

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

October 2020
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During the COVID-19 pandemic we are following provincial health protocols. There will be NO in-person worship services.

E-mail: mzoffice@shaw.ca or
prmarlys@shaw.ca

Phone: (604) 521-0120 (office)
(604) 521-0525 (fax)

Mount Zion Lutheran Church
930 Cumberland Street
New Westminster BC V3L 3H4
Canada

Website: www.mtzionlutheran.ca

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



mount zion **Message**

L U T H E R A N

2020 Season after Pentecost Newsletter

Pastor's Musings

6 months

Milestones

We now have passed the six-month milestone since we closed the doors of Mount Zion to in-person worship and gatherings. At that time we thought we may return to "normal" by September. Well, September has come and gone, and we are now looking at possibly some time in 2021.

However, thanks to a reminder about celebrating our 125th anniversary four years ago, I realized that this is NOT the first time in our history to have weathered a global pandemic. Mount Zion (then known as Nidaros) survived the Spanish Flu Pandemic which began in 1918. "A *Province* article from Oct. 16, 1918 claims 'Royal City to be Closed Up Tight.' The article goes on: "Schools, theatres, churches, and all public meetings will be closed and semi-public functions, such as dances and whist drives, will also be forbidden. The rapid spread of Spanish 'flu' has caused this drastic order." (<https://www.mapleridgenews.com/opinion/looking-back-quarantine-back-in-the-day-of-the-spanish-flu-kept-maple-ridge-safe/>)

The restrictions imposed over a hundred years ago sound very familiar. Yet we keep hearing how we are living in unprecedented times. As rates of COVID-19 infection rise, as we learn more about the lingering effects for those who have been ill, I am sure many of us think we are living in historical times, that we will tell future generations engaging stories about surviving a pandemic.

Yes, these times are reminiscent of the 1918 pandemic. Much to my surprise, a quick check of the history book prepared for Mount Zion's 100th Anniversary yields NO reference to the Spanish Flu. It mentions the two World Wars, the hard times after 1920, but NOTHING about the Spanish Flu! Instead they refer to God's faithfulness through the difficult and simpler times. The God who was with this congregation in 1918 is the same God who is with us now in 2020. So, whether we have another 6, 9, 12 or who knows however many more months to go, take a look at the mountains and take comfort from these words written long, long ago in Psalm 121:

I lift up my eyes to the hills—from where will my help come?
My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.
He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber.
He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.
The LORD is your keeper; the LORD is your shade at your right hand.
The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.
The LORD will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life.
The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore.

9, 12 months?



The Chair is taking a well-deserved break this month, but you can still read input from Lyna Kiviste, writing this time from the vantage point of the COVID-19 Task Force.

COVID-19 Task Force

Our Duty to Care

Several months ago, the BC Synod contacted a lawyer to get a legal opinion on three questions:

1. What would the church’s liability be if a member of a congregation, an employee or a visitor died as a result of COVID-19?
2. What steps should a congregation take to avoid the risk of liability for COVID-19 transmission?
3. Will the church's insurance coverage apply if a COVID-19 claim was made against a congregation?

Here are some highlights from the lawyer’s response to these questions.

As an owner Mount Zion Lutheran Church has a “duty to care” for people who are in our building and on our property. As a result, we are at risk of liability if a person becomes ill and dies after contacting COVID-19 (presuming proof that the virus was transmitted on church property). This duty to care for people includes employees, visitors, and visitors who enter our church under a rental agreement.

Congregations can manage their risk with the following: comply with government orders; implement the BC Synod’s reopening guidelines; monitor and enforce compliance; and remain current with COVID-19 updated practices and procedures. *(Please note that the provincial government recently enacted a regulation that protects faith-based organizations against liability so long as it can demonstrate that it has complied by public health guidelines. It will not protect organizations if there is gross negligence.)*

The letter includes three additional suggestions that congregations can do to protect against liability. First, everyone entering the church must sign a release and waiver agreement (a sample letter was provided). Secondly, renters are required to indemnify our congregation in the event of renter’s negligence or breach of contract (we were given sample wording to use). Furthermore, congregations

should confirm COVID-19 coverage with their insurance broker.

The lawyer concluded his letter to the BC Synod with a list of 17 recommendations for congregations. We will review three in each of the upcoming newsletters along with what we are doing to comply. Here are the first three recommendations:

Recommendation #1: Create a COVID-19 leadership team

Council created a COVID-19 Task Force at the end of June and this Task Force has been meeting almost weekly since the beginning of July. The Task Force created a written “Safety Plan for Employees,” using the format of WorkSafeBC and following the guidelines of CDC and provincial health guidelines. (This safety plan is posted on our website.) The Task Force reviews all requests to use church property. More recently, we are creating an action plan to implement all 17 of the lawyer's recommendations to protect against liability.

Recommendation #2: Implement procedures for waiver and release agreement

On September 27, 2020 Council passed a motion that all those who attend in-person gatherings will be required to sign a “Release, Waiver of Liability, and Assumption of Risk Agreement Related to COVID-19”. A copy of this form can be found in this newsletter. The COVID-19 Task Force developed a communication plan (newsletter, website), and a plan for monitoring compliance.

Recommendation #3: Include indemnity language in the written rental agreements

The Task Force implemented an immediate plan to include the indemnity clause in our rental agreements. This language will be included in all rental agreements effective October 1, 2020.

More to follow in the next newsletter 😊

COVID-19 Task Force:

Deng Biar, Shirles Burton, Monica Deng, Norma Houde, Lyna Kiviste, Marlys Moen, Vivienne Welters



In-Person Worship Service with Holy Communion October 11 at 10:00am

Book your spot now!



According to the Order of the Public Health Officer, only **fifty (50)** people can be present. You must **reserve a spot ahead of time**. Please contact the church office, 604-521-0120, with your name and contact information. We also require a **signed waiver** which is included with this newsletter. If possible, please return the waiver by dropping it off at the church, by scanning and emailing before the service, by regular mail, or bring it with you.

Please note:

- ☆ Bathrooms will be available for emergency use only.
- ☆ Bring a mask, and, if possible, your own hand sanitizer.

- ☆ Bring your own chair (if necessary the church can provide plastic chairs)
- ☆ Proper physical distancing (2m) must be maintained.
- ☆ We will meet on “the patio” on the lane side of the church
- ☆ Canopies will be provided for protection

The **good news** ☺ is we can visit and celebrate God’s presence together in person!

Help Prevent the Spread of COVID-19. Please DO NOT COME if:

you have any of the following symptoms:

- ☆ Fever
- ☆ Chills
- ☆ New or worsening cough
- ☆ Shortness of breath
- ☆ New muscle aches or headaches
- ☆ You have travelled outside of Canada within the last 14 days
- ☆ You are a close contact of a person who tested positive for COVID-19



Community, Conversation, & Reflection on the Eucharist

Register for this event at:

<https://rcav.zoom.us/join/register/tJwuc-ihqT0sEtGqoMERLJmdOVRP-8fn1Ubr>

Thanksgiving Offering (October 11)

Gifts given in the Thanksgiving offering envelopes will be used for Emergency Relief (which assists with Christmas hamper purchases, etc.) If you wish to support another Mount Zion ministry, please write the designation on your envelope.

Just Thought You'd Like to Know...

	August 2020	YTD 2020
Income	\$ 7,704	\$103,749
Expenses	\$11,482	\$118,114
Surplus/Deficit	(3,778)	(14,365)

Thank you for your faithful support!

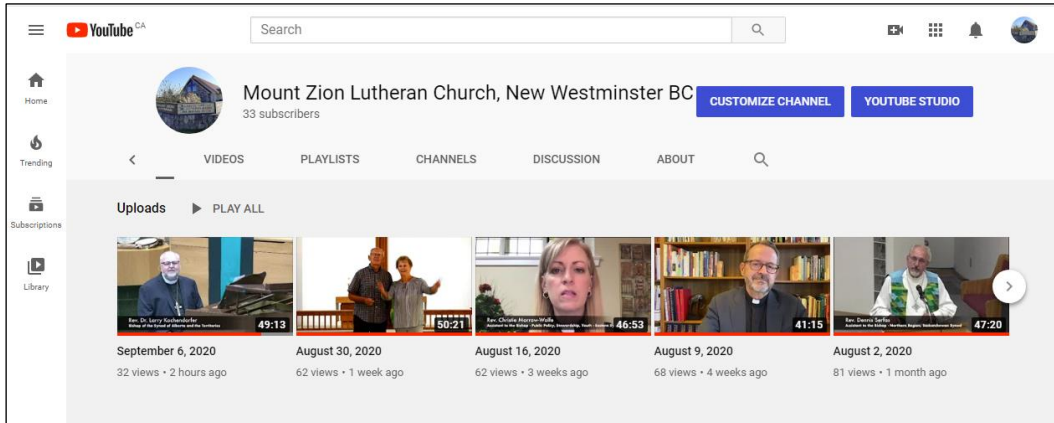


**Zoom Discussion
Wednesday,
October 28
7:00pm**

Mount Zion Lutheran is joining with other people from across the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada in reading the book of **Deuteronomy** throughout October as part of the Bible Book Club. 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.

Mount Zion's Online Presence

Worship at Mount Zion Still Looks Like This!



- For our October 11th in-person service
- For our healthcare workers
- For people in nursing homes who have limited visitation
- Thank God for many answered prayers for health and safety.

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

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

LIFT is DONE!
Dedication TBD



Bible Study
Church Council
COVID-19 Task Force
Coffee Time

ZOOM Coffee Time - Sunday mornings at 11:00am
Bring your own beverage and treats. Relax in the comfort of your own home (pj's & recliners most welcome☺)



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!

Devotional Booklets



- The October-December edition of *Eternity for Today* is now 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.