
THE MESSENGER OF HOPE



HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Advent 1 to Christmas 1



December 2024

WORDS OF HOPE

Reflections by Pastor Terry Richardson

As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, the living God. When can I go and meet with God? Psalm 42:1-2

Soul at the Surface

I remember standing on stage at school with the other members of my class. I think it was grade 2 or 3. We were singing the Christmas carol *O Come All Ye Faithful*. Not having had any church training or background, I didn't know anything about Bethlehem or angels or the point of the song. However, something seemed to be coming to the surface in this setting. I wondered, "*What is this all about?*"

Move ahead to 1988. I was standing in a large group of tourists – some German, some Japanese, others English speaking. We were crowded into a cave beneath the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem that marked where the birthplace of Jesus was claimed to have been. Someone quietly began humming a melody and then the words began. Latin lyrics came from this diverse crowd: *Adeste Fideles (O Come All Ye Faithful)*. Many of us knew those words. I thought, "*Isn't this interesting?*"



I spoke with a woman one time who told me that although her husband didn't attend church often, he was always present for the Christmas Eve service. The story is about angels, shepherds, Mary and Joseph, and the baby. What is it that draws us in? Family? Memories? Light in darkness? My heart also strangely warmed with the retelling of the old story.

These are times of faith, or moments when we notice something sacred happening. I think all traditions have such times although I am not familiar with them all. When light enters darkness and chaos, when hope begins in challenging circumstances, when remarkable events take place that encourage those who would otherwise be discouraged... we pause and realize that we are not alone.

A wise friend of mine said, "This is the time of year when the soul is close to the surface." The soul, that deepest part of us responds to hope, encouragement, and possibility at various times in life. But this time of year with long nights, thoughts of family and the desire for the warmth of fireplaces and friends can also bring the soul to the surface.

Our souls, our selves, our hearts bare themselves at key moments. We become encouraged or heart-broken. We can be “all alone together” as another friend of mine put it; or we can realize that what is most personal is also most common.

May the God of our hearts, seen in the face of this child of Bethlehem, remind us that we are not alone at this time of year. May the warmth of hope bring us light and the fact that others care for us even if the nights are long. May the stirring of our souls lead us to the God who loves us and helps us live.



WORSHIP NOTES

Submitted by Carolyn Iles

Buckle up!! Get ready to go!!! In less than six weeks, we will go through three Church seasons.

ADVENT SEASON December 1, 8, 15, and 22.



Advent season is also called the season of light, or the coming of the light. It is a time to prepare for the celebration of Christ’s birth, His historical birth and His coming again.

Advent readings are themed Scripture readings for each Sunday. In many churches such as Hope, and in homes, a candle is lit on each Sunday while

Scripture is read. The four weeks of Advent are broken down into the themes:

1st week, Candle of **Hope**, Isaiah 9: 2nd week, Candle of **Peace**, Isaiah 40: 3rd week Candle of **Joy**, Matthew 2, 4th week Candle of **Love**, John 3.

Advent is also seen as a time of giving and helping others, bringing the light of love. Many Christians engage in acts of kindness, charity, or volunteer work during this season.

Check out the article on *Worship and Work Shall be One* in this newsletter for some suggestions.

CHRISTMAS SEASON December 24- January 5

The liturgical season of Christmas begins with services on Christmas Eve and concludes on the Celebration of the Baptism of our Lord. The season lasts twelve days and ends on “Twelfth Night.” (Remember the song the Twelve Days of Christmas???)



Hope’s Christmas Eve family service will be at 6:30pm, on December 24th. The service will be zoomed.

Should you wish to attend a service on Christmas Day, consider St. Paul’s Anglican, on Church Street. Their Christmas Day service begins at 10:00 am. Another choice would be St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, at Shepherd and 4th Street. Their service begins at 10:30 am.

EPIPHANY SEASON January 6 – March 4



The Epiphany season begins with the coming of the “Three Kings” and leads us to Lent. The Greek word “epiphaneia” means “appearance” or “manifestation,” and it refers to the manifestation of Jesus to the world, according to Encyclopedia Britannica.

Throughout the Epiphany season our scripture readings follow Jesus as he brings the Good News to everyone.

WORSHIP AND WORK SHALL BE ONE

As we enter a time of gift giving, here are some suggestions you might consider, as you decide where to give your gift of prayer, or time, or money.

Hope could use some help! Could you wash dishes on Sunday after service? Help prepare or serve Communion? Assist with reading the scriptures or prayers? Offer your talents and time to help the property committee, or the gardeners or serve on Council?



There are some groups in our community and in BC that our church supports with money, prayers and time. Each week in **Advent** one of these groups will be highlighted. Is there a group you could support with a donation? You can add it to your church donation envelope and mark down the name of the group on the outside of the envelope.

CLWR is a member of the [Humanitarian Coalition](#), a partnership of leading Canadian aid agencies that coordinate life-saving efforts in response to major disasters around the world.

Covenant House provides support for homeless youth in downtown Vancouver; **donations will be triple matched until December 31st**.

Loaves and Fishes is Nanaimo's food bank, in operation since 1996, supporting the hungry in our community. For every \$1.00 given, \$5.00 worth of food will be provided.

Island Crisis Care Society uses housing and outreach programs to help people in crisis stabilize and find the support, resources and services they need to recover and be well.

CONTINUOUS LEARNING

Submitted by Carolyn Iles

Discernment process launched in advance of national bishop election



After 18 years of service leading the ELCIC as national bishop, Rev. Susan Johnson has announced she will be retiring at the conclusion of her current term, which coincides with the 2025 National Convention.

To assist the church in this transition, National Church Council (NCC) has thoughtfully considered a discernment process in the lead up to the election of the new national bishop.

“It is very important to be engaged in this process, as we look at what will set the stage for the next period of life of our church,” said NCC member Stephen Holmes (British Columbia Synod, Lay). “As we move forward, it may be challenging and a bit fearful, but also a very exciting time, as we discern where we are going and how we are going to get there. It will be important that people feel that they are a part of this and can participate in this process because this is their church.”

Starting immediately, members of the church are invited into a discernment process using a study guide to walk them through a series of questions to consider God’s call to national bishop of the church at this place and time. Beginning in January, through to the end of March, a pre-identification process will occur, identifying individuals with the skills and gifts for the call to national bishop. Pre-identified nominees will require endorsement from eight ELCIC members, four rostered leaders, four lay. All ELCIC members can only endorse one individual. And individuals must agree with having their names put forward.



After March 31, 2025, a task force will work to get biographical information for those who have been pre-identified and will also prepare video interviews with each individual.

“Members of the ELCIC should care and be intrigued by this process, as it opens up the opportunity to have a voice and be involved,” said Linda Grainger, who serves as secretary for NCC. “I am pleased with the process that NCC has adopted, specifically the pre-identification process. This process will encourage all ELCIC members across this church to be involved, not just the delegates at convention. I am hopeful

that members will take this opportunity to pray, reflect, listen and discuss throughout this time of spirit-led discernment.”

When it comes to delegates voting at National Convention, the process continues as laid out in the ELCIC Administrative Bylaws. “The ecclesiastical ballot – or the first write-in ballot – is really the nomination process the ELCIC has followed here for some time,” Holmes added.

“We don’t want to be ground to the past,” he said. “But we need to be looking forward as to what can we be, or what can we become to meet the needs in our community and what we’re called to be. Finding the right person with the appropriate gifts to fulfill that role is the next step.

TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION CALLS TO ACTION



We continue our presentation of the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action.

Commemoration

79. We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with Survivors, Aboriginal organizations, and the arts community, to develop a reconciliation framework for Canadian heritage and

commemoration. This would include, but not be limited to:

- i. Amending the Historic Sites and Monuments Act to include First Nations, Inuit, and Métis representation on the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada and its Secretariat;
- ii. Revising the policies, criteria, and practices of the National Program of Historical Commemoration to integrate Indigenous history, heritage values, and memory practices into Canada’s national heritage and history.
- iii. Developing and implementing a national heritage plan and strategy for commemorating residential school sites, the history and legacy of residential schools, and the contributions of Aboriginal peoples to Canada’s history.

80. We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, to establish, as a statutory holiday, a National Day for Truth and Reconciliation to honour Survivors, their families, and communities, and ensure that public commemoration of the history and legacy of residential schools remains a vital component of the reconciliation process.

81. We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with Survivors and their organizations, and other parties to the Settlement Agreement, to commission and install a publicly accessible, highly visible, Residential Schools National Monument in the city of Ottawa to honour Survivors and all the children who were lost to their families and communities.

82. We call upon provincial and territorial governments, in collaboration with Survivors and their organizations, and other parties to the Settlement Agreement, to commission and install a publicly accessible, highly visible, Residential Schools Monument in each capital city to honour Survivors and all the children who were lost to their families and communities.

83. We call upon the Canada Council for the Arts to establish, as a funding priority, a strategy for Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists to undertake collaborative projects and produce works that contribute to the reconciliation process.

Media and Reconciliation

84. We call upon the federal government to restore and increase funding to the CBC/Radio-Canada, to enable Canada’s national public broadcaster to support reconciliation, and be properly reflective of the diverse cultures, languages, and perspectives of Aboriginal peoples, including, but not limited to:

- i. Increasing Aboriginal programming, including Aboriginal-language speakers;
- ii. Increasing equitable access for Aboriginal peoples to jobs, leadership positions, and professional development opportunities within the organization;

- iii. Continuing to provide dedicated news coverage and online public information resources on issues of concern to Aboriginal peoples and all Canadians including the history and legacy of residential schools and the reconciliation process.

ELCIC Newsletter Notes **Submitted by Carolyn Iles**

Each week our national church office sends out a newsletter. Here are some items in the most recent newsletter which might be of interest to you.

5. 2025 National Convention **Discernment Process Launched in Advance of ELCIC National Bishop Election**



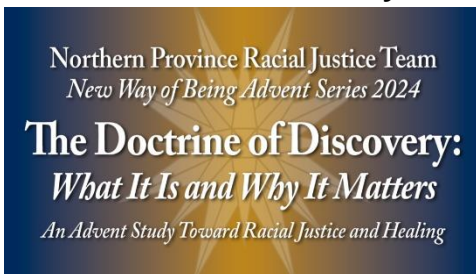
After 18 years of service leading the ELCIC as national bishop, Rev. Susan Johnson has announced she will be retiring from her role at the conclusion of her current term, which means delegates to the 2025 ELCIC National Convention will elect a new National Bishop. To assist the church in this transition, National Church Council (NCC) has thoughtfully considered a discernment process in the lead up to the election of the new national bishop. You are encouraged to share this process with your congregation and community. (More information will be coming in future newsletters.)

1. Lutheran-Anglican-Moravian Full Communion Cycle of Prayer Begins This Advent

Beginning December 1, 2024, the [Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada \(ELCIC\)](#), the [Anglican Church of Canada \(ACC\)](#) and the [Moravian Church in Canada \(MOR\)](#) will have a joint cycle of prayer with recommended petitions for use each Sunday throughout the 2025 calendar year. Previously operating as a joint liturgy for use between Lutherans and Anglicans in Canada - the Anglican-Lutheran Cycle of Prayer - this new venture was prepared by the Lutheran-Anglican-Moravian Commission following the new full communion partnership between Lutherans, Anglicans and Moravians at the 2024 Special Convention this past July.

3. Compassionate Justice

The Doctrine of Discovery: What It Is and Why It Matters



The [Moravian Church Northern Province Racial Justice Team](#) is pleased to present its ***New Way of Being Advent Series*** for 2024. This year's theme is "The Doctrine of Discovery: What It Is and Why It Matters." There will be three one-hour sessions **on December 4, 11, and 18 at 7:30 p.m. ET**. All sessions will be on Zoom. There will be a guest presenter for each week. For more information and to get the Zoom link, check out the ELCIC e-mailed newsletter or contact Carolyn Iles who can forward the

ELCIC Newsletter to you.

Let us Pray together

Beginning December 1, 2024, the [Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada \(ELCIC\)](#), the [Anglican Church of Canada \(ACC\)](#) and the [Moravian Church in Canada \(MOR\)](#) will have a joint cycle of prayer with recommended petitions for use each Sunday throughout the 2025 calendar year. Previously operating as a joint liturgy for use between Lutherans and Anglicans in Canada - the Anglican-Lutheran Cycle of Prayer - this new venture was prepared by the Lutheran-Anglican-Moravian

Commission following the new full communion partnership between Lutherans, Anglicans and Moravians at the 2024 Special Convention this past July.

KAIROS CAMPAIGN Submitted by Carolyn Iles

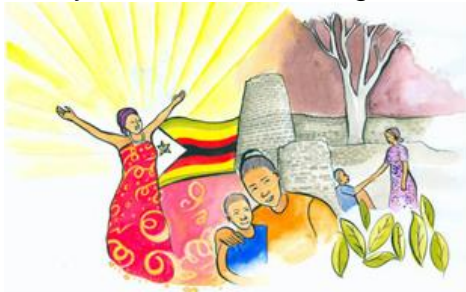
KAIROS is an ecumenical movement for ecological justice and human rights. Formed in 2001 by bringing together over 10 previous inter-church coalitions, our justice commitments reach back over 40 years. Below is information about one of the KAIROS campaigns.



Gender-based violence is on the rise globally. Racialized and Indigenous women are particularly affected by multiple levels of gender-based violence and oppression. Women human rights defenders, peacebuilders, community leaders, journalists and politicians are often targeted, attacked and killed for speaking out.

16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence is a global campaign that mobilizes women's organizations and movements, feminists, partners and survivors in their efforts to build awareness, advocate and act to end gender-based violence. The campaign begins on Nov.25th, The International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, and ends on December 10, International Human Rights Day.

This year, the Canadian government commemorates 16 days in the campaign- [Come Together, Act Now.](#)



2024 marks the 25th anniversary of the UN General Assembly's designation of November 25 as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, in memory of the Mirabal sisters, who were brutally assassinated on this day in 1960 for their resistance to the dictatorship of Rafael Trujillo in the Dominican Republic. With the transition to democracy in the Dominican Republic in the 1970s, the Mirabal sisters became symbols of both

democratic and feminist resistance and were known as butterflies.

For years, KAIROS has participated in the 16 Days of Activism to highlight and amplify the work that partners are doing every day to end gender-based violence and the impunity that supports and perpetuates it. This year we spotlight our partners' activities and actions to end gender-based violence. [Visit our 16 Days campaign page.](#)

As KAIROS, we have the privilege of collaborating with partners, networks, allies, and movements in Canada and the Global South – courageous, resilient, and powerful butterflies working every day to end all forms of violence – for everyone and the planet. The impetus for KAIROS to participate in this campaign came from our Global South partners, like the Organizacion Femenina Popular (OFP) in Colombia, who were already organizing 16 Days campaigns in their own contexts. They encouraged and catalyzed us to bring the campaign to Canada to highlight

ongoing gender-based violence in Canada, particularly violence against Indigenous and migrant women. They helped us make the connections between the fight to end gender-based violence in Canada and the Global South.

To learn more about KAIROS and its programs, check the internet, or ask Carolyn Iles to forward information to you.



WITNESS AND MISSION REPORT

Submitted by Joan Roszmann

COVENANT HOUSE VANCOUVER

Your donation will be triple matched until December 31st!

Homelessness has increased 32% over the last three years and a substantial number of these are youth.



Covenant House provides a safe haven from the hardships of homelessness among youth in Vancouver. The organization recognizes the fundamental worth of every human being, and creates a safe setting where all youth are served without judgement. CHV welcomes young people, aged 16 to 24, and provides a safe place to sleep, nutritious food, warm clothing and showers.

The **Witness and Mission Committee** invites you to check their website: covenanthousebc.org! Donations can be made through your offering envelope marked 'Covenant House' or directly on the website.

Thank you from Island Crisis Care Society Thank you for the "stocking gift" donations left in the box in the narthex which will serve to brighten the holiday period of their many clients. This drive closes December 1st. Financial donations can still be made at islandcrisiscaresociety.ca.

CLWR GIFTS FROM THE HEART

Submitted by Joan Nolting



Christmas is coming and Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR) has released a new version of the **Gifts from the Heart** catalogue, copies of which are available upstairs by the CLWR bulletin board and downstairs in the library. The catalogue is also available on line at clwr.org/GFTH.

Give a meaningful gift from the comfort of home with Canadian Lutheran World Relief's **Gifts from the Heart**. Your gift to a loved one will provide meaningful, tangible items for people around the world facing hunger and poverty. No matter which gift you choose, the gifts you give will change lives and touch your loved ones. Some of the gifts in the catalogue will be matched 3 or 4 times.

CLWR introduced **Tiny Hearts** to help teach generosity to children. Gifts in the Tiny Hearts section will give someone access to schooling, a career and a new future.

Purchases can be made through your church envelopes, designated for the specific items, with cheques payable to Hope Lutheran Church or directly to CLWR by mail (if the postal service is working) or email at clwr.org/GFTH or by calling **1-800-661-2597**. If you send through CLWR they will send you a gift card, by mail or email, that you can send to the person on whose behalf you have made the gift.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

AN OLD FASHION CHURCH CHRISTMAS PARTY AT HOPE



When: December 7 at 2:00 in the afternoon
Where: Hope Lutheran Church
What: A pot luck **CAKE AND COOKIE** coffee/tea party with carol singing and visiting.

Come out and enjoy the fun amongst the "pine and candles" during the Christmas season.



Christmas Cookie Walk: Brechin United's 21st Annual Cookie Walk will take place at the church (2020 Estevan Road) on Saturday, **December 7, from 11 am-12:30 pm.** This is your opportunity to purchase an assortment of festive treats to serve over the holiday period. If possible, please bring a container. The homemade treats will be sold by weight @ \$2.50/100 grams. Pay with cash or cheque. See you on December 7th!

The Tidesmen and Rising Tide invite you to join them for their Christmas shows:
Dec 7 – 2:00pm - Qualicum - Christian Fellowship Centre
Dec 8 – 2:00pm – Holy Trinity Church - Spartan Rd, Nan.

Enjoy new Christmas songs in our choruses and quartets-ie "Meet me Under the Mistletoe", and a rock 'n roll version of an old favourite. **Expect some fun!!** Reserve the date and order your tickets by contacting Glenn Harvey **250-751-1435. He will deliver if necessary.**



Malaspina Choir presents "A Child's Christmas in Wales" by Dylan Thomas.
7:00 pm Friday, Dec. 13th at St. Andrew's United, Nanaimo
AND 3:00 pm Saturday, Dec. 14th at Knox United, Parksville
Tickets: Adults - \$30 under 25 - \$13.50 under 12 – free
Tickets are available from Port Theatre Box office 250-754-8550



The Island Consort, Nanaimo's classical chamber choir, presents "The Joy of Christmas," featuring the Christmas cantata "**Gloria in Excelsis Deo,**" BWV 191 by J. S. Bach, with 18-piece orchestra, as well as selections from Lauridsen, Rutter, and more. **2:30 pm, December 14, at St. Andrew's United Church, 311 Fitzwilliam Street, Nanaimo. Tickets \$25 through the Port Theatre or \$25 cash at the door for adults, \$5 for students, children under 13 free.**

Concert also presented without the cantata (due to space constraints) at Christ Church Gabriola, 2600 South Rd, Gabriola, at 2:00 pm on December 15. Tickets \$20 cash at the door.



YELLOW POINT SINGERS Winter Concert "GLORIOUS!"

Doors open at 1:30pm

2:00 p.m. Sunday, December 15, 2024
Cedar Hall [2388 Cedar Road Nanaimo BC](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov2/01_services/02_health/03_hospitals/04_cedar_hall.htm)

\$20 adult. \$5 12/under

50/50 raffle in support of Loaves and Fishes Food Bank

FOOD IN NANAIMO

7-10 Club Bagged lunches Mon-Fri
8-8:30am Pioneer Park (Wallace), 830-9am Victoria Rd
Hot breakfast & bagged lunch Mon-Fri
8:30-9:30am Caledonia Showers

Stone Soup Mobile Service Hot/bagged meal daily 5:30-8:30pm
Various locations downtown (Note: exact times may vary)
Robson St, Victoria Rd @ Cavan St, Library, Bowen Park

Selby Street Mission St Andrew's Church, 315 Fitzwilliam St
Lunch Thursday 12-2pm

St. Paul's Church/Foodshare 100 Chapel St
Lunch Monday 12-1pm

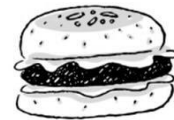
Risebridge 520 Prideaux St
Drop-in/Breakfast Tuesday 9am-12pm

Snuneymuxw Outreach #1 Port Dr
Hot meals Tuesday 12pm
Snack packs Friday 12pm

Maranatha Church 6553 Portsmouth Rd
Pasta dinner Sunday 4-6pm



(Updated November 2024)



BLUE
CHRISTMAS SERVICE

SATURDAY
December 21, 2024
2:00pm

"Perhaps you are grieving the loss of a loved one; feeling sad and anxious about the Holiday Season. After this service, our prayer is that you will feel uplifted and experience God's love for you."

Light refreshments and social time will follow the service. All Welcome!

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church,
4235 Departure Bay Road, Nanaimo
250.756.2576