

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

June 2020  
Volume 8, Issue 4

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**During the COVID-19 pandemic we are following provincial health protocols. There will be NO in-person worship services, meetings or events.**

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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.



2020 Pentecost Newsletter

## Pastor's Musings

*Breath of God – The Gift of the Holy Spirit*

Pentecost, in Greek, means “the fiftieth day.” Within the Christian Church the term Pentecost marks the fiftieth day of Easter. It is also the day we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit. The most common images used within the Bible for the Holy Spirit are: the breath of God, the wind of God, and the fire of God.

In this time of pandemic, when the COVID-19 coronavirus wreaks havoc on a person's respiratory system, I wanted to focus on the Holy Spirit as “the breath of God.” In John 20:22 we read that “Jesus breathed on them” (meaning the disciples.) But Karoline Lewis, in her commentary on the Gospel of John, points out that the Greek verb for “breathed” (*emphusaō*) is better translated as “Jesus breathed into them.” She goes on to explain how this verb for “breathe” is the one used in the Greek version of the creation story in Genesis where God breathes into man's nostrils the breath of life. She writes: “The connection between the creation of the first human being, that the earth creature became a living being because of God's very breath, and the giving of the Spirit to the disciples cannot be overstated. This resurrection appearance is a moment of re-creation, of new birth, of abundant life, of becoming children of God (1:12-13)... That the Holy Spirit is both called alongside us and breathed into us also heightens the intimacy between God, Jesus, and the believer.”<sup>1</sup>

Breath – in a time of pandemic with COVID-19 which robs one of breath, which ravages one's respiratory system

Breath – when people with respiratory problems, like sarcoidosis or pulmonary fibrosis, live with breathing that is laboured and a struggle...where's that inhaler?

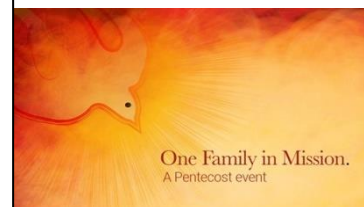
Breath – watching his aunt on a ventilator, a young boy commented; “The machine pumps air into her lungs. It's God who makes it breath.”

Breath...Breathe in, breathe out. The Holy Spirit lives within you!

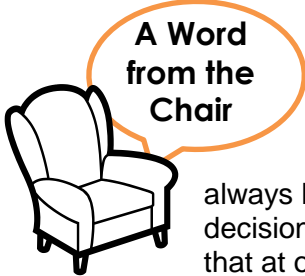
### You Are Invited...

Hearts and minds from across the Anglican Church of Canada and Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada will gather on Sunday, in worship, prayer and song, with the Holy Spirit and Giver of Life. Join us as we celebrate this Pentecost Sunday.

<https://anglicanlutheran.ca/pentecost/>



<sup>1</sup>Lewis, Karoline M.. John (Fortress Biblical Preaching Commentaries) (p. 246). Fortress Press. Kindle Edition.



**A Word from the Chair**

What has your Council been up to? Well, we had our fourth Zoom council meeting on May 24, 2020. There is

always lots to discuss and decisions to make. You may recall that at our AGM we had two new members join council: Wayne Weholm and Norma Houde. Both have served on council in the past and are a valuable addition. Norma has joined the Worship Team and Wayne the Property Management Team.

Our Property Management Team is working on a number of projects: gardening and lawn care, repairing the church gutter, maintenance at the Synod Office, and of course our lift installation. Our Education Team continues to send out weekly lessons and fun activities to our Sunday School children. Collectively we

endeavour and enjoy reaching out to all of you. Know that we miss you and you remain in our hearts, thoughts and our prayers.

Members of council have participated in a number of Zoom Lay Leaders Meetings hosted by the BC Synod. At times up to 80 lay leaders (council members) from Lutheran Churches across BC have participated in these meetings. Every meeting has been a valuable source of information and support. At these meetings we have shared how churches are coping and how we reach out. We have reviewed Federal Government Subsidy Programs and more recently we listened to a presentation on "The Challenges of Worshiping in Our Facility Again." More on that to come.

Please remember council in your prayers. May God grant you peace.

*Lyna, Chairperson, Church Council*

**Just Thought You'd Like to Know...**

	<b>April 2020</b>	<b>YTD 2020</b>
Income	\$ 7,356	\$ 37,411
Expenses	\$13,777	\$ 70,265
Surplus/(Deficit)	( 6,421)	( 32,854)

Please note: The deficit includes the March payment of \$15,554 for insurance.

*Thank you for your faithful support.*

**Do you miss getting together and visiting after church on Sundays?**

**Then join us on Sunday mornings at 11:00am.**

Bring your own beverage and treats ☺



**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.** (And you may also be able to connect by telephone only, technology permitting.) Please contact Vivienne Welters at [mountzion930@gmail.com](mailto: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!

**Gardening at Mount Zion**

Calling all people who love to dig in the dirt and make our grounds beautiful. The gardening crew are meeting every second week to stay ahead of the speed at which the weeds are growing. In order for everyone to maintain good social distance and feel

safe we are keeping the group to a max of five. There is still lots to do (edging, pruning, weeding). If you are interested in joining please call Lyna at 604-520-6300. We could easily organize a second crew to come at a different time.



## When is the right time to open our doors?

On May 19, 2020 BC moved into Phase 2 of the “BC Restart plan.” While this announcement by Premier Horgan gives churches permission to hold in-person services again for groups of up to 50 people, there are still restrictions and cautions in place that need to be met.

At the May 14, 2020 BC Synod Lay Leaders Meeting Rev. Kathy Martin talked to Council Members about factors that need to be considered before making a decision to open a church to in-person worship. She encouraged us to think about the following:

- How many worshippers will there be? Can the church accommodate physical distance restrictions?
- What is the composition of church members? Are there individuals with medical conditions? Who will be at risk? Some may have others close to them whose health may be vulnerable.
- Does the church have the capacity to implement procedures for an increase in cleaning and disinfecting high traffic areas, common areas, public washrooms and high touch areas? Who will oversee and take responsibility for this work?
- Does the church have adequate cleaning supplies available including PPE (personal protective equipment) for cleaning personnel?

- Will we celebrate the sacrament? How do you have communion while maintaining a distance of 2 meters, no common cup or no hand to hand transfer of bread? How can we maintain a 2 meter distance when baptizing?

- Did you know that singing can project microscopic particles of saliva 26 feet creating a dangerous cloud of aerosol particles?

As you can see it is complicated and there are many things to consider.

BC Synod’s strong recommendation is “that congregations maintain the current practice of providing congregational worship remotely through Phase 2 and well into Phase 3.” This will allow time to review all the things that need to be attended to before we open our doors to in-person services. Reopening is the responsibility of everyone.

At its meeting on May 24, 2020 church council made a decision to postpone in-person worship services indefinitely based upon the BC Synod’s recommendations. Council will continue to dialogue on this topic. We welcome your thoughts as this is something that needs the whole church community working together.

-Submitted by *Lyna Kiviste*

## Worship at Mount Zion Still Looks Like This!

Online worship services are available on our YouTube channel, Mount Zion Lutheran Church, New Westminster BC. Check our website for updates and information at [www.mtzionlutheran.ca](http://www.mtzionlutheran.ca). We are always looking for people to video the Bible readings at home and/or come to the church to lead the singing. Please contact Pastor Marlys at 604-521-0120.



## BRITISH COLUMBIA SYNOD

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada  
80 East 10th Avenue  
New Westminster, B.C. V3L 4R5

May 14, 2020

### Recommendation from the Bishop's Office to BC Synod Congregations

Dear Friends,

Our BC Provincial Government has announced plans to ease restrictions within British Columbia over the coming weeks and months. We currently are in Phase 1. From mid-May onwards, our province will begin Phase 2, "a careful step-by-step process to ensure all of our combined efforts and sacrifices are not squandered."<sup>1</sup> This comment is a reminder that the COVID-19 pandemic is not over. Our actions together as a province over the last few months have allowed our health care system to provide care without being overwhelmed. Now, the task is to continue to find a balance and avoid new outbreaks.

With respect to places of worship, Provincial Health Officer Dr. Henry stated the following on Wednesday, May 13:

*Starting next week, religious services can be held, with safe physical distancing. So that is a maximum of 50 people still, and that is provided that many people can fit into your facility. That may be way too many for many places of worship. We have seen outbreaks starting from religious gatherings, so be mindful of the room you are in, how long the service may be, and who are your congregants who are there – particularly if they are elders, people who are more likely to have severe illness with this virus. So hold your gathering in the largest room possible. Keep the group small. If you can, the maximum group is 50 but that means you have to maintain that physical distance. You need to make sure that you are continuing to modify those parts of the service that are important, so that you don't have that touching of multiple people with physical contact. We want to as well make sure that there are opportunities for hand hygiene when you are going in and out of the facility. That may mean that you need to have shorter or multiple services, and keep those virtual connections going, especially for the older people of your congregation.*

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/bc-restart-plan>



Such advice may sound simple and straightforward, but we want to caution you and ask you to be patient and to plan diligently before you even consider beginning worship services in your facilities. We say this out of an abundance of caution. A significant portion of those who worship with us are in higher-risk categories. **We strongly recommend that congregations maintain the current practice of providing congregational worship remotely through Phase 2 and well into Phase 3.** This will provide you with the necessary time to review all the things that need to be attended to before you reopen your doors.

Note also how the Provincial Health Officer mentions modifying parts of the service. This means no physical contact with those outside of our immediate family group or "bubble." Sharing of the Peace needs to be done by bowing and making the sign of prayer with our hands. Serving Holy Communion needs very careful consideration. According to many infectious disease experts, we also are strongly advised not to engage in congregational singing. A soloist might be able to sing on behalf of the congregation, but even then, the placement of the soloist is crucial so that droplets and aerosol particles are not spread widely. In addition, worship services should be shortened, for we are told that longer exposure, particularly inside a building, increases the risk of infection.

Attached with this letter are resources for you to use in assessing if and when you should reopen your facilities. All appropriate risk mitigation practices must be in place and sustainable before you do so. This includes acquiring the proper supplies, providing adequate training, and establishing a firm disinfecting regimen. Functionally, this may mean many congregations decide to wait until the end of the summer (nearer the end of Phase 3) before beginning to transition to in-person worship. You may decide to take several months or even longer before you meet in-person. You need to determine what is best for your context and your capacity to manage all that needs to be undertaken. You may even decide to wait until the new year. Whatever your decision, listen to one another, respect differences of opinion, keep the focus on maintaining a safe place, focus on the importance of community, and work together for the good of all.

All congregations must follow the public health requirements and ensure their programming and worship services keep everyone safe, especially the most vulnerable. We recommend that you keep abreast of these public health requirements by regularly visiting the BC Centre for Disease Control website <[www.bccdc.ca](http://www.bccdc.ca)>.

We also want to say that the responsibility for reopening is the responsibility of everyone. Maintaining a safe space and practicing proper disinfecting tasks should not rest on the pastor. This needs the whole church community working together.

We remember you in our prayers. We will do what we can to provide assistance, resources, and advice. We know that God journeys with us during these challenging times.

May God's peace be with you all.

Bishop Greg Mohr

Assistant to the Bishop Rev. Kathy Martin



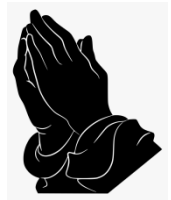
## Canadian Lutheran World Relief

**Baling Days have been postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions.** While quilting and packing school and learning kits have been suspended, one of the ways you can continue supporting CLWR's We Care program is by donating a *quick kit* or *hygiene kit*.

CLWR has also issued an **Urgent Appeal**. Your support is critical as CLWR partners work on the frontlines to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and offer care to those affected. You can find out more information and/or donate online at <https://www.clwr.org/>

## Please Pray for...

### Chagai and Aluel



Your prayers and financial support for Chagai Lual and his wife Aluel Nyok are still needed as they await the re-opening of international borders and flights to return home to Canada. Currently they are in Malakal, South Sudan. Donations may be made to the Emergency Fund at Mount Zion to assist them during this unexpected delay.

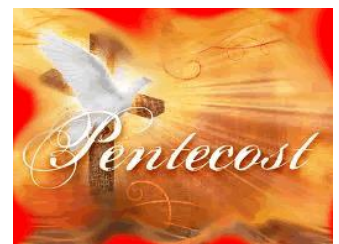
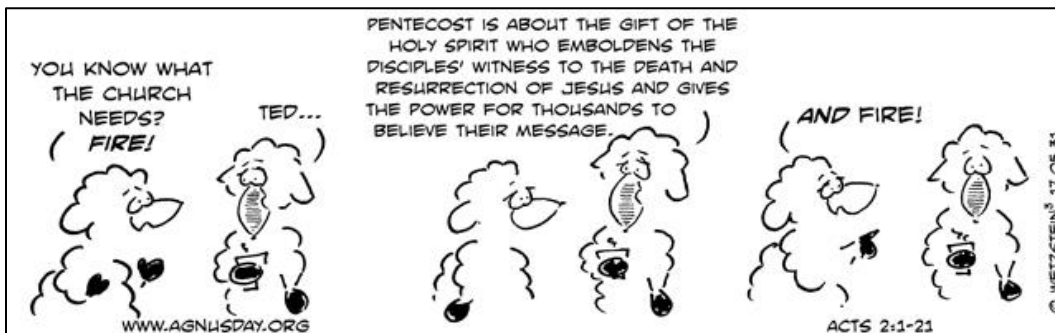
## Lift Installation Update

The lift is still pending inspections by the City of New Westminster and Technical Safety BC.

## Virtual Meetings

Societies now have the option of hosting virtual or hybrid meetings even if the society's bylaws and the Societies Act, and any regulations under these acts, state otherwise. This is the result of a [ministerial order](#) that will remain in force for the duration of the current state of emergency. Where a notice is required, instructions for participation can be provided in lieu of a physical location.

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/business/not-for-profit-organizations/societies-agm-covid-19>



**Wear something red for Pentecost Sunday, May 31!**