



# November 2018

## Ascension Update

### Update from the Pastor's Office

I know, I know... this might be a bit late, but not much.

I came across the following article by the national bishop of the ELCA, Bishop Elizabeth Eaton. She writes about the year after the 500 anniversary hype in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the US, and - in light of this year's Reformation anniversary - wonders what might be next.

Enjoy the article.

### So now what? <sup>1</sup>

*This month marks the 501st anniversary of the Reformation. Last year it was all Reformation all the time. It was our year!*

*News, media and the public paid attention. Hundreds of Reformation-themed events took place. Documentaries were produced and joyful liturgies with our Roman Catholic brothers and sisters were held. I have lost track of the number of "Flat Luther" photos that were taken. We walked with a spring in our step. We read Martin Luther's Small Catechism together. Even Lutherans in parts of the U.S. where Lutherans are not dense were noticed! But the spotlight has dimmed, the public and the media have turned their eye to other things. Reformation 500 swag has taken up residence in the backs of closets and the bottoms of file drawers. And, I'd wager, our Small Catechisms sit alone and unopened on shelves and apps. This really is October 32.*

*But, dear church, now is the time for us to refocus our attention on the gospel of our freedom, forgiveness and reconciliation given to us through God's indescribable act of love in the death and resurrection of Jesus the Christ. Take out your Small Catechism and take a fresh look at Luther's clear and concise exposition of the faith.*

*To start, turn to Luther's explanation of the second article of the Apostles' Creed. In beautifully spare language, he lays out the truth about God and human nature: "I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father in eternity, and also a true human being, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord."*

*Two things jump out—the God of all creation, infinite and omnipotent, set aside all of that to become finite and helpless as the Christ child and the broken one on the cross, and this Jesus is Lord. There are many things that*

*claim our attention and allegiance, but none of these can save us and none of these is Lord.*

*Luther continues: “He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned human being.” He had a conservative and realistic assessment of humankind. Yes, we affirm with the psalmist that we are “fearfully and wonderfully made” (Psalm 139:14), but it is also clear that we are seriously and terminally broken. We are a rebellious lot constantly rising up against God’s good and gracious will and trying to set ourselves up as savior. This never ends well. And while there is pain in acknowledging that we are sinful, there is also freedom in confessing that truth.*

*Here’s the thing: we have to get past a kind of Billy Joel theology in which God sings “I Like You Just the Way You Are” to the realization that God does not like us just the way we are and in infinite love has done something about it. In Christ, Luther wrote, God has “purchased and freed me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver but with his holy, precious blood and with his innocent suffering and death.” Here is pure grace. It is God’s action, not ours. We don’t have to—in fact, we cannot—do anything to save ourselves or the world. God has done it.*

*So now what? So now we live, really live, in freedom and in service. Luther wrote: “He has done all this in order that I may belong to him, live under him in his kingdom, and serve him in eternal righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as he is risen from the dead and lives and rules eternally.”*

*This is what the world needs to see in us and hear from us – not a vindictive, capricious god who must be appeased, nor a purveyor of therapeutic moralism, but an all-powerful God who comes to us in humble human form to set us free from our murderous rebellion so we may be whole, holy and wholly devoted to joyful service. This is most certainly true.*

**Proclaim and live the gospel boldly!**  
**God's Peace to you all,**  
**Pastor Barbara**

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<sup>1</sup>Eaton,Elizabeth. (2018, September 28; Living Lutheran). So Now What?. Retrieved from [https://www.livinglutheran.org/2018/09/so-now-what/?fbclid=IwAR3F8ZE046NXPdf5j1ZHK-AaCGwy2vY7Z\\_2YCz2tdkc-lz4bfCi9xQg4u2s](https://www.livinglutheran.org/2018/09/so-now-what/?fbclid=IwAR3F8ZE046NXPdf5j1ZHK-AaCGwy2vY7Z_2YCz2tdkc-lz4bfCi9xQg4u2s).

OCTOBER COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

- **Proposed Model Constitution:**  
All congregations of the ELCIC are being asked to undertake a review of their constitution and bylaws and to begin a process of transitioning to the recommended ELCIC Model Constitution for Congregations. Maureen Chell has provided us with a comparison of the proposed changes to our current constitution. We are sending out an information package to every member household with that information for review. If you have an email address with the church office, you will receive your information package via email, otherwise it will be mailed directly to you. Please take time to review the changes and attend a special congregational meeting on November 18th to discuss the changes. If you have any questions, please contact Maureen Chell or one of the Council members.
- **Financial Summary:**  
We continue to be under budget for revenue collected from envelopes, our spending is within budgeted guidelines. If this pattern continues, it may affect our ability in future to meet our operating expenses. A quarterly summary of our financial situation will be provided.
- **New Council Members:**  
Please consider serving on Council next year, we are currently accepting nominations, and the election will be held at our AGM in February. Please contact any Council member for more information.

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OFFERINGS	CURRENT	BENEV.	DESIG. MIN.
September 30	2060.00	277.50	22.50
October 7	2331.00	213.00	153.00
October 14	1207.00	76.00	60.00
October 21	1863.89	291.50	40.50
PAR	1070.00	277.00	172.00

**ATTENDANCE**

September 30:	45	October 7:	66
October 14:	51	October 21:	60

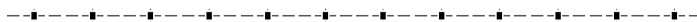
## Noticias de Colombia

November is **Colombia Month**! Join us this month for worship with a Latin flavour. We will sing familiar Spanish songs and learn a couple new ones. Liturgy will have a Latin rhythm as well.

On **November the 4<sup>th</sup>** after the service, Joyce, Tricia, Geoff and Pastor Barbara will share pictures and stories of this summer's Synod Journey to Colombia. We will update you on our Designated Ministry programs - True Vine and Caracoli - and share about other IELCO projects as well. It was wonderful to see the impact our support has made on the programs and to meet some of the participants. Please join us so we can share the good news with you!

Delicious Colombian treats will be served!

Bienvenidos! All are welcome!



## Dwelling in the Word

One of the things we have been doing this year is taking the time and rooting ourselves **in the Word** by reading scripture, and reflecting together on that reading. It opens us to up to one another and even more so to God's presence among us!

Our last **Dwelling in the Word** session is on **November 11 after worship**. If you can't make it, please, uphold the group in prayer.



## Special Congregational Meeting

A special congregational meeting will take place on **Sunday, November 18<sup>th</sup>** following the worship service. We will be discussing the proposed constitutional changes for Ascension.



## Pathways to Prayer: Series One by The Lay Academy

On **Saturday, November 17<sup>th</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup>** the Lay Academy presents Pathways to Prayer: Series 1. This event starts at 9:30 am and ends at noon for both Saturdays. Dr. Faith Nostbakken will be in attendance here at Ascension Lutheran on **Saturday, November 17<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, November 24<sup>th</sup>**.

Local Ascensionians will get a !0% discount. Please register online: \$25 for one session, \$45.00 for the two dates. Please see the poster for more information and for the registration form.

## Bishop's Message - November 2018

Dear Beloved of God -

We have just concluded the season of Area Gatherings: Northern (Sept. 28-29 at Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Stony Plain in collaboration with St. John Lutheran of Golden Spike, Spruce Grove and St. Matthew, Spruce Grove), Southwestern (Oct. 13 at First Lutheran, Calgary), Southern (Oct. 13 at Spirit of Grace Lutheran, Brooks via video report and telephone Q&A) and East and West Central (Oct 20 at Zion Lutheran, Bashaw).

Thank you to the Area Leadership Teams for your preparation for and planning of the Area Gatherings. I value these times when we have the opportunity to gather together as God's people for worship, learning, conversation and feasting.

This year we gathered under the theme: "Faith, Hope and Love" which was an extension of our Synod Convention theme and conversation from I Cor. 13. For our Dwelling in the Word we spent time together considering the text of I Thess. 1:2-3: We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Participants shared in part of the need to see ourselves as "we", as community together; conversation centered around how a spirit of gratefulness might impact our faith community and neighborhood; and of the work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope which they see.

Then most gatherings viewed a brief video (The Synod Convention Interview - All Questions) prepared during the Synod Convention around faith, hope and love. These videos and a summary (all questions) video are available on our synod website for your use:

<http://albertasynod.ca/convention/area-gatherings/area-gathering-videos/>

Much of the rest of our time was spent in conversation around how we might work collaboratively within our Areas and across our Synod in faith, hope and love.

I look forward in the next couple of months to meet with each Area Leadership Team for further conversation, listening and discernment together as we move forward always giving thanks...constantly remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

In Christ Jesus -

Shalom,

+Bishop Larry Kochendorfer

## MULHURST CHRISTMAS GALA

You are invited to celebrate the **9th Annual Christmas Gala** in support of Mulhurst Camp, on **Saturday, November 24** at **Trinity Lutheran Church**, Edmonton. Come for the turkey supper, silent auction, entertainment and fellowship! Remember to invite your friends. Silent auction at 5 pm, dinner at 6 pm.

For tickets at \$75 p/p contact your congregational rep, go online at [mulhurstcamp.ca](http://mulhurstcamp.ca) or call Lorraine at 780-490-0882. See you on the 24th of November!



## For All the Saints - Hymns for the Soul

Don't miss this one!

The 100+ voice Edmonton Metropolitan Chorus, together with the 30 piece Mission Hill BRASS Band proudly presents "FOR ALL THE SAINTS," *Hymns for the Soul*: November 18<sup>th</sup>, 3-4 pm at First Presbyterian Church, 10025 - 105 St.

Tickets: \$15 each in advance, \$20 at the door, children under 12 free.  
Call Lorraine Assheton-Smith, 780-466-6279.



