CHURCH OF THE CROSS

CROSSBEAMS Summer 2020

George Floyd's death should make us all think…and act

The death of George Floyd at the hands of a Minneapolis police officer on May 26 should give the whole world pause, because it is one death in a long line of people who are murdered for being who they are. It should give us pause because people are people are people and the trends we see to the south have their reflections here in the north. It should give us pause because the killing continues. On April 29, sixteen-year-old black Michigan teen Cornelius Fredericks was murdered in almost identical fashion, after also crying out, "I can't breathe." Why wasn't his death noticed?

What can the people of the world do in response? What they have always done: Organize, protest, cry out for justice, demand to be seen. And heard.

Pride
Me Too
Truth and Reconciliation
Black Lives Matter

Political flash points, narratives that divide family members and friends, and hot topics for preaching, these movements were all born from struggles for human rights. The escalation of violence and civil unrest is always a consequence of not dealing with glaring injustice all along. And who is the biggest champion for human rights of all time? Who is the best example we have for dealing with glaring injustice?

Jesus.

Jesus' ministry was a wake-up call for people of all walks of life. He was controversial and politically active. He called people to have a change of heart, show compassion to their neighbours, love their enemies, and pray for their persecutors. Here is a short list of his more controversial actions:

* He touched lepers.
* He ate in the homes of tax collectors.
* He talked to and touched women in public, even ones who were bleeding.
* He called children to his side and gave them status in society.
* He confronted religious and political leaders.

He didn't much care if the things he said and did offended people or were politically correct. First and foremost, he cared about people. And he also cared about the community as a whole.

To follow Jesus today means to live by his example within our current context, applying his way of life to the world as we know it. This can be extremely difficult.

We forget that Jesus talked more about money, politics, and the poor than he talked about worship, singing and reading the scripture. Jesus was interested in converting people to a communal way of life that challenged authority and wealth on behalf of the marginalized, poor, and suffering.

We struggle to confront the glaring injustices of our time, because they are political hot topics. They still divide friends and family. They still cause anger, hatred, and violence to arise.

But hot topics or not, we are called to stand for justice for all people. We are called to convert people to caring, kindness, and action on behalf of those whose voices are seldom heard. We are called to solidarity and to announce that every single person on the planet has been created in the image of God. We are called to care for God's good creation, which means caring for our natural environment and the planet as a whole.

What can we do in these unsettled times? Here are some suggestions. Build and expand on the ideas offered here:

- Remember that Jesus was proposing and modeling a radical way of life that included ALL people. Read the gospels and notice Jesus' radical actions and compassionate care. What do you have to do to follow him?
- Stretch yourself. Strive to see "the other side" of every position. This is one way to transform death-dealing contradiction into life-giving paradox. Things are not "either/or," but a continuum on which we all live.
- Hold to civility, compassion, education, and action. Hold your friends and family to that level too. Teach one another to speak and act non-violently.
- Call people on all of their "isms"; sexism, racism, environmentalism, and the like are all symptoms of privilege, wealth, comfort, and power. People who benefit from the status quo love it the most. That doesn't mean the status quo is the common good. Ask the question, "What about everyone else? What about the environment?"
- Do something to love the planet and its creatures. They cannot speak for themselves. Reduce your personal use of plastic. Shop locally. Plant something.
- Pray for the victims of abusive political positions and systems. Include George Floyd's family in your prayers.

Christianity is more than saying you worship God or believe in Jesus. It is a way of life that stands for God's justice. The church is Jesus' body in the world. Stand up, O People. Stand for justice, integrity, compassion, and change.

What is good, and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with your God? Micah 6:8

Jesus said, *"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news."* Mark 1:15

Peace,

Pastor Laura

To Reopen or Not to Reopen?

As the world reopens its social and economic activities, we are assessing and reassessing the risks of resuming in-person worship.

Right now, in-person worship comes with a number of restrictions:

* Limits of 50 participants
* mandatory attendance-taking
* no singing
* no touching
* no communion
* social distancing

In addition, COVID-19 is still with us and measures to keep people safe are still necessary. It was revealed in our Town Hall Meeting with Dr. Hinshaw and Premier Kenney that every outbreak in Alberta has been traced back to a faith community. This gives us an extra air of caution as we consider re-opening.

As Dr. Deena Hinshaw has said, *"There are no completely risk-free options….We are each other's best protection against COVID-19 now and in the days ahead."* This chart illustrates the relative risks we all assume when interacting in public.

COVID-19 RISK LEVELS tinyurl.com/c19risk

9	• Bars • Big concerts	• Sports stadiums
8	• Gyms • Amusement parks	• Churches • Buffets
7	• Playing basketball • Public pools	• Schools
6	• Casinos • Restaurants – indoor • Playgrounds	• Hair salons, barbershops • Pontoon boat rides • Movie theaters
5	• Home dinner parties • Airplanes • Backyard barbecues	• Malls • Beaches • Bowling
4	• Dentist offices • Walking in busy downtown • Offices	• Doctor waiting rooms • Restaurants – outdoor
3	• Grocery stores • Camping • Hotels	• Golfing • Libraries, museums
2	• Walk, run, or bike with others	• Get car gasoline
1	• Restaurants – takeout	• Tennis

Dr Matthew Sims, Dr Dennis Cunningham, Dr Mimi Emig, Dr Nasir Husain. Based on risk factors including inside/outside, nearness to others, exposure time, compliance likelihood, and personal risk.

We are called to be responsible and to care for one another. With these restrictions in place and these known risks, we have assessed that we will gain very little by worshipping in-person. Therefore, we announced suspended in-person worship through July 19.

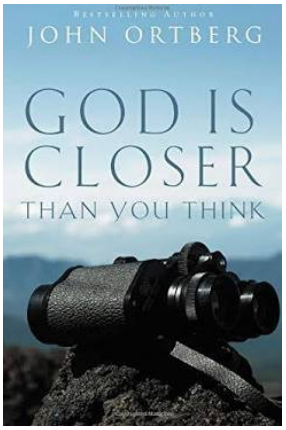
Mid-month, we will update this announcement. But as always, we urge you to care for yourself and your family, stay safe, and worship online. We are continuing to provide pre-recorded worship, pre-recorded children's worship, communion online at 11 am, fellowship from 11:15-11:30 am, and sermon conversation from 11:30-noon each Sunday. The live online interactions with people in our Zoom Prayer Room have been uplifting and have proven to provide vital connection with each other and we invite you to try that out if you hasn't done so already.

In addition, the pastors continue to be available online every day, Monday-Saturday in the Zoom Prayer Room for short morning prayer and then conversation at 10 am and Sundays as mentioned above.

If you need help connecting to online worship, please contact the church office.

Pastor Laura

We are forming small groups for online study and fellowship.



If you are interested in spending 90 minutes with friends from church both old & new, give the church office a call, or send an email to let us know you are interested.

We will be scheduling groups to meet during the morning, day, or evening as people prefer and we are planning on having the groups meet once or twice a month.

Our first study will be "*God is closer than you think"* by John Ortberg.

If you have a copy of this book that you are willing to loan or give the church, please let us know.

Summer devotion books are available at the church at the east entrance.

Church office hours for the summer will be very minimal, so please call ahead to make sure the church is unlocked. **OR ring** the doorbell and someone from

Cantare will be able to let you in. Thank you.

Weekly offerings may be mailed into the church, or go on our website www.churchofthecross.ca

and click the **DONATE** button, **OR**
e-transfer to 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.

Cause of the Month

Calgary FOOD BANK

The Food Bank is still in need of non-perishable food supplies and also funds to purchase supplies of perishable foods. Food donations can be left at church Monday to Thursday during office hours and this will be delivered to the Food Bank as needed.

Due to the covid 19, the Drop-In Center is no longer taking delivery of Sandwiches during the ongoing epidemic. Hopefully in the near future we can re-start the Sandwich making again, but till then, the project is on hold.

KEEPING THE CALGARY FOOD BANK COMMUNITY HEALTHY DURING COVID-19

DONATIONS
The Food Bank continues to experience high demand and a great need for food and funds. There are a variety of ways that you can help feed YYC:

-Donations are regularly picked up from grocery partners. If you are grocery shopping, please consider picking up some extra items and leaving them in the donation bin in the store. Most needed items can be found on the website wish list.

-Donated funds help the Food Bank purchase essential hamper items. Please make donations online or over the phone rather than in person.

Thank you to everyone who is helping the Food Bank serve the community through this difficult and uncertain time, however long it may last.

Need Food? The Hamper Request line is open. **You must call first as emergency hamper distribution is by appointment only; please call 403-253-2055.** The main Food Bank location currently uses a drive-through model for hamper distribution.

IMPROVING EMERGENCY FOOD HAMPER ACCESSIBILITY
Clients can now validate their identification online, minimizing risk during hamper pickup (fewer physical objects exchanged and less contact required). Adjustments have been made for client eligibility for subsequent hampers; clients now only need to wait 10 days between hamper requests. If you're unsure whether you qualify for a hamper, please call the request line at 403-253-2055.

For a video tour on how the Calgary Food Bank is currently operating during the COVID-19 pandemic please click on the following link:

https://youtu.be/DFv-FV_WPSw

CALGARY FOOD BANK

Have you placed your order for the best Stampede BBQ meal?!

Why are we doing this??

The Mustard Seed considers ourselves a part of the Calgary community. We've always loved celebrating our amazing supporters during Stampede season and we don't want to lose that celebratory spirit when Calgary needs it more than ever. Not to mention **every dollar** from this purchase goes directly to supporting people experiencing homelessness and poverty in our city.

How it works:

Choose your meal for 2 or 4 people
Choose your pick-up date: July 3, 4, 5, 10, or 11 | pick-up time: 5 p.m. or 6 p.m.

Drive on down to The Mustard Seed and pick up your meal kit! We'll have a mini Stampede party on-site with mini donuts, prizes, and some very enthusiastic volunteers.

What you get:

- Pulled pork from Big T's (cooked, sealed, and frozen)
- A full bottle of Big T's BBQ Sauce (choose your sauce on site
- Soft buns
- Homemade potato salad and coleslaw
- The Grizzly Paw soda
- Annex Soda
- Paper plates and napkins
- A butcher paper tablecloth and crayons to step up that western vibe

Our address is:
The Mustard Seed
102 11 Ave SE
Calgary, AB T2G 0X5

Phone: 403.269.1319

LCOC GARDENS

We have had a busy but fruitful Spring. On May 27 we planted the vegetable garden. We have kept it simple, planting just carrots, beets, potatoes, pole beans and zucchini. June rains and regular watering has helped everything flourish! Our harvests will be donated to the Food Bank.

In the first week of June, the Remembrance garden was planted in memory of Brittney McInnes. In keeping with COVID-19 guidelines, people came alone or in family groups. We had close to the same number of people as in past years. We were honored by Cheryl Gagnon Greyeyes presence one morning, where she smudged, danced and prayed in recognition of our indigenous sisters.

The rose and perennial gardens are particularly beautiful this year. When we are tending to the gardens, neighbors often stop to chat and comment how our efforts enhance the community. This year, we have simple painted stones with words of hope and encouragement along all of the flowerbeds. Anyone is welcome to take a stone, if it resonates with you.

Thank you to all who have helped this year: Kathy Bishop, Lukas and Max Thomson, Pearl Schuster, Maureen Leonhardt, Laurie Hansen, Genevieve Munroe. Doris Urquhart , and Terry Kopperud. Special thanks to Doug and Georgina Normandin for leveling the steps leading to the Remembrance Garden. Thanks to Marvin Erickson for re-staining the garden bench situated by the vegetable garden, which he built a few years ago.

May this summer bless you with peace and good health. Know that God loves you and walks with you each day.

Judy Shore-Isford and Betty Jane Hegerat

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

Are you willing to repair costumes?

Are you willing to sew costumes?

We have plenty of fabric and could use some help!

There's no time pressure…you can work on this project any time.

Please call the church office is you are willing to help.

Bridges Vacation Bible School

Started in 2017, Bridges VBS is a collaborative, area-wide Vacation Bible School with ELCIC Lutheran churches participating from around the Waterloo, Ont. region. This year the program will run as Bridges VBS @ Home.

You are invited to join Bridges VBS @ Home for daily videos, including Bible stories, music, games, crafts and more! Find out all the details at https://bridgesvbs.weebly.com.

FYI

• FOR YOUR INFORMATION •

Join our National Bishop who unites us together during times of physical distancing by sharing a hymn and prayer and inviting you to pray along. Lt's be a community connected by song and prayer!

See the website https://www.elcic.ca/ for the daily prayers. **OR** if you are on FaceBook, search for the ELCIC Facebook page, "like" the page and you will receive them every day.

Office Hours for the Summer

Dianne is on 'Leave of Absence" for the weeks of:

June 29 - July 2

July 20 - 31

AND Vacation for:

August 3 - 14.

There will be minimal office hours during this time so please phone first if you are stopping by.

Church of the Cross Stampede

Yahoo! Join the fun at our Virtual Stampede!

Have you got the COVID-19 summer blues?

Missing those Stampede Breakfasts, BBQs, Chuck-wagon races and Grandstand shows?

We've got you covered. We've created a virtual replacement for *The Greatest Outdoor Show on Earth!*

- Pick a day during "Stampede Week," July 3-12
- Put on your boots, cowboy hat, sheriff's badge & other western gear
- Prepare your own Stampede Breakfast at home (pancakes, sausage, coffee & juice)
- Enjoy your food and our video stampede

Look for the Virtual Stampede on our website during "Stampede Week," July 3-12!

(Don't worry…the real thing will be back next year)

"Satan, on the contrary, is thin, ascetic and a fanatical devotee of logic."

~ Arthur Kestler

June LEAD Team Activities

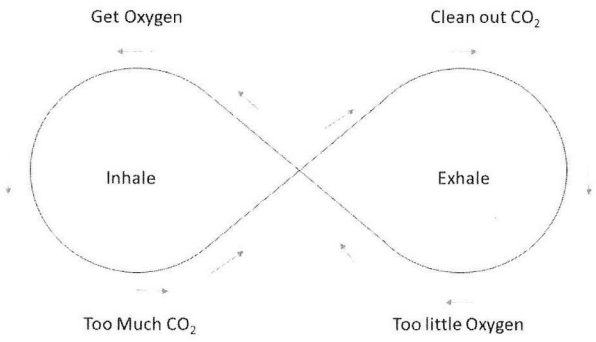
In June, the LEAD team talked about polarity management: a way to deal with dilemmas that leave us trying to reconcile contradictory beliefs. A useful study for Lutherans, since Lutheranism - like Christianity itself - is full of contradictions: we are both saints and sinners; we follow both the Law and the Gospel; we become wise by being fools. One of the best known of these paradoxes is from Matthew 10:39

"Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it."

Although they don't seem to make sense - and can never be resolved - thinking about these paradoxes leads us to inquire deeply into our beliefs and values. What do we owe to our government and what to God? Should we compete with others or collaborate? When do the rights of the group take precedence over the rights of the individual?

Operating on a Continuum

In all the important moments of life, we find ourselves on a line between polar opposites. It's a bit like breathing in and breathing out. We are always alternating between the two. Neither is the "correct" answer: if we breathe too rapidly and deeply (hyperventilation), we may feel lightheaded, experience a tingling sensation in our fingers and even lose consciousness. If our breathing is too slow and shallow (hypoventilation) we have too little oxygen in our blood, and may experience headaches, fatigue, and drowsiness. Ultimately, it can be fatal. In normal healthy breathing, we maintain a constant balance between these two polar opposites.



Similarly, in our daily lives, we are constantly balancing opposites: home life versus work life; control versus freedom; reflection versus action. Finding the correct balance can be difficult. But it can help to use a technique called polarity mapping.

Polarity Mapping

Polarity mapping is essentially a pro-con list. We start by defining the opposites at either end of the continuum, and creating a statement defining each value. Then we build a table listing the pros and cons of each. Here's an example, using the question of individual rights versus collective rights.

	Individual Rights	Group Rights
	We all have individual rights	We all have to live together
Pros	• Better treatment • Appreciate diversity • Get to have your own space • Make your own choices	• Sense of meaning • More support • Can achieve more as a group • Don't have to work as hard
Cons	• Anarchy • Closed-mindedness • Loneliness • Incapacited	• Tyranny • Overlook needs of individuals • Lose individual choice • Lose individuality

Here, we can see the good and bad points of going to the extreme in either direction. If we focus on individuality, we get some benefits: better treatment, our own space, freedom to make our own choices. But we risk creating anarchy, becoming closed-minded, becoming lonely. If we focus on group rights, we gain a greater sense of meaning in our lives, we can achieve more, and we don't have to work as hard. But we give up some of our freedoms, and run the risk of losing our individuality. Every day, all of us must find our place between these opposite poles.

Using Polarities in Daily Life

Christians find polarities every day in our faith struggles. Recognizing the contradictions in our beliefs, we can go past simplistic or trivial beliefs to ideas filled with intellectual depth and rigor. We can admit that church teachings - while often full of accumulated wisdom - are not always in accordance with scripture. And we can recognize that although it's important to live a faith-filled life, we also have to pay the bills. Recognizing and balancing these polarities can lead us to a fuller, richer experience of our faith, and a more meaningful participation in our church.

SYNOD OF ALBERTA AND THE TERRITORIES

July-August 2020 Message for Congregations and Lay and Rostered Leaders

Dear Beloved of God –

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

I am writing to a future that is uncertain and unknown, to a situation that is changing not by the month, week, day, or even by the hour, but literally minute by minute, with the certainty that nothing will be the same again. Our church and our world will be very different for all of us on the other side of this coronavirus wilderness.

In many ways, this tragic time has accelerated the movement of the church into profoundly adaptive changes and challenges. And we need to address these challenges in order to be vital communities of witness to Jesus in the 21st century.

There are new opportunities and possibilities before us, including recommitting to a missional model of listening, discerning, experimenting, reflecting, and learning. And, all the while, to keep asking the questions: where is God in our neighborhood? Our community? Our world? And equally importantly: how might we join God in God's mission?

Dear Church, I continue to wonder, to reflect, to pray:

- What is God calling us to be and do in the time ahead? What is God's purpose for us – what is God's mission through us – moving forward?
- What have we learned during the last few months about what is most important in our life together as the body of Christ? And how can we use that knowledge to shape how we will live, work, and serve together? What might we bring into the future from this experience?
- What new skills have we picked up? What other skills and gifts will we need to embrace a new future?
- How might our theological, denominational, and biblical perspectives and traditions inform how we move forward?
- What were the things that seemed so important before the coronavirus crisis that we might give less attention to, or let go of altogether?

Dear Church, I wonder, reflect, pray:

Our life together as the body of Christ, in service to our neighbours and all of creation, is going to be very different moving forward. Be humble and gentle with one another. Honor each other. Make space for lament. Welcome moments of joy. Help each other live into hope. Learn

from this journey through the coronavirus wilderness and let the learning lead you forward. Trust that God is at work in this time and look for the new things God is doing even now.

Thank you for your witness to patient trust in God and to sacrificial, cruciform love for your neighbours. And know that God is with you and even now is planning and nourishing seeds of resurrection life.

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

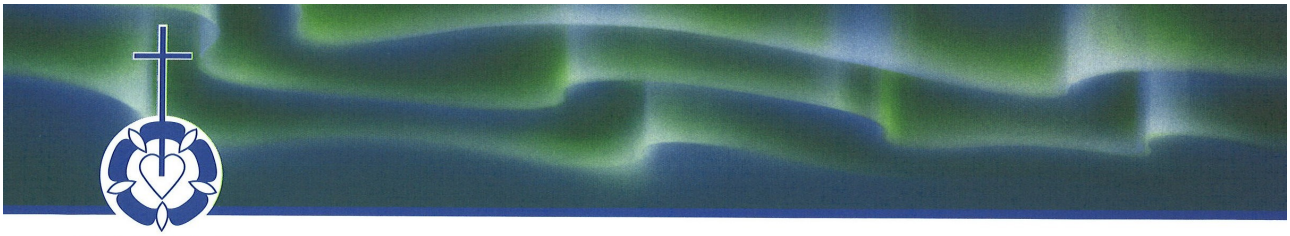
In Christ Jesus – Shalom,
+Larry

ABT Synod bi-monthly e-newsletter: *WEDNESDAY'S WORD*

Beginning in January of 2016, in order to provide regular communication and to reduce financial costs, the Synod office made the decision to discontinue distributing regular quarterly mailings to all Congregations and Rostered leaders.

These bi-monthly e-letters, called *Wednesday's Word* provide timely information and quick links to synod resources and other websites, as well as weekly prayers. This is a useful communication resource for Rostered Ministers, Lay Leaders and Congregations. These may be forwarded to interested individuals, and reproduced in your Sunday bulletins/newsletters and on your congregational website.

To subscribe to Wednesday's Word, please go to our home page and click on the subscribe link which you will find on the lower right hand corner of the page.



SYNOD OF ALBERTA AND THE TERRITORIES
Incorporated as Alberta Synod

The Office of the Bishop

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Edmonton, AB T6E 1W8
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www.albertasynod.ca

June 9, 2020

Ascension Lutheran Church
8405 – 83 St
Edmonton, AB
T6C 2Z2

Lutheran Church of the Cross
10620 Elbow Dr SW
Calgary, AB
T2W 1G4

Trinity Lutheran Church
10012 81 Ave
Edmonton, AB
T6E 1W8

Dear Church Council at Ascension Lutheran, Lutheran Church of the Cross and Trinity Lutheran and Pastors Barbara Groote, Phil Holck, Ingrid Doerschel and Doug Heine.

Spirit -Led Leadership

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Spirit be with you.

It has now been nearly four years since four Pastors from Alberta began journeying to Whitehorse to provide ministry with and among the people of faith at Trinity Lutheran, Whitehorse.

Hope-Filled Discipleship

In this time much pastoral care, visitation, counsel, worship, Eucharist, prayer, teaching, study, youth...ministry has taken place.

Innovative Tradition

Thank you Pastors for your participation in this partnership of the Synod, your calling congregation and the Trinity, Whitehorse congregation; and thank you Ascension Lutheran, Lutheran Church of the Cross and Trinity Lutheran congregations for your support and encouragement of this collaborative participation by sharing your Pastor with Trinity, Whitehorse.

Collaborative Partnerships

I give thanks to God that Dr. Deborah Bartlett, through our ELCIC Alternative Route to Ordination, will soon be ordained and continue the fine pastoral ministry that has been provided.

With thanks and deep gratitude!

"The God of all 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).

In Christ Jesus –
Shalom,

+Bishop Larry Kochendorfer

The Rev. Dr. Larry Kochendorfer, Bishop
Synod of Alberta and the Territories
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

cc.: Sharon Specht, Council Chair; Trinity Lutheran Church, Whitehorse

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN CANADA