WOMEN'S CENTRE CHRISTMAS TOY DRIVE: Last year the centre was able to give 4209 gifts (1300 women and 2909 children). Please consider our annual gift drive for the children and women of Bridgeland. **Collection starts now through Dec. 15. Unwrapped only. No food. No used clothes.** How to give: Monetary donations: Gift cards for 11 - 18+yrs in \$25 and \$50 denominations - examples: Sephora, Mall gift cards, Amazon, Walmart, Chapters/Indigo, Sport Chek, EB games, movies, etc. The Centre has partnered with [Castle Toys website](#). Use promo-code

WHAT'S PLANNED FOR DECEMBER?

Dec 1 (Sun): Advent service in German @ 9:30 a.m. English @ 11 am

Dec 3 (Tues): Pastor leads worship at Bethany Riverview

Dec 3 (Tues): Bible Study (online) @ 7 p.m.

Dec 5 (Thurs): Confirmation class on zoom @ 7pm

Dec 5 (Thurs): Tannenbaum group meeting @ 7 p.m.

Dec 8 (Sun): Advent service in German @ 9:30 a.m. English @ 11 am

Dec 10 (Tues): Bible Study (online) @ 7 p.m.

Dec 11 (Wed): Advent evening devotion with soup supper @ 6 p.m.

Dec 12 (Thurs): Staff luncheon



- Dec 12 (Thurs):** Confirmation class on zoom @ 7pm
Dec 14 (Sat): Men's Breakfast @ 9 a.m.
Dec 14 (Sat): Tannenbaum Lighting Festival @ 5 p.m.
Dec 15 (Sun): Advent service in German @ 9:30 a.m. In English @ 11 a.m. / Coffee Hour
Dec 17 (Tues): Bible Study (online) @ 7 p.m.
Dec 19 (Thurs): Caroling at Bethany Riverview @ 6:30 p.m.
Dec 19 (Thurs): Last confirmation class of 2024 @ 7pm
Dec 21 (Sat): Winter solstice!
Dec 22 (Sun): Advent service in German @ 9:30 a.m. In English @ 11 a.m.
Dec 24 (Christmas Eve): Candlelight service in German @ 4:45 p.m. / English @ 6:45 p.m.
Dec 25 (Christmas Day): Communion services – German @ 9:30 and English @ 11 a.m.
Dec 22 (Sun): Communion services – German @ 9:30 and English @ 11 a.m.
Dec 22 (Sun): Online Bible Study in Portuguese
Dec 31 (Tues): New Year's Eve – thank God for the blessings of the year!



Der Christbaum ist der schönste Baum

Carolin Eberhardt in deutschland-lese.de

Weihnachten ist nicht nur das Fest zur Ehrung Christi Geburt, sondern auch ein traditionell familiäres Zusammentreffen in gemütlicher Atmosphäre und besinnlichem Lichterschein. Als Traditionsmerkmal des heidnischen Brauchtums hat sich ab der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts der Weihnachtsbaum in den Wohnstuben des deutschen Bürgertums etabliert. Der neuartige Brauch hatte infolgedessen vermehrt Einfluss auf die Entwicklung des Volksliedergutes.

So wurde der geschmückte Weihnachtsbaum unter anderem in "O Tannenbaum" (1824) von Ernst Anschütz und "Am Weihnachtsbaume die Lichter brennen" (1841) von Hermann Kletke besungen.

Der Christbaum ist der schönste Baum entstammt der Feder des aus Nauheim stammenden evangelischen Theologen und Dichters Johannes Carl (geb. 1806), der als Pfarrer in der Johanneskirche zu Hanau tätig war. Publiziert wurde der Text erstmalig 1875 in einem umfangreichen Band seiner gesammelten Gedichte. Die Melodie des Weihnachtsliedes stammt von dem Kantor Georg Eisenbach. Ursprünglich umfasste das Stück 12 Strophen.

Der Christbaum ist der schönste Baum

Johannes Carl (1806-1887)

Georg Eisenbach (1842)

1. Der Christ - baum ist der schön - ste Baum, den
 wir auf Er - den ken - nen. Im Gar - ten klein, im
 eng - sten - eng - sten - Raum, wie lieb - lich blüht der
 Wun - der - baum, wenn sei - ne Lich - ter
 bren - nen, wenn sei - ne Lich - ter
 bren - nen, ja bren - nen.

*1. Der Christbaum ist der schönste Baum,
 den wir auf Erden kennen.
 Im Garten klein, im engsten Raum,
 wie lieblich blüht der Wunderbaum,
 wenn seine Lichter brennen,
 wenn seine Lichter brennen, ja brennen.*

*2. Denn sieh, in dieser Wundernacht
 ist einst der Herr geboren,
 der Heiland, der uns selig macht.*

*Hätt' er den Himmel nicht gebracht,
wär' alle Welt verloren, verloren.*

*3. Doch nun ist Freud' und Seligkeit,
ist jede Nacht voll Kerzen.
Auch dir, mein Kind, ist das bereit't,
dein Jesus schenkt dir alles heut',
gern wohnt er dir im Herzen, im Herzen.*

*4. O lass ihn ein, es ist kein Traum,
er wählt dein Herz zum Garten,
will pflanzen in den engen Raum
den allerschönsten Wunderbaum
und seiner treulich warten, ja warten.*



E-MAIL LIST: If you are not on our e-mail list yet, I recommend you to contact me (pastor) and give me your email address, so you can receive the **Agape** every month and other notifications or announcements that are important for members or friends of our congregation.

May God's unconditional love (*agape*) reach you and your family during this advent & Christmas time.

In His service,

Rev. Markus Zeuch

Calgary, December 1, 2024

