

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

September 2020
Volume 8, Issue 7

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Mgona Update

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

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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 Season after Pentecost Newsletter

Pastor's Musings

Starting Over

The month of September usually is a time for re-starting regular church programs, like Sunday School, Confirmation, ESL Bible Study, Lutheran Church Women (LCW), etc. But September 2020 is not like most Septembers, so we continue to wait on holding in-person meetings, worship and gatherings. However, that does not mean that some of our regular programs are not continuing. Sunday School teachers are considering how to provide Sunday School again. Confirmation will likely resume in October via Zoom. Sunday worship will continue online. Church Council continues to meet every 4th Sunday of the month via Zoom. Bible study continues on Wednesday evenings at 7:00pm via Zoom. Things are still happening at Mount Zion! It's just not "church as usual."

Actually, it has been a steep learning curve for so many in adjusting these past six months. But it has not been all negative.

By moving worship online some of our members who cannot come to the building can still come to worship. Plus we have visitors from near and far who attend worship at Mount Zion. Yes, we miss gathering together in person, but this time of pandemic is also providing opportunities for us to connect with people in other ways. I appreciate the many people who are making phone calls to try and stay connected with others in the congregation. Please join me in extending appreciation to our faithful videographer, Don Leech, who enables us with video to continue to worship together – while we are apart! And many thanks to Vivienne Welters for hosting our Zoom events and looking after the website.

As we continue in COVID-19 protocols for an unknown time period, may we use this time to pray, learn, and to love one another by doing the things that keep us safe. As for starting over – well, I think that began in mid-March when we started being the body of Christ in a new and very different way. What we always can count on is God's presence with us in and through this time. Thanks be to God! I want to close with a prayer from our hymnal, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, written for such a time as this:

"O God, where hearts are fearful and constricted, grant courage and hope. Where anxiety is infectious and widening, grant peace and reassurance. Where impossibilities close every door and window, grant imagination and resistance. Where distrust twists our thinking, grant healing and illumination. Where spirits are daunted and weakened, grant soaring wings and strengthened dreams. All these things we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen."

(Evangelical Lutheran Worship, © 2006 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Published by Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, p. 76)



**Sunday,
September 20
11:00a.m.**

Parking Lot Coffee Time☺



**In-Person
Outdoor
Thanksgiving
Service**

with Holy Communion??

If you are interested in attending an **outdoor** worship service with Holy Communion on **Sunday, October 11**, please contact the church office (604-521-0120) so the COVID-19 Task Force can decide if there is sufficient interest to proceed.

**Ecumenical Faith Break 2
Together in Thanksgiving
Saturday, October 17 at
10:00am**

Presented by the BC Synod & the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Vancouver
More information to follow☺



Thank you for your prayers!

- + Both Aluel and Chagai have returned home safely
- Please continue to pray for:**
- + Family and friends of Alual N whose unexpected death has left a deep hole in so many lives.
- + Students, teachers and parents as school resumes
- + COVID-19 Task Force as they try to keep up with ever-changing protocols and information
- + People in nursing homes who have limited visitation
- + Our healthcare workers



I asked Pastor Marlys “What should I write about in the newsletter?”. She suggested that I talk about the responsibility I feel as chair and being a part of the COVID-19 Task Force. Here it goes.

When I signed up to be chair of council I agreed to be chair for *three* months. Here I am, a year and a half later and I am still chair. It isn’t as frightening as it used to be but, I can tell you, it is a big job. Thank God we have council members who faithfully show up to every meeting to share their knowledge, experience and ideas. I am especially grateful to Doreen, our secretary, Len, our Treasurer and Bruce, our Vice-Chair who continue to be critical to the overall functioning of council.

Sitting on the COVID-19 Task Force has been a daunting experience. Other members of the congregation who also make up the Task Force are Vivienne, Monica, Deng, Norma, Shirles and Pastor Marlys. We have met every week via Zoom all summer focusing in on completing the Safety Plan for Employees in order to conform to provincial guidelines. It is now complete and you will find the safety plan on our website. It is a live document in that it will need to be updated as provincial guidelines change.

Council has now asked the Task Force to review all requests from organizations wanting to use our church, including events for our congregation. While we strive to make the best decisions for our church and for our members, the weight of this responsibility, at times, feels overwhelming. What helps me is knowing that I am not alone. I share this responsibility with the committee and I know God is with me. I pray and then I pray some more. I ask God for guidance and the wisdom to make decisions that will keep everyone safe. Will you please remember council and our COVID-19 Task Force in your prayers?

Before I end my newsletter submission I would like to comment on how important it is to reach out to others, whether it is a fellow member of our congregation, a neighbor or a friend. We can never assume that someone else is reaching out. Every phone call that we make matters. Each call we make will warm someone’s heart and God will bless us for it.

God bless each and every one of you and Pastor Marlys too!

Lyna Kiviste
Chairperson, Church Council

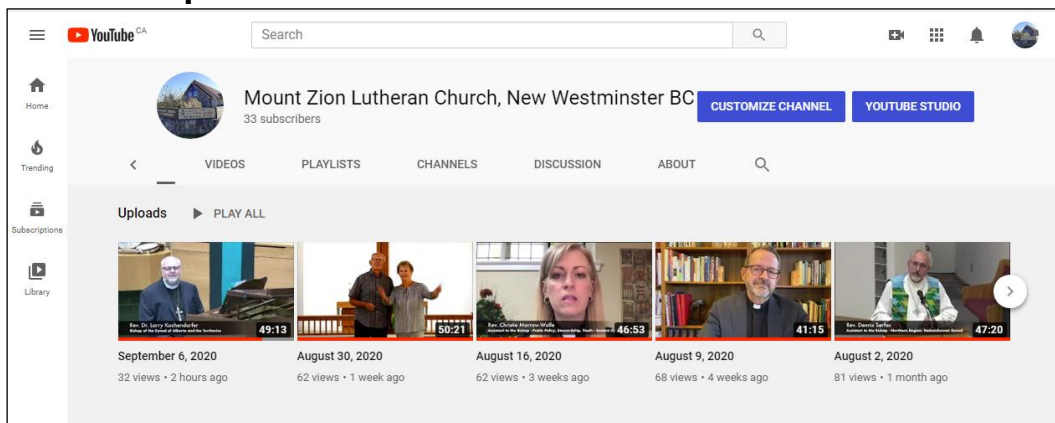
Just Thought You’d Like to Know...		
	July 2020	YTD 2020
Income	\$24,784	\$ 96,045
Expenses	\$12,896	\$110,171
Surplus/(Deficit)	11,888	(14,126)

Thank you for your faithful support!

Lift Installation Update:
Almost “Final”
Final inspection by the City of New Westminster is scheduled for Tuesday, September 8. We will dedicate the lift when we return to in-person worship.

Mount Zion's Online Presence

Worship at Mount Zion Continues to Look Like This!



Please note:
Pastor Marlys is away from September 9-16.
 Join other ELCIC congregations from across Canada for worship on September 13. Check out <https://www.elcic.ca/public/health/livestreaming.cfm> for a list of worship services being offered. Pastor Eric Krushel is available for *emergency* pastoral care. Contact 604-936-2939 (church) or 604-220-5450 (cell).

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.



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 (pi'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!



The July-September edition of **Eternity for Today** is still available. Plus the October-December edition has also arrived!
 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>



Living our FAITH
PRAY READ WORSHIP LOVE

Zoom Discussion
Wednesday,
September 30
7:00pm

Mount Zion Lutheran is joining with other people from across the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada in reading the book of Genesis throughout September as part of the Bible Book Club. Check out resources at this website: <https://elcic.ca/livingourfaith/default.cfm> or contact the church office for copies to be mailed to you if you do not have access to a computer.

SPECIAL PARKING LOT COFFEE TIME – September 20 at 11:00am

Book your spot now!

According to the Order of the Public Health Officer, only **fifty (50)** people may be present, so we need to keep track of how many are coming. We need your name, contact information and if you're coming in a car, so please contact the church office, 604-521-0120, to reserve a place.



Please note:

- ☆ Bathrooms will be available for emergency use only.
- ☆ Bring a mask, and, if possible, your own hand sanitizer.
- ☆ Bring your own beverage, snacks and chair (if necessary we can provide plastic chairs from the church.)
- ☆ Proper physical distancing (2m) must be maintained.

This time we are trying a couple of different things, in light of what we learned from August:

- ☆ 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
- ☆ Have travelled outside of Canada within the last 14 days
- ☆ Are a close contact of a person who tested positive for COVID-19



Mgona, Malawi Update

Mgona Diary:

From the Ground, The Hope Christian Mission in Malawi

The video short documentary on the work of the mission in Mgona, Malawi (<http://youtu.be/vXtnQZJReCg>) has been accepted for review at several film competitions and festivals. The important thing is that this provides opportunity for the video to be seen by a broader audience and for the excellent work of **Dean Karalekas** and **Stephen San** (Nelson) to be recognized. The video has been nominated for inclusion in competition for "short documentary international". This is a tribute by Dean and Stephen to the people of Mgona, Malawi.



John and Kay Ekstedt have also provided us with another gift in this compilation of writings by advocates about advocacy. This book, ***Voice: An Advocates Journal***, is available at <https://www.amazon.ca/> and a study guide is also available. Pastor John shared that these materials are being used at this time in several virtual online courses. Thank you Pastor John and Kay for continuing to share your many gifts in ministry, not only in the church, but to the broader community. Thanks be to God!

