

We Worship, We Grow, We Serve,
We reach out in love sharing God's
message of hope through Jesus Christ.

March 2021
Volume 9, Issue 2

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During the COVID-19 pandemic we are following provincial health orders. All in-building worship services and gatherings are cancelled.

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We recognize and acknowledge the Qayqayt First Nation, as well as all Coast Salish peoples, on whose traditional and unceded territories we gather.



2021 Lent Newsletter

Pastor's Musings: The "Lentiest" Lent!

During Lent 2020 the following meme circulated on Facebook:

This is the Lentiest Lent we've ever Lented!

As we near the end of Lent 2021, with continuing public health orders and restrictions, some are saying that Lent never ended in 2020! Those 40 days of Lent, which are to remind us of Jesus' 40-day fast in the wilderness and Moses' 40-day fast on Mount Sinai, probably feel more like the 40 **years** the Israelites wandered in the desert before reaching the Promised Land☺

Traditionally, the 40 days of Lent (which do NOT include Sundays!) are spent in increased prayer, repentance, acts of mercy, and by giving up or fasting from things we enjoy in order to focus on Christ. Lent can seem to be a rather somber time, especially when the skies are grey and the days are short. And, as we continue to fast from time with friends and family, gathering for worship within our building, hugs and handshakes, travel, and... well, you fill in the blank! Truly, it is the Lentiest Lent I've ever Lented.

However, the word "Lent" has its roots in the Anglo-Saxon word for "spring." Some of us began our Lenten journey on Ash Wednesday with planting seeds and this prayer: "Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth. May this soil remind us that we are fragile creatures, totally dependent on you. Remind us that apart from you we can do nothing that is good. Only by the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ we can live the abundant life you desire for all creation. We pray this through the same Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. Amen."

As the days lengthen and we experience more sunshine, such physical signs increase my hope. And, the seed I planted on Ash Wednesday has actually sprouted!



So, here's a question to ponder: where, in the midst of all that we are experiencing this Lent, are those signs of new life, new growth, and resurrection?

As we approach Holy Week, beginning March 28, we once again walk with Jesus through his agony, his suffering, and his death, perhaps more intensely than ever. Be assured that he walks with us through all that we are experiencing as well and that his promise to us remains the same. "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die." (John 11:25)
-Pastor Marlys

On a more personal note: not only has it been the "Lentiest Lent" but also a Painful Pandemic. I am now on the "urgent" wait list for a hip replacement, so your prayers are much appreciated.



I think it is because of the bright sun and the days getting longer that I have this song in my soul:

*All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful,
The Lord God made them all.*



I hope you too are feeling the warm comfort of spring approaching.

On behalf of council, I would like to thank everyone who attended our Annual General Meeting. God willing, we will be meeting in person next year. The installation of church council took place during our Zoom coffee time on March 7, 2021 and at our next council meeting, council will elect from its own membership a chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary, and treasurer. As a whole, and in accordance with our constitution, the council "shall have general oversight of the life and activities of the congregation" until next year.

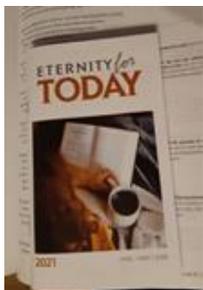
At this point our church continues to be closed. We are all watching the Public Health Orders closely. The Parish Education Team has been working on preparing mail-out activities for the children during Holy Week. The Property Management Team is currently busy working on the care of the trees and shrubs at the Synod office. Last, but by no means least, our Joy Committee continues to sprinkle phone call joy.

Before I end my contribution to the newsletter, I would like to share with you something that a member of my "church family" said to me. She said, "If you are thinking of someone, it means you are supposed to call them!" For some reason that line has stayed with me. Please continue to reach out to those in need of hearing a friendly voice.

Remember Pastor Marlys and council in your prayers as we move forward to start a new year.

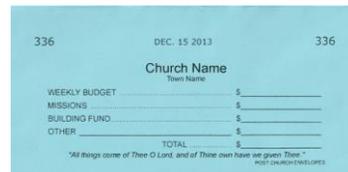
God bless,
Lyna Kiviste, Chair of Council

Devotional Booklets



- The April-June edition of *Eternity for Today* is available. Please contact the church office to arrange for pick-up or delivery. An online version is also available through <https://elcic.ca/app/dailydevotion/www/index.html>
- A large-print devotional, *Christ in Our Home*, is also available. Please contact Margaret if you would like to be added to this list of recipients.

Offering Envelopes 2021



Offering envelopes are ready for 2021. Your envelope number will remain the same as 2020.

Please continue using your remaining old envelopes until we can get your new box to you.

Any date will be fine as deposits are made at mid and end of each month. Post-dated cheques will be in safe keeping until the date on each cheque.

If you have used all your envelopes just submit your offering in a plain envelope giving your name. I will add your number.

Thank you for your generous support of Mount Zion.

Margaret Leech
Financial Secretary

Can You Help?



Aluel Nyok's orphaned 16-year-old niece, Nyakong Nyok, is living in Uganda. Aluel had been providing financial support for her niece's living expenses and schooling. However, due to the pandemic and loss of employment Aluel is unable to send money at this time. Aluel needs \$150/month to assist with supporting her niece. **Can you help? Please contact Aluel or the church office. Thank you!**

“Joining God in the Neighbourhood” Quilt

I am reminded of a song from our hymnal, #526 God is Here! The verses say, in part,

“Here, in newness and renewal, God the Spirit comes to each... Here our children find a welcome in the Shepherd's flock and fold...”

At Mount Zion the members of our Education Team are always looking for ways to encourage the children in sharing their thoughts and ideas. Early last year, while we could still meet in person, the teachers engaged them in a conversation around what Joining God in the Neighbourhood might mean. Doreen Fleury is a member of the Quilters group and a Sunday School teacher. Doreen, along with others, helped the children bring their ideas to life in a quilted banner.

The children previously completed an Alleluia banner. It is such a joy for all of us to see so many of them, big smiles on their faces, holding onto a piece of it as they, together, carry it back into worship on Easter Sunday. It is one of the ways the teachers hope to show the children that, big or small, everyone has equal value in God's dream for the world.

The *God in the Neighbourhood Quilt* displays their ideas and drawings about where God might be found in the world around them: both within the walls of our church and in the lives of the people around us, our next door neighbours, our friends and family and people in our community. The children were asked, “What are the places where we might find opportunities to be used by God, in both big and small ways?” And “What might be ways of sharing God's love in the world with others?” The Quilt drawings are their ideas of where God might be at work in people's lives and how, when we are open to this, amazing *God Moments* might be in store for us and for our neighbours.



-Vivienne Welters, on behalf of the Parish Education Team



Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada
ELCIC *In Mission for Others*



Living our **FAITH**
PRAY READ WORSHIP LOVE

Mount Zion Lutheran continues to join others from across the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada in participating in the Bible

Book Club. We are reading the book of **Daniel** throughout March and looking forward to the book of **Amos** in April. Check out resources at this website: <https://elcic.ca/livingourfaith/biblebookclub.cfm> or contact the church office for copies to be mailed to you if you do not have access to a computer. You may also enjoy these videos: <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/daniel> and <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/amos>

“Remember, that we are Easter people, and that our risen Lord is walking with us in these difficult days. Although we are not able to physically gather in worship, Easter is not postponed. Resurrection is coming! Jesus still comes to each of us into our isolation and says peace be with you!” – ELCIC Bishops, 2020

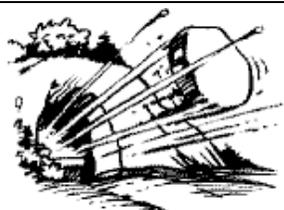
From Palm Sunday



to Good Friday



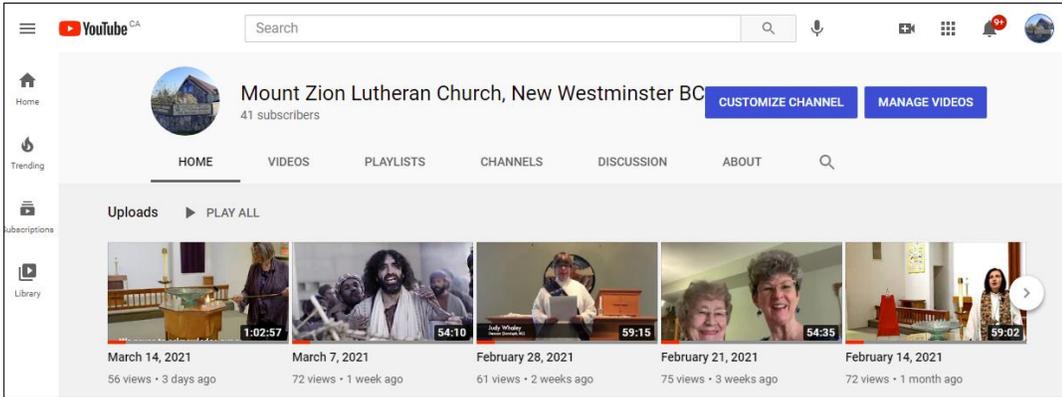
we look forward to



Easter Sunday!

Mount Zion's Online Presence

Worship at Mount Zion Still Looks Like This!



Check out online worship services on our YouTube channel, Mount Zion Lutheran Church, New Westminster BC. We are always looking for people to video the Bible readings. Please contact Pastor Marlys at 604-521-0120.

- People struggling with isolation
- Healthcare & frontline workers, teachers
- People in nursing homes with limited visitation
- Thank God for vaccines and many answered prayers. Grant patience while we wait for our turn.



Bible Study
Church Council
COVID-19 Task Force
Coffee Time

Join us for Zoom Bible Study on Wednesdays at 7:00pm. Contact Vivienne

ZOOM Coffee Time - Sunday mornings at 11:00am

Bring your own beverage and treats. Relax in the comfort of your own home.



ZOOM
COFFEE
TIME

Join us on Sunday mornings (except when there's a church council meeting) for virtual refreshments and visiting. You need a computer, tablet or smartphone for the audiovisual connection. (You may also be able to connect by telephone only, technology permitting.) Please contact Vivienne Welters at mountzion930@gmail.com to assist you with Zoom Coffee Time. You can also check in with her by telephone about a phone-only connection. Hope to "see" you soon!

Just So You Know...

The chart to the right gives you a snapshot of our financial situation for the month of January, as well as for the year. We give thanks to God for income in the form of subsidies from the federal government, as we continue to receive restricted rental income.

Non Designated	Jan 2021	YTD 2021
Donation	\$ 4,203	\$ 4,203
Rent	\$ 1,923	\$ 1,923
Subsidy	\$ -	\$ -
Other Income	\$ -	\$ -
Expenses	\$ (11,955)	\$ (11,955)
SURPLUS/ (DEFICIT)	\$ (5,829)	\$ (5,829)

Annual General Meeting

Annual General Meeting Highlights



Mount Zion's Annual General Meeting was held on Sunday, February 28 at 11:00am. Thanks be to God for many answered prayers! More than 30 people participated via ZOOM on their computers, tablets and telephones. Here are some highlights from this meeting:

Mount Zion Lutheran Congregational Council

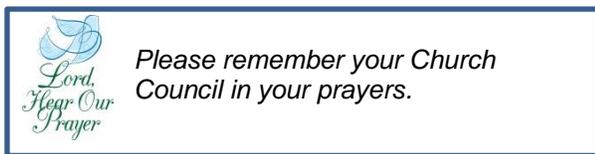
Terms are for two years. The council elects from its own membership a chairperson, vice chairperson and secretary at its meeting in March.

Current Members (terms expire in 2022)

- 1. Bernice Birzneck
2. Doreen Fleury
3. Norma Houde
4. Lyna Kiviste
5. Wayne Weholm
6. Vivienne Welters

New Members (terms expire in 2023)

- 7. Bruce Cornish
8. Beverley Cuthbert
9. Akok Deng
10. Monica Deng
11. Len Imrie
12. Bob Kochendorfer
13. Don Leech
14. Katie Nieman
15. Paulos Nizghi
16. Yohannes Solomon



Auditing Committee (one-year term)

- 1. Stephen Scheving
2. Chagai Lual
3. Racheal Manyuon

Nominating Committee

- 1. Victoria Dobson
2. Tigisti Glaizghi
3. Judy Kochendorfer
4. Apajook Atem

Memorial Secretary

- 1. Barbara Davison

The congregation voted to maintain the current special offering designations for Easter (Seminary Support), Pentecost (Padang Relief Society), Thanksgiving (Emergency Relief Fund) & Christmas (BC Synod.)

In addition, we voted to support two more worthy causes:

1. Greater Vancouver Food Bank: An extra donation during Lent where funds would support a local community endeavor, the Food Bank. Check out the Greater Vancouver Food Bank website at https://foodbank.bc.ca/ where you can donate online or you can designate the Food Bank on your offering envelope.

2. Schools of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL): We want to raise \$1,600 through individual contributions over several months, until the end of August 2021, in support of student tuition at schools of the ELCJHL. Here is some important information from the ELCIC National Office about the situation in ELCJHL:

As schools around the world are now into the second half of the 2020-21 academic year in very challenging circumstances, so too are the students at schools of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL). Earlier in the COVID-19 pandemic, the schools dealt with closures and lock down periods by embracing digital technology and distance learning. Sadly, the continued lock downs have impacted families served by the schools in many different ways. COVID-19 restrictions have meant further barricade closures and a significant loss of tourism for the region resulting in job loss and substantial reduction in income to household. Many families are now facing significant difficulties with paying tuition for the 2020-21 school year, which is on average \$1,600/year per student.

Pre-Authorized Giving: Several members have requested pre-authorized debiting to facilitate their giving of offerings. On the following page you will find a form letter, enabling you to provide authorization to Mount Zion Lutheran Church to debit your bank account. Contact Len Imrie for further information.

March 2021

(month, date, year)

Mount Zion Lutheran Church of New Westminster
690 Cumberland Street
New Westminster, BC V3L3H4

Subject: Authorization to debit account

Dear Treasurer,

This letter is to acknowledge that Mount Zion Lutheran Church of New Westminster is hereby authorized to debit my account below in the amount of \$_____ on the _____ day of every month for my donation.

Please withdraw the funds from the following bank account:

Bank Name: _____

Bank Address: _____

Bank Transit No: _____

Name on the account: _____

Account No: _____

Please allocate my donation as follows:

Current Expenses	\$ _____
Building Fund	\$ _____
BC Synod Support (Missions)	\$ _____
Other (specify)	\$ _____

I enclose a "VOID" cheque from the account.

Sincerely,

Signature/Name