



## A city that works for all

'...for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, <sup>36</sup> I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' [Matthew 25:35-36]

In the winter of 2019, the Calgary Alliance for the Common Good (CACG) gathered the leaders from its member organizations to discern what issues were most important for the Alliance to work on together. In that assembly, the members identified *Mental Health, Social Isolation, Reconciliation* and *the Environment* as the areas to take action. For the last year or so, Research Action Teams comprised of members of the Alliance have been looking into what kind of actions we could take to help address these areas of concern.

Earlier this week, the leaders from all the different congregations, community organizations and labor unions gathered again to hear back from these Research Action Teams about their issue proposals. In addition to the agreed upon areas, another Research Action Team was created to look at the issues that COVID-19 might have brought to the forefront. From their listening, they found that the people who were vulnerable before, were even more greatly impacted:

- Those that were struggling to make it financially found it even harder
- Social isolation plus the additional financial stress dramatically increased mental illness and abuse
- Many parents who are trying to provide their children with a good education were left out of the virtual learning because they could not afford laptops and internet

For me, one of the more interesting issue proposals that came out of the COVID-19 team's research was about *Guaranteed Basic Income*. The general idea to make sure that everyone would have enough income so that they could have a place to live and food to eat.

As Christians, we are called to love our neighbour and be of service to others following the example of Jesus. The story of Jesus (and the early Church) is one of reaching out to and ministering to those who had been left out, deemed unworthy or undeserving, or declared *unclean*. When I hear about an approach that might directly help those that are struggling the most in our society, my ears perk up!

I know that there are lots of things to be considered such as, *How are we going to pay for this? And How exactly would this be administered?* Fortunately, many people with minds better than mine have been studying this idea and are pretty clear that it is viable.

From my standpoint as a pastor, it certainly strikes me as an idea that we should give a fair hearing because it seems to be so in line with what Jesus calls us to do. I was also proud that so many of the other members of the Calgary Alliance are excited about working on this and the other issues that can help make our society healthier and more compassionate.

I pray that we can continue to have a conversation as a congregation about how we might work to alleviate poverty and help those that are most vulnerable.

Peace,

# When will in-person worship resume?

Your leadership at Lutheran Church of the Cross (Council and staff) has decided not to reopen at this time. The overriding concern is for everyone's health and safety.

Additionally, the restrictions around opening **do not allow us to:**

- Sing
- Share the peace
- Gather for fellowship before or after the service
- Celebrate communion
- Worship more than 50 people at one time

In our assessment, on-line worship seems to be providing an opportunity for people to worship without any risk of infection, while in-person worship cannot provide that assurance.

## **Here is some background information:**

As you have probably heard, our Premier Jason Kenney has given churches permission to begin having services of 50 people or less beginning June 1.

There are rather extensive guidelines that must be followed in order to ensure that social distancing is maintained and risk of spreading the virus is reduced. In addition, the church is tasked with "preventing" the spread of the illness.

The re-opening of churches is being granted primarily to accommodate small communities throughout Alberta where the risk of infection is minimal. Calgary however, has been the epicenter of the COVID-19 outbreak in Alberta, and our risk is greater.

After being on a province-wide call with religious leaders May 21 led by Premier Jason Kenney and Alberta Health Minister Deena Hinshaw, it became clear to us that the virus is still with us and that the proposed measures regarding places of worship are about limiting the risk of outbreak, and then containing any outbreak that might occur. These measures are about mitigating communal risk, not individual risk.

It was particularly striking to us that the Premier said Alberta is the only place in Canada and as far as he knows the only place in the world where gathering sizes for communities of faith (50) are larger than the social gathering limit (15). They also said that all of the outbreaks in Alberta are traced back to communities of faith, even the meat packing plant outbreaks.

Those bits of news caused all sorts of alarm. Why are we doing this? What do we gain?

What our people miss most are intimacy & singing and those are the two things we cannot provide in person at this time, even if we do open. We are experiencing a measure of effectiveness with our online worship, which we will have to continue whether we open or not.

We are continuing to monitor the situation and are in conversation with public health officials, the council, the bishop and other pastors. We also welcome your input and feedback.

During the pandemic, we have been asking and continue to ask: What do you need beyond what we are already providing? We recognize that you may not know, and so we continue to ask and to experiment.

We ask for your prayers and your continued support for your church staff, council, and friends, remembering that none of us have tried to be the church during a pandemic before, we are relying upon God's grace and care, and that love will cover a multitude of sins and omissions.

Peace,  
Pastor Phil and Pastor Laura

# LEAD ... love God with all your heart

Weekly offerings may be mailed into the church, or go on our website [www.churchofthecross.ca](http://www.churchofthecross.ca)

and click the **DONATE** button, **OR**  
etransfer to [churchofthecross@shaw.ca](mailto:churchofthecross@shaw.ca)

**OR** mail to: 10620 Elbow Dr. SW

Many thanks to those of you who have continued your weekly offerings.

## Let's Zoom!

Get in touch with the people in your small group!



We encourage your small group to meet online.

The Church has a Zoom meeting room available for your use. Contact **Sasha Craven** to schedule a meeting time. Her number is available in the member directory, or by phoning the church office.

Don't know how to use Zoom? No problem! Let Sasha know and we'll arrange to show you the ropes.

Would you like to read lessons for our Sunday morning on-line worship services? Go on our website - find '*online opportunities*' and click the link. Sign up where you'd like to read - It's easy! A recording app is offered there too. Record your reading and email to Pastor Laura.

Need help? Contact the church office.



# LEAD ... love God with all your heart

## REMEMBRANCE GARDEN PLANTING

Hello Friends!

I hope this finds you all safe and healthy during these unprecedented times. With the arrival of Spring, our thoughts turn to gardening at LCOC. For the past ten years, we have gathered on the first Saturday in June to remember and commemorate the life of Brittney McInnes. Brittney was a member of our Church community who lost her life through an act of violence.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, **there will NOT be our usual morning** of prayer and fellowship. But the **garden WILL be planted!** We invite you to come individually or in your family group and plant a purple or pink petunia in the heart shaped flower bed by the Church sign. **Come anytime between Monday, June 1 to Friday, June 5.** Traditionally, we plant flowers remembering and honoring our indigenous sisters who have been murdered or disappeared in Canada and these flowers will be planted too.

We invite you to take a moment to reflect, pray and give Thanks to our God and Creator and truly feel His presence in this small act of planting a flower. If you are unable to plant yourself, please leave your petunia at the North entrance. We will check daily and look after this for you. Lastly, please let us know when you have participated so we can put your name in our scrapbook.

God's Blessings,

Judy Shore-Isford - 403-251-7742; Betty Jane Hegerat - 403-278-9871



# LEAD ... love God with all your mind

There are on-line Zoom courses being offered by our Pastors during this time.  
Check them out on our website.

**Scripture Study** - Tuesdays from 11 am - 12:30 pm -  
Corinthians 1 & 2

**Bible Classes with Pastor Phil** - Thursdays from 10:30 am - noon



## ZOOM HYMN SING

Thursday, June 4th

7:30 pm

**Come join with others and sing your favorite Pentecost Hymns!!**



**Come into the same Zoom room as Sunday morning**

# LEAD ... love God with all your mind

## Calgary Alliance Delegates Assembly

- On May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020, about 90 delegates from the organizations belonging to the Calgary Alliance for the Common Good took part in its (virtual) Annual Delegates Assembly.
- Six delegates from the Lutheran Church of the Cross (ELCOC) took part: Pastor Phil Holck, Bill Ogilvie, Gates Fortier, Sasha Craven, Archie Wells and myself.

### Preparation at ELCOC

- ELCOC invited congregation members to provide input on the options being proposed. Our ELCOC Core Team also decided to support all items being proposed, and also ranked the items according to priority. Results were as follows (with item 1 the highest ranking):
  1. Early Intervention and Prevention (mental health support at elementary schools)
  2. Mobile Response Team (24/7 community mental health outreach)
  3. Social Isolation/Inclusion resources (outreach teams within organizations)
  4. Affordable Housing and Public Transit
  5. Trauma-Informed Care (across all appropriate government departments and agencies)
  6. Technology for Schools and Low-Price Internet (computers, internet access)
  7. Guaranteed Basic Income (monthly income level to support stable, healthy life)
  8. Aboriginal Liaison support (Aboriginal Liaison Officer for all five Calgary Police district offices)
  9. Green Stimulus (Net-zero City capital projects, Green Line transit)

### Votes

- ELCOC voted in support of all of the proposals that were on the table. We also indicated an interest in actively supporting items 1-5, as well as item 8, while endorsing the other items without active involvement on the part of ELCOC.
- Overall votes followed a similar pattern. It was noted in discussion that non-active support does not necessarily mean non-support. In the case of ELCOC, it simply reflects our best sense of what we can contribute actively to.

### Next Steps

- Calgary Alliance will be reviewing and likely prioritizing the proposals in the near future to determine where to focus its major efforts.

### Invitation

- We invite congregation members to provide your views on the order of importance of the proposals.
- Further details can be found on the Calgary Alliance website at [www.calgarycommongood.org](http://www.calgarycommongood.org)
- Please provide your input to Pastor Phil at [philholck@gmail.com](mailto:philholck@gmail.com)
- Thank you very much for your support and your input.

Paddy Colfer, ELCOC Liaison with Calgary Alliance for the Common Good

# LEAD ... love God with all your mind

## About Basic Income

From the *Basic Income Canada Network website*:  
[www.basicincomecanada.org](http://www.basicincomecanada.org)

**A basic income guarantee (BIG) ensures everyone an income sufficient to meet basic needs and live with dignity, regardless of work status.**

Basic income supporters span the political spectrum. There are many reasons for that support and they shape the way a basic income is designed in different places. Around the world, having a basic income is recognized as a highly effective way to support important societal goals, including the reduction and elimination of poverty and insecurity; the narrowing of extreme income and wealth inequalities; shared citizenship; and improved democratic and economic functioning.

### Basic income in Canada's history

A form of BIG was established in 1967 with income guarantees for seniors. Shortly afterwards, in 1971, the idea of a wider basic or guaranteed annual income was the key recommendation in a Senate report on poverty (the "[Croll report](#)"). Also in the 1970s, both Canada and the United States ran extensive pilot programs, including a [unique site in Dauphin, Manitoba](#). [A Senate Committee in 2009](#), noting growing inequality and persistent poverty in Canada, said it was time to put a guaranteed income back on the public agenda.

### Basic income in Canada today

Currently, the most significant income guarantees are provided for seniors and children. Old Age Security is provided as a "[demogrant](#)", meaning that almost all adults on reaching 65 can receive it. It is an amount of money provided regularly to individual seniors, regardless of family status, past or present work status or other income. In addition, the Guaranteed Income Supplement is provided to seniors with low income using a "[negative income tax model](#)" of basic income: the lower one's income the greater one's benefit. Children's benefits share similarities. Income guarantees for seniors and children work in tandem with public services to provide a better quality of life than any of us could afford on our own.

### Basic income is not welfare

For working-age Canadians, overall there is little security in the event of job loss, disability, divorce, prolonged illness and treatment, maternity, economic recession and other life events. For those in this age range, Canada's "last resort" income floor is provided by welfare ("social assistance" programs by various names) and it is very unlike a basic income concept. There is no universality, for there are different income floors for different categories of people in different parts of the country. There are many complex rules and conditions that do not apply to other people, often discouraging work effort and causing stress and poor health. In many cases welfare provides an income nowhere near to meeting basic needs. It is a throw-back to an earlier time that is not suitable to life in a modern, affluent democracy.

### A New Reality

Ever increasing rates of technological change are creating a new reality in which automation is replacing human labour, making life better in many ways, but also taking away livelihoods. Employment is increasingly insecure, the economy is shedding jobs, and much socially valuable work continues to go unrewarded. Some people are doing very well while many Canadians are losing ground--in income and wealth as well as in control of time, the ability to raise families and other aspects of citizenship that have been dependent on stable employment. A basic income is key to creating a future that offers security and dignity for all while ensuring a fairer distribution of work, wealth, income and participation in society.

### Basic income: an idea whose time has come.

The advent of universal public health care changed Canadians' lives profoundly: quality medical care provided on the basis of our health, not our bank accounts, makes Canada a more equal, affordable and healthy place to live. Forms of a basic income in Canada have also changed lives profoundly for the better, but only for some. Like health care, having income to meet basic needs is essential for everyone. The challenge now for Canadians is to put basic income on the public agenda, expand our vision, and create a basic income guarantee for all. It could be Canada's next great public policy legacy.

# LEAD ... love God with all your soul

## Summer Worship: Elijah, a prophet for COVID-19 days

The Easter season ends with two major church festivals: The Day of Pentecost (May 31) and the Feast of the Holy Trinity (June 7). Then begins the nearly 6-month-long season of spiritual growth, the season of Pentecost.

This year during the season of Pentecost, we will engage the multiple-chapter story of Elijah. For 10-weeks, we will hear, study, reflect, and discuss the events in Elijah's life as he experiences: call, drought, social isolation, death & resurrection, threat from the rulers of the day, despair & depression, and a word from God (who is pretty quiet).... It seems the Elijah story has a lot to say about our current events and our spiritual relationship to them.

I hope Spirit will inspire you to "tune in". Engage pre-recorded Sunday worship, available anytime! Weekly worship is posted at midnight on Sunday mornings and remains online. Check out the Sermons & Online Worship tab on our website. **Note that worship will continue to be audio only, but there may also be separate video clips to view.**

Worship for Kids will also continue. It includes story and song by Pastor Phil and Word for Children read by various congregation members. Sparkhouse is providing online Sunday School through June 7 and we are exploring options for its replacement once they have finished. All of these resources are also available online 24/7 on the Sermons & Online Worship tab.

In addition, we continue to offer this schedule of virtual face-to-face interaction in our Zoom Prayer Room:

Day	Time	What's happening
Monday-Saturday	10 am	15-minute morning prayer followed by daily check-in
Sunday	11-11:15 am	Singing and Holy Communion (bring your own bread & wine/grape juice)
Sunday	11:15-11:30 am	Fellowship
Sunday	11:30 am - noon	Biblical story & sermon discussion: What are you hearing & what difference does it make?

You can access the Zoom Prayer Room from the COVID-19 & Morning Prayer tab or from any of the posted Sunday services. The same Zoom link is the place for all worship, prayer, and classes offered by the pastors.

We hope Spirit uses our summer worship to inspire love for the Word of God through Elijah, a prophet for all time.

Peace...and deep discipleship!  
Pastor Laura



## Hearts on Fire!



**Our second annual art show is taking place online!**

God is everywhere, doing good things amongst families, neighbours and friends. Get inspired by the goodness in life around you! What lights your heart on fire?

What inspires you and gives you hope?

Our art show is inspired by the story "*The Walk to Emmaus*," found in Luke 24:13-35.

### Here's what to do:

- 1) Create your work of art. The sky is the limit, as long as your art can be photographed or video filmed.
- 2) Take a photo of your art. If your art is a skit, play, drama, or story, make a video!
- 3) Make a short video of yourself. Say "Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_" and then tell us what you love about life or what sets your heart on fire.
- 4) Email your photos and videos (or a link to them) to [lauraholck@gmail.com](mailto:lauraholck@gmail.com)

## AFFIRMING MINISTRY TEAM

### LCOC Bookmobile

For those who are using the social distancing time to catch up on reading, we have a fine selection of books in our Affirming Ministry library. In addition to our usual array, we have novels and collections of stories, mostly by Canadian authors.



We are delighted to have added a beautiful new book for families titled *For Everyone Who Loves Me; A Savvy Parent's Guide* by Susan Ohman and one of her teaching colleagues Dulcie Ingram. You can find information on the book at [www.savvyparent.ca](http://www.savvyparent.ca) where is a downloadable "Daily Checklist" which is included in the book. I highly recommend this book for its lovely design, simplicity, and wisdom.

Books are meant to be read, and I would be happy to deliver your choices to your doorstep, as well as accept returns of any of the Affirming library books which you currently have at home.

You can contact me by email: [bjhegerat@gmail.com](mailto:bjhegerat@gmail.com) or phone 403 278 9871.

I will leave the books on your front step, letting you know in advance that they will be arriving.

All of the covers of the books have been cleaned with a sanitary wipe, and the research I've done tells me that porous material (cloth, paper etc) are poor hosts for the virus and not likely to pose a risk.

So, when you tire of Netflix, or those many tasks around your home that you've just never before had time or inclination to complete (*I still don't have inclination for most of what I could/should be doing in my house*) here's access to new reading material.

Betty Jane

See following pages for the list of books.....

# LEAD ... love God with all your soul

## LCOC Affirming Faith Library

(\*\* Reviews at end of list)

### For children of all ages:

*Heather Has Two Mommies*

Author Lesléa Newman illustrated by Laura Cornell  
Candlewick Press 2015

*Red, A Crayon's Story*

Author Michael Hall  
Greenwillow Books (Harper Collins) 2015

*Introducing Teddy*, a gentle story about gender and friendship

Author Jessica Walton illustrated by Dougal MacPherson  
Bloomsbury Books 2016

*A Church for All*

text by Gayle E. Pitman pictures by Laure Fournier  
Albert Whitman and Company 2018

*The Most Beautiful Place in the World*

Author Ann Cameron  
Yearling Press 1993

*Worm Loves Worm*

Author J.J. Austin  
Harper Collins 2016

*To Everyone Who Loves me*

*A Savvy Parent's Guide*  
Authors: Susan Ohman and Dulcie Ingram  
<https://savvyparent.ca/>

### For older children of all ages:

*When Everything Feels Like the Movies*

(winner of the GG award for children's literature 2015)  
Author Raziel Reid  
Arsenal Pulp Press 2015

*Queer Heroes: Meet 53 LGBTQ Heroes From Past and Present*

Author Arabel Sicardi

Wide-Eyed Editions 2019

\*\**Two Boys Kissing*

Author David Levithan  
Knopf Books for Young Readers 2015

\*\**Be My Love*

Author Kit Pearson (also a GG winner for children's literature  
Harper Trophy Canada, an imprint of Harper Collins 2019-10-12)

*the love and lies of rukhsana ali*

Author Sabina Khan  
Scholastic Press 2019

*Dr. Edith Vance and the Hares of Crawley Hall*

Author Suzette Mayr  
Coach House Books 2017

*Better Nate Than Never*

Author Tim Federle  
Simon and Schuster

### Adults of all ages

*Transforming*, The Bible and the Lives of Transgender Christians

Author Austen Hartke  
Westminster John Knox Press 2018

*a family by any other name*, Exploring Queer Relationships

edited by Bruce Gillespie  
Touchwood Books 2014

*God and the Gay Christian*

Author Matthew Vines  
Convergent Books 2014

*Double Pregnant*, Two Lesbians Make a Family

by Natalie Meisner  
Roseway Publishing 2014

*This One Looks Like a Boy: My Gender Journey to Life as Man*

Author Lorimer Shenher  
Greystone Books 2019-10-07



# LEAD ... love God with all your soul

*\*\*A Two-Spirit Journey: The Autobiography of a Lesbian Ojibwa- Cree Elder*

Author Ma-Nee Chacaby Marie Louisa Plummer

University of Manitoba Press 2019

*Red and White and Royal Blue*

Casey McQuiston

St. Martin's Press

*Pride: The Unlikely Story of the True Heroes of the Miners' Strike*

Author Tim Tate

John Blake Publishing 2018

(there is a very fine film adapted from this title)

## Comic Books

*Ultra Chicken Fun-Time Super Special*

by Sophie Labelle

*The Assnment*

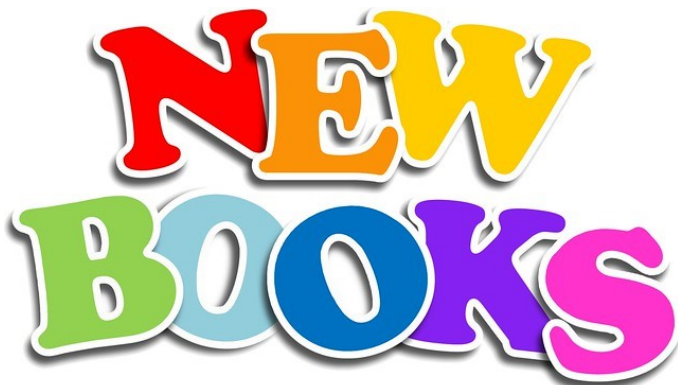
by Sophie Labelle

*Tools against a cissexist world*

by Sophie Labelle

*A bas le cis-tème! Assignee garcon*

by Sophie Labelle



Our LCOC library has a great many books that have not been out on loan in a very long time. One of the collections we have is a complete set of "Christian fiction" by Janette Oke. If anyone is a fan of Mrs. Oke's and would like these books for their own library, please let us know and we will get them to your door.

# LEAD ... love God with all your soul

## The Second Conversion

Tuesday, May 26, 2020

*The following is the daily devotion for Tuesday, May 26, 2020 from the Center for Action and Contemplation. It is part of that week's theme, "Solidarity."*

If the first conversion to solidarity is to befriend or experience compassion for the poor, **the Second Conversion** to solidarity is anger at the unjust situation that caused their poverty. Many people never reach this stage of anger at injustice, especially in the United States. Our cultural worship of individualism and "bootstrap" mentality deprives us of the capacity to empathize with people in need and recognize systemic oppression. When we are in the middle or upper tier of privilege, it is almost impossible to see the many ways the system helped us succeed. We cannot recognize or overcome this "agreed upon delusion" as isolated individuals, mostly because it is held together by the group consensus. The dominant group—in any country or context—normally cannot see its own lies. We have to pay attention to whomever is saying "I can't breathe" to recognize the biases at work.

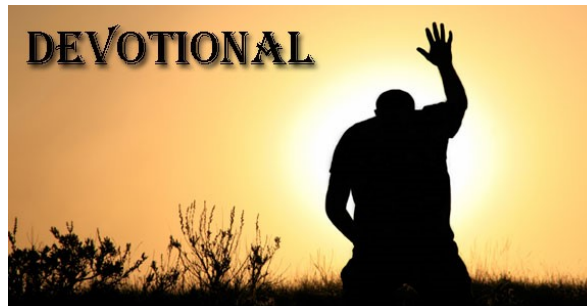
This often only changes when, through friendship with people of different backgrounds and life experiences, we witness mistreatment and marginalization. We get to know someone outside our immediate social circle. Our sister falls in love with someone from another race, religion, or culture. Our grandchild is transgender. We see all the ways life is more difficult for them than it needs to be. We feel their pain instead of standing apart at a safe distance.

Anger is a necessary, appropriate, and useful response to this kind of injustice. It is the beginning of social critique and helps us protect the appropriate boundaries for ourselves and others. Yet anger can be dangerous, too. When it hangs around too long, it becomes self-defeating and egocentric. Then it distorts the message it came to offer us. We can become so intent on pointing out problems that we are never actually willing to be part of the solution. As I like to say, the best criticism of the bad is the

practice of the better, not more criticism! The question of true conversion and solidarity is, "how can I work through my anger and get to the other side, so I can be a life-giving presence *with and for* those who are most suffering?"

For oppressed communities, however, anger can be a form of survival, a necessary stage on the path towards healing. Listening to such anger with compassionate friendship can itself be a form of solidarity. As my colleague Barbara Holmes writes:

Many spiritual traditions warn us against anger. We are told that anger provides fertile ground for seeds of discontent, anxiety, and potential harm to self and others. This is true. However, when systems of injustice inflict generational abuses upon people and communities because of their ethnicity, race, sexuality, and/or gender, anger as righteous indignation is appropriate, healthy, and necessary for survival. . . Until the killing of black and brown people stops, all peaceful methods of resistance are appropriate. Right now, our anger is our truth, and our anger is a sacred part of our humanity and our faith. [1]



### Gateway to Action & Contemplation:

*What word or phrase resonates with or challenges me? What sensations do I notice in my body? What is mine to do?*

### Prayer for Our Community:

*O Great Love, thank you for living and loving in us and through us. May all that we do flow from our deep connection with you and all beings. Help us become a community that vulnerably shares each other's burdens and the weight of glory. Listen to our hearts' longings for the healing of our world. [Please add your own intentions.] . . . Knowing you are hearing us better than we are speaking, we offer these prayers in all the holy names of God, amen.*

# LEAD ... love God with all your strength

*"I thank my God every time I remember you, <sup>4</sup> constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, <sup>5</sup> because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. <sup>6</sup> I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. <sup>7</sup> It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. <sup>8</sup> For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. <sup>9</sup> And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight <sup>10</sup> to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, <sup>11</sup> having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God."*

*Philippians 1:3-11*

This month, Pastor Phil focused on Paul's blessing for the Philippians. Although Paul was in prison, and afraid he might be executed, his letter is full of cheerful praise and blessings for the church at Philippi. His situation is a lot like ours under social distancing. Like Paul, we're cut off from our brothers and sisters – unable to pray or sing hymns together. But we do have the time to turn inward and reflect on our values. In our own isolation, we can think creatively about how to reach out and nourish the souls of others.

Although we hold education in high esteem, response to a Bible Study Initiative on the church web site has been weak – surprising at this time, when the Internet seems to be the best resource for hearing the Word. It was Pastor Laura who suggested that what we all need isn't Bible Study, but the same warm encouragement Paul provided to the Philippians from prison. At her request, members of the congregation have been painting signs with inspiring messages and planting them in other people's yards to cheer them and buoy them up. And people love them. She suggested by treating social isolation as a spiritual practice, we can help bring light to the world in this dark moment.

So it would seem.

Bill Ogilvie - Council Chair

# LEAD



June 2020 Message for Congregations and Lay and Rostered Leaders

Dear Beloved of God –

I know I have said it before, but it bears repeating: I have experienced in these past weeks so many signs of hope, and of faithfulness, trust, courage, and encouragement:

- congregational leaders, lay and rostered who, under extraordinary stress, pressure and restraints have poured themselves into the work of leadership;
- congregational leaders, lay and rostered who, tired and weary and wondering, have reached out to one another, and to those in their midst, providing pastoral care, connection, compassion and care;
- congregational leaders, lay and rostered who, in the midst of an unprecedented time, exercised great skill (and energy and time) in preparing and/or searching for worship resources;
- rostered ministers who gather each Wednesday via ZOOM with Synod Staff for prayer, affirmation and encouragement, updates, and connecting;
- Area Deans who gather with rostered ministers via ZOOM for check-in with each other, study and/or prayer;
- and, creativity, ingenuity, openness, support, encouragement, trust, community.

At this time, I am inviting you – encouraging you – to pray for rostered ministers in varied ministry contexts, because I am hearing, seeing and recognizing that many of our rostered ministers are tired, weary, exhausted from:

- the emotional toll of being a leader in a time of uncertainty, crisis, liminality;
- leading sudden adaptive changes with technical challenges;
- disruption and change to regular patterns of spiritual and self-care practices;
- constant remote availability;
- worship preparation, pastoral care ministry, connecting with the congregation and community;
- and all, without any specific training or experience. This means that the skills, experience, training, networking, resourcing, and best practices, for many, have all needed to be created and learned in real time.

Pray for rostered ministers. Encourage them. Affirm their ministry. Give thanks. And know that God is with you and even now is planning and nourishing seeds of resurrection life.

In Christ Jesus – Shalom,  
+Bishop Larry Kochendorfer

*“The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” (Romans 15:13)*



**Synod of Alberta and the Territories**  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada