



# The Messenger of Hope

## JANUARY 2021

*"The Messenger of Hope" is the newspaper of Hope Lutheran Church, 5104-106 Avenue Edmonton*

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*The purpose is to inform, encourage and foster. Do you have a testimony, a story, joke, or a recipe to share?*

*Contributions are welcome and can be submitted at any time Your submissions can be dropped off at the church or sent by email or regular mail.*

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### Pastor's Message

This Christmas was different, and not in a "better" way. I believe we can and should try to grasp whatever good we can from any situation, even if we know the good won't come any day soon. So, I know there's much to learn, and opportunities to grow, from the Christmas we just experienced. And yet, as my first Christmas as a pastor, I also hope what we experienced becomes a distant memory, and better experiences soon spring forth.

One thing to mention, that I know was good, is that, for me, worship took over more of the rhythm of the days, and the focus. With nowhere else to go, or events to fit into the schedule, I was able to focus more on the Savior's arrival that all that other stuff, present in a normal year, is supposed to be about.

But I know this is one of those things that's more for me than for others. I still got to go to church, and didn't have to look at a screen or hold a phone. It's my hope and prayer, though, that more people will be seeking new rhythms from now on, will be looking for more connection, and, ultimately, sense, in whatever way, that the church and its worship is a great place to be, since we find Christ's healing presence as we gather together to remember, proclaim, and receive.

With that all, I know we can't ignore the fact that these are still very dark days. And we likely won't be back to "normal," brighter times any day soon.

Megan and I have known more than a few people who've tested positive for Covid-19, but recently heard of someone connected to us dying with the virus (the grandma of Megan's oldest sister's husband). We know that this isn't unique, or really very close to us, but the reality of our circumstances makes the sting of such things much greater for many. Even for the most ardent and devout believer, the knowledge that Christ has taken away the sting of death doesn't always carry with it the peace and assurance we require when the time comes.

What we're hearing, in this specific situation and from others in general, is we're all tired of the separation. Most of us have been for quite some time, though, eventually, we tend to slip into more of a comatose state. But then, we can't even grieve, like Job did, surrounded by friends, and we're reawakened to our discontent (even if our friends end up being full of bad advice like they were for Job). We want to be together. We're exhausted by all the screens and masks and dotted lines, whether we're speaking of virtual things, or real life.

Many are struggling for answers, I know only one—know Christ and his ways. Trust only in the Lord. Then prayerfully and patiently wait, even though often accompanied by unspeakable agony.

Grace, mercy, and peace,  
Pastor Erik

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### **A special prayer at this time of Covid-19:**

O God our Healer, show your compassion for the whole human family that is in turmoil and burdened with illness and with fear.

Come to our aid as the coronavirus spreads globally, heal those who are sick, support and protect their families and friends from being infected.

Grant us your spirit of love and self-discipline so that we may come together, working to control and eliminate the coronavirus.

Make us vigilant, attentive, and proactive in the eradication of all diseases, that create suffering and often result in death for many people.

Open ways within us so that we can reach to our neighbors and support them in this time of isolation.

Strengthen and encourage those in public health services and in the medical profession: caregivers, nurses, attendants, doctors, all who commit themselves to caring for the sick and their families.

Continue to give insight and hope to all researchers focused on the approval and distribution of vaccines.

Sustain all workers and business owners who suffer loss of livelihood due to shut-downs, quarantines, closed borders, and other restrictions... protect and guard all those who must travel.

Guide the leaders of the nations that they speak the truth, halt the spread of misinformation and act with justice so that all your family may know healing.

Heal our world, heal our bodies, strengthen our hearts and our minds, and in the midst of turmoil, give us hope and peace.

Hold in your gentle embrace all who have died and who will die this day. Comfort their loved ones in their despair.

This we pray in Jesus name. Amen *(adapted from the Lutheran World Federation, 2020)*

# Special Days for Our Church Family

## Birthdays

### February

- 1 - Marta Woronka
- 5 - Irma Ferchoff
- 15 - Lori Hanasyk
- 18 - Gus Ferchoff
  - Michelle Goudreau
- 27 - Susan Graham

### March

- 2 - Jack Raycroft
- 4 - Freda Ness
- 5 - Dylan Norton
- 14 - Rudy Kiel
- 15 - Diane Osback-Brown
  - Avangeline Norton
- 16 - Connor Short
- 18 - Jeffrey Hanasyk
- 22 - Teresa Grynas
  - Susan Smith
- 24 - Dorothy Moench
- 26 - Ted Elford



## Baptismal Anniversaries

### February

- 1 - Fiona Halbert
- 16 - Laura Grynas
- 21 - Kelly Hanasyk
- 27 - Deanna Norton



### March

- 12 - Jesscia Hodson
- 21 - Janet Meger
- 25 - Carol Schweder
- 27 - Morgan Lindgren
- 20 - Christine Wolfe



The Hope Prayer Chain continues to do its work by providing support, care, and most importantly prayer for those in need. Please contact Pastor Erik at the church or Susan G if you have a prayer request or praise report. Susan G can be reached at 780-468-2201 or [susanatherdesk@yahoo.ca](mailto:susanatherdesk@yahoo.ca).

There is no special training or skills required to be a part of the Prayer Chain. All that you need is the heart to pray for others in their time of need and a willingness to be contacted when prayers are needed. New members for the Prayer Chain are always welcome. Please consider joining us –especially at this time when we are apart due to the pandemic. If you feel you can join in, please call Susan.

## Church Council Highlights - January 4, 2021

**Financial report** – Council reviewed the monthly financial reports from October through December and has a first discussion of the 2021 budget as drafted by the Officers. Nothing was approved as we expect final adjustments for the year end. At the time of our meeting:

Over budget items include:

- janitor's costs due to the extra cleaning scheduled with Covid,
- repairs and maintenance with twice the cost of annual fire and elevator inspections and the necessary repairs,
- church supplies with the large amounts of paper and copying of weekly worship notes etc. to stay in touch with the congregation

Under-budget items include pastor's car allowance, church utilities, organ & pulpit supply.

The wage subsidy grant from the federal government has been a big help to keep us close to the 2020 budget projection. Hope has also applied for a provincial grant to assist with extra technology costs to Zoom and cleaning. No word on the grant yet.

There was a slight surplus at the end of December, but we expect year-end adjustments. We will use those figures to finalize the financial report for 2020, as well as the 2021 budget proposal for the AGM at the next meeting at the end of January.

**Ash Wednesday** – tentative plans were made for the opportunity to receive Holy Communion at the church throughout the day by appointment on **February 17<sup>th</sup>**. Please call the church, or email: [pastor-hopelutheran@telus.net](mailto:pastor-hopelutheran@telus.net) if you're interested. For now, 4 times are available: 10:30 AM; Noon; 4:30 PM; and 8:30 PM. Worship on Ash Wednesday will also be live over Zoom/phone-in at 7:00 PM, using the same number and/or meeting ID as Sunday services.

Pastor Erik is also planning a Zoom/phone-in **Lenten study on Wednesdays during Lent**, from Feb 24<sup>th</sup> – Mar 24<sup>th</sup>, **starting at 7:00 PM**. The intent is discuss Luther's Small Catechism, while surrounding our time with a spoken word Evening Prayer service (also optional as a "new member" course). The meeting will open at 6:30 PM for anyone looking to chat before we start.

The current limited numbers likely wouldn't work for Easter, but we're making plans for people to receive Communion during **Holy Week, March 29<sup>th</sup> – April 4<sup>th</sup>**. Preferably, this will happen at the church in small groups, but arrangements can be made closer to that week for in-home Communion as well (if allowable under provincial mandates).

**The congregational Care Committee** will prepare materials for hand delivery and email or regular mail to coordinate with the Lent, Holy Week, and Easter planned by Pastor Erik. **Look for a personal delivery around the middle of February.**

**AGM date will be Sunday February 28<sup>th</sup> at 12 noon.** With current AHS guidelines, we have the option to meet in person and will plan accordingly. Pre-registration will be required and details will be in the package coming mid- February.

## **LCW and Quilting News**

The LCW and Quilting groups would like to meet in late February or early March. Suggested meeting times are:

**Quilting on February 24th** from 9-3, and  
**LCW on Wednesday March 3rd or 10th at 1:30 p.m.**

These dates will depend on what Alberta Health says about the Covid situation. It would be wonderful to get back to normal.

Contact Anna (780-466-5982) if you have any questions.

## **Mitten Tree Update**

A brief update on the distribution of items from the mitten tree. Thank you to everyone who donated homemade and store-bought items for the mitten tree. It was overflowing with so many brightly coloured items. In mid-December, we called the 2 schools and various organizations who we have contacted in previous years but they were not accepting any goods this winter due to COVID-19. Therefore, we have bagged up these winter items and will store them until we can distribute them in November/December 2021.

Submitted by: Teresa Grynas

## **To all the Altar Guild Volunteers in 2020**

A very warm and sincere "**thank you**" is due to the following people who volunteered for Altar Guild in 2020:

Ruth Kiel

Susan Graham

Dorothy Moench

Laura Hughes

Lorraine Hodson

Although services were suspended for most of the year, the ladies listed above were available during some part of the year to help with Altar Guild. I very much appreciated all of your help. I would like to especially thank Susan Graham for volunteering on many weeks in the fall time when services were resumed. Hopefully in 2021, things can return to a more regular schedule and I will be looking for volunteers at that time.

Thank you again, ladies, for all of your help.

Submitted by: Teresa Grynas

# Archives Corner

## Hope Lutheran Church

Welcome to the *Archives Corner* – we (the Archives Committee) are looking forward to featuring events and activities the members were involved in the past.



Our second article is the Youth activities as reported in *The Messenger of Hope* in 1991.

### **November 1991**

#### **YOUTH**

The youth from Hope have been planning for upcoming events. The “big one” we have in mind is the National Youth Gathering in Kingston, Ontario in August. We are beginning fundraisers and awareness to the event.

Although that is the big event of the year, we are not forgetting about the smaller event and activities which are held in the city and area. But again, time is an issue with the youth. Many of our youth play on sport team such as basketball and soccer . . . ask one of them when they play, and then take in a game. . . high school sports are exciting.

We had a reformation pot luck on Reformation Sunday, it was a fun time of fellowship and information about the Reformation.

If you have any questions about the youth, please feel free to contact Cathy.

#### **LUTHER AND THE POPE BOTH AT YOUTH REFORMATION SUNDAY SUPPER**

Both Martin Luther and the Pope came to the Youth’s Reformation Supper on October 26. Neither harangued the other over matters of doctrine or church practice. Both stayed for the pot luck meal. Luther was there carrying his big bible and the Pope was there wearing his big hat.

After the pot luck meal, the youth showed the *Root and Wings* video from the youth event in Vancouver last year. Cathy Wonnek made a presentation on five of the 95 Theses and other elements of the Reformation. Pastor Roy followed this with a quiz on the *who, what, when, where, why* and *how* of the Reformation.

## *Archives Corner continued...*

Efforts were made to keep the event appropriately theologically serious, but when the Pope kept losing his hat guests dared to smirk, and when Mary wished to go for a few seconds and while doing so had the Pope hold the baby Jesus, Luther could hardly restrain himself.

The evening closed with the singing of *A Mighty Fortress is Our God* and was led by none other than Luther himself. Even the Pope was seen moving his lips but few dared believe that he was actually singing.

In other news!!!!

### PARISH HALL RENOVATIONS

A sketch of plans for renovation the parish hall can now be seen . . . in the parish hall. Thanks to Rick Meger for drawing it up. Comments and suggestions are invited. Plan to donate a few days of time, a whole week if you can manage it. Even a few evenings would help. Ernie Posehn will be drawing up the work schedule. Call him at 475-4670.

Work went well on the fall projects, two of them: An internal vacuum system is now in place in the church and working well; a storage shed is up and functioning fine.

Tom Hodgson  
Carol Moeller  
Archives Committee  
Hope Lutheran Church

### **Eternity for Today**

The January to March Issue was late being delivered due to publishing difficulties. There are now lots of copies available at the church. Please contact Pastor Erik if you want a copy either by picking it up at the church or we can arrange to have it hand delivered.

## **Coffee Zoom Time (with Dale and Pastor Erik), 10:00 AM on Tuesdays**

To surprise of some of you, I'm sure, this has been going on for months, but usually it's just Dale and Pastor Erik. If you'd like to join them:

To phone in, dial:+1 587 328 1099; passcode when asked: 729280

On your Computer, Laptop, Tablet, iPad, iPhone, Smartphone, or any other such device, go to: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86311368893?pwd=ZkgyR09vcGJ1dDRBS05VQUgyMnc1UT09>

If you don't use the link, the "Meeting ID" is 863 1136 8893, and you'll need a passcode: Hope. Contact Pastor Erik if you have any questions.

**It's Hope's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2021** and plans are underway to have a celebration as soon as we are able to gather and the weather is better...likely in the summer or early fall. If you would like to be on the planning committee, please contact someone on Church Council or leave a message at the church. We hope this will be like the Music Recognition Sunday – only bigger and even better.

## **A Message for the Congregation of Hope Lutheran Church**

### **Re: Policy for Protection of Children, Youth & Other Vulnerable Persons**

We are now in this second year with the Policy for Protection of Children, Youth and Other Vulnerable Persons based on the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada policy. In June of 2019, Council adopted these policies as they pertain to abuse, harassment and vulnerable persons.

At the same time, we established a set of procedures for hiring, staff supervision and evaluation, personnel records, and the protection of children and youth and vulnerable persons. These procedures provide details about hiring, gifts to the pastor, abuse training, handling complaints, the staff evaluation process and record keeping.

One of the requirements of these policies and procedures is that our congregation must be advised annually by the Council Chair that this policy is in effect, and that a paper copy of the Policy Document is available to sign out from the church if you are interested. You can also find the policy document online at:

<https://elcic.ca/Documents/documents/Policytoprotectchildrenyouthandothervulnerablepeople.pdf>

Given the challenges we are facing with being apart, if you want a paper copy, please call the church office and we will make arrangements to have one made available.

Church Council

## **Offering Envelopes for 2021**

The new envelopes for 2021 have arrived and are available for distribution.

If you wish to, and you are able, they will be available for **pick up at the church, or delivered with AGM materials in early February**. If there is someone you live near to and you wish to pick up their envelopes and take it to them please arrange to do that too.

Envelopes that cannot be picked up at this time will be delivered in our next hand delivery scheduled for mid-February, 2021.

**Income tax Receipts for 2020** will also be available at Envelope pick up time. Receipts will similarly be hand delivered mid-February to those who don't pick them up beforehand.

Questions: please contact Dale Allen at??

## **Offerings while we are not able to gather:**

*We thank you for your continued financial support of Hope during these challenging times. It has been a difficult time and we are blessed to have such a faithful congregation.*

*The following options are available when you want to make an offering:*

- *write a cheque and use your regular Offering Envelope and place it at the entrance to the sanctuary when you are at church*
- *write a cheque for your offering, put it in a regular envelope and mail it to the church. Please do not send cash in the mail.*
- *OR phone Richard Grynas at 780 450 0413 and he will arrange for pick up.*

Another option is **e-Transfers at Hope for your Offering:**

1. You need to have online banking.
2. Log into your account and find eTransfers
3. Make a new Contact with information for Hope Lutheran Church.  
Email for our Treasurer is [treasurer-hopelutheran@telus.net](mailto:treasurer-hopelutheran@telus.net)
4. Enter and confirm the amount you want to send. This goes to Autodeposit.
5. Your bank may require you to enter a brief security question (choose one that the treasurer will be able to answer.) Put in the answer to the question.
5. You may add a message about where you want your offerings to go such as "monthly offering" or a "designated fund". Questions? Please contact Richard Baron.

# The Joy of a Child

By Dorothy Lowrie

In the Bible, Jesus speaks of the difference in being childish such as arguing over petty issues (Matthew 18:1-4 as Jesus speaks to the disciples who are arguing over issues of position) versus being child-like as Jesus defines as a person having a humble and sincere heart.

The difference is where you are placing your attention in life. Is it on who you are and your status or is it on your relationship with God and attention to the guidance of scripture in your life?

A theme of one of the popular presentations I have developed for seniors is focused on the need to continue to have play in our lives, regardless of our age. The word “neoteny” is a term with contrasting definitions related to this theme. This word was introduced by an anthropologist (Ashley Montagu). You can look at the meaning of this word in two ways; one definition is to retain childlike or immature characteristics through adulthood; the other definition is to hold on to youthful traits like curiosity, playfulness, and laughter. In my presentation, I suggest that it is the second meaning that we need to adopt for healthy aging.

Christmas is a time when we consider how we can celebrate the season with the joy of a child. Using our curiosity, playfulness, and laughter to ensure our own humble and sincere, child-like heart.

Even when we are not in a time of chaos as the world wrestles with the economic and social impact of a pandemic, there are those who would say that Christmas is “just another day.” And in any year, Christmas buying, and the debt assumed, can cause many families financial difficulty that only adds to an already stressful life.

Curiosity, playfulness, and laughter do not require the purchase of more things; but they do require creativity, beneficial to developing a healthy, positive state of mind. And with the current difficult economic and social situation many are facing, maintaining a healthy state of mind is extremely important in managing stress.

To approach life with a playful nature, there are so many things you can do and to share with others. I believe many people have already been playful in what appears to me to be an increasing number of homes with lights and decorations outside this past Christmas. But the outward things we do are only part of it. It is important to consider how to playfully ‘work on’ having a humble and sincere heart. One of the things I did this year was to create a ‘Gratitude Advent tree’. I used a tabletop Christmas tree decoration I already had and each day of Advent, I created a decoration based on a quote from scripture. Then on the back of the decoration, I wrote what I am thankful for, as it relates to the scripture. Someone mentioned to me that they had done something similar in a Sunday school class. Well, I am 61 years old and I still find joy in this project!

Finally, laughter can be hard when you are dealing with stress and isolation. I suggest that you find those things that brought you laughter in the past. Perhaps it was a movie or a story or something that you can recall with a smile. Search those things out again. If you cannot think of anything, reach out to others, Christmas is not quite yet over, so search online for a list of funny Christmas stories. A favorite of mine is *Dave Cooks the Turkey* by Stuart McLean ([Dave Cooks the Turkey by Stuart Mclean on Vimeo](#)).

The final aspect of approaching Christmas for me this year with the joy of a child was to trust. Trust that if we approach the real meaning of Christmas, and of life – the joy and wonder of the God coming into our world – with curiosity, playfulness, and laughter, God will see our desire to have a child-like humble and sincere heart and he will help us find what we need.

Added Note: *The following exercise can be done any time of the year:*

*To creatively engage with God in the birth of His son, I would suggest a method that originates from Jesuit meditation using your creative imagination. Imagine that you are part of the Christmas story; you are a shepherd, one of the wisemen or perhaps the owner of the inn. Find a part of the story that resonates with you and imagine you are there; what do you see, what do you hear, what do you say, how do you feel? You can journal your experience or just meditate on it. I have never been a mother, but I like to meditate on what it would have been like as Mary to have held Jesus as a newborn baby and to have his small fist hold on to my finger. I believe that if you try this imaginative meditation and 'take part' in the Christmas story, that it might renew or restore your sense of wonder as to how God brought his only Son to this world. And your sense of wonder will help to open your heart to His ongoing life in you.*

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*\*\*\*Please look for the next information package from Hope around the middle of February – It will be hand delivered and will include the Annual Report for 2020, all the information about the AGM, and the Home Worship Booklet for Lent and Easter.*

## OLD FASHIONED BREAD PUDDING

1 (1-pound) loaf (4 cups) French bread, cubed 1 1/2 inches  
1/2 cup raisins  
2 cups milk  
1/4 cup butter  
1/2 cup sugar  
2 large eggs, slightly beaten  
1 tablespoon vanilla extract  
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg

### SAUCE

1/2 cup butter  
1/2 cup sugar  
1/2 cup firmly packed brown sugar  
1 cup Whipping Cream  
1 tablespoon vanilla extract

- Heat oven to 350°F. Grease 1 1/2-quart casserole; set aside.
- Place bread cubes onto baking sheet. Bake 8-10 minutes or until toasted.
- Combine toasted bread cubes and raisins in prepared casserole; set aside.
- Combine milk and 1/4 cup butter in 1-quart saucepan. Cook over medium heat 4-7 minutes or until butter is melted. Cool slightly.
- Combine all remaining pudding ingredients in bowl; mix well. Add milk mixture; mix well
- Pour milk mixture over bread cubes. Bake 40-45 minutes or until set in center.
- Meanwhile, combine all sauce ingredients *except* vanilla in 1-quart saucepan. Cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, 5-8 minutes or until mixture thickens and comes to a full boil. Carefully stir in 1 tablespoon vanilla
- Spoon warm pudding into individual dessert dishes; serve with sauce. Store refrigerated.

*Submitted by Carol Moeller who says she hasn't tried it yet but she received the recipe from a good friend who bakes a lot and says it is delicious.*