
THE MESSENGER OF HOPE



HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Lent 5 to 2 Easter



April 2025

WORDS OF HOPE

Reflections by Pastor Terry Richardson

Once safely on shore, we found out that the island was called Malta. The islanders showed us unusual kindness. Acts 28:1-2

Kindness

A blessed Easter to you on April 20th! He is Risen! Alleluia! Life can be new again!



I like it when people are kind. It is encouraging to receive kindness and to see it shown toward others. Kindness toward children, toward strangers, toward those closest to us can make a huge difference in the background of life that we help build for ourselves.

The alternative is to see everyone else as competition. Then we do not want to be left behind. We don't want to see others get something that we would like. If we have experienced someone being mean or aggressive to us, it may result in the temptation to pass that attitude on. The effect can spread like a forest fire.

Think of life without kindness. Some may feel that describes their current experience in life. It means that only the strong survive. It means that the weak and infirm get trampled. It means a law of the jungle. Life would be sterile, without any smiles, without joy, without a sense of peace and safety; or we would simply join the animals.



Kindness is a human quality. It may be a missing piece in the bump and grind of daily existence. Kindness pauses to take time for someone else. It "can" happen anywhere.

I think kindness is like many positive qualities. We experience them when we start to express them. Instead of waiting for someone else to be kind, why not start being kind to others and see if it doesn't come back around at you one way or another.

Try an experiment. Be kind in the neighbourhood or in the yard. Be kind in the hallway or with people on the elevator. Be kind in the shopping mall. Show kindness to your spouse or partner. Slow down and be kind to your children or parents.



In spite of all of our negative attitudes and brokenness God was kind to us and sent Jesus as our Savior. Jesus was kind with broken and hurting people. He sent his Spirit to us in order that such kindness and care for others would continue.

You might even try, just for a moment, being kind to yourself. It's a great way to make life new again.

WORSHIP NOTES

Submitted by Carolyn Iles

What does Worship Mean to me?

(An interview with Darlene Johnson)*



I grew up in a non-liturgical tradition and when I first experienced the liturgy it grabbed me. There's something about it that felt right. In the church I grew up in, there were no bulletins outlining the shape of the service or the congregation's prayers and the pastor or worship leader directed everything. It was easy to blank out or to simply let the words go over your head. But what I love about our liturgical form of worship is that I am an active participant.

The liturgy is the work of the people and we do this work together, we all have parts to play. I like that we purposefully start with confession and then enter into adoration followed by prayer and then the word, scripture and sermon, and of course communion. Rather than letting my mind wander, I stay engaged in the liturgy as we work through it together.

In my own personal worship and devotions, I tend not to spend much time in worship or adoration. I may begin that way, but my attention quickly turns to petitioning God for my own concerns. What I love about participating in the liturgy every week is that it offers a much-needed balance. There is time set aside where we offer our petitions to God and they do touch on my concerns, but I benefit from turning outward from myself to listen to the wisdom in the lessons and the psalms. I also allow myself to be carried or enveloped by the music and the hymns which are often more positive than the concerns of my life. When I follow the liturgy, I spend more time in adoration than I do in my own private prayer. On my own, I struggle to find time to read and study and so I need to worship with others in order to keep being fed.



As the words of one chorus says: I need the spark of others to keep the fire going. The liturgy provides me with the framework and community to have a more balanced time with God.

Of course, I love a worship service where there is great music, fantastic preaching and uplifting hymns. I can't help feeling as if part of the kingdom of God has come down. But even a simple liturgy provides some refreshment as I go out into the world to share that kingdom with others once again.

**Originally published in the BC Synod Worship Committee's newsletter, Sounds of Joy, printed in May 2015. Material for this reflection was drawn from interviews with Darlene Johnson, who at the time of the interview was the Vice Chair, BC Synod Council and is still a member of Spirit of Life Lutheran church.*

CONTINUOUS LEARNING

Submitted by Carolyn Iles

Canadian Lutheran World Relief works with others to provide support for Ukrainians.



Ukraine conflict - three years on

It has been three years since the conflict in Ukraine began—a sobering milestone that reminds us of the hardships millions continue to face. Families have been displaced, homes destroyed, and daily life remains filled with uncertainty. Recent developments, including intensified military actions and complex international negotiations, underscore the ongoing challenges for those affected.

Your compassion and solidarity have been a source of hope. **Because of your support, over 700,000 people have received vital aid**—food, shelter, cash assistance, mental health services, and help to rebuild their lives. Lutheran World Relief works with ActAlliance, which is a global faith-based coalition organized in national and regional forums operating in more than 120 countries. They have been providing funds to the Hungarian Inter-church Aid, or HIA which provide support for Ukrainian Refugees living in Hungary and Ukraine. **Churches working together have provided over \$51,042,493 USD for these aid programs.** Here are a few people YOU have helped with your donations.

Lydia from Rokytno, who needed eye surgery, shared how this support changed her life: *"When they told me the money had been transferred, I couldn't believe it. Now I can cook again because I can see what I'm doing—and finally, I can take care of myself."*

Natalia's home lacks gas, she cooked on firewood for her two children and herself. To save costs she received a resourceful stove designed by local entrepreneurs from HIA. *"I needed to watch how much and when I put wood on the fire. I used to put something on the stove for the night to cook slowly and save firewood. Now I don't have to combine heating and cooking, this is much more efficient."*

Dmytro and his family had to start from scratch again after fleeing the warzones of the Donbas. Helped by HIA's Cash for Protection program he started renovating a dilapidated hut they bought near Bohuslav entirely on his own. *"You know, my plan is this: every day, at least something has to be done. With HIA's help we bought what we did not have before: pipes for the sewage system, water pipes, a toilet, a bathtub. And little by little it becomes a lot."*

Kateryna and her three children were stuck in frontline Pokrovsk when the mandatory evacuation of the city was announced. Unable to afford costly commercial services, HIA was able to arrange transport of the family and their belongings.

"I felt like we were trapped, with nowhere to run or hide. We had no money, my husband was far away, and the explosions and shelling were constant. Half the night we sat awake on the bed, too afraid to sleep. I distracted the children with cartoons to ease their fear. Our windows were already shattered by shockwaves, and something also hit the neighbouring house. Fortunately, we got a call from HIA's support operator. We just couldn't stay any longer, so help in evacuation was vital to us."

Stories like these are only possible because of this outpouring of generosity. We are deeply grateful to everyone who has kept Ukraine in their prayers and shown compassion over these three years.

Please continue to keep the people of Ukraine in your thoughts and prayers. Together, we stand in solidarity—committed to peace, supporting resilience, and working towards a brighter future.

Yours Sincerely,

John Constable

Director, Community & Donor Relations



CARBON NEUTRALITY

Submitted by Carolyn Iles

TASK FORCE ON CARBON NEUTRALITY –

Seeking carbon reduction with honesty, prayer and empathy *By Andrea Wilhelm **

(A monthly devotional about Carbon Neutrality in the ELCIC Newsletter.)

I live in Alberta, ground zero of the fossil fuel industry in Canada. Here the calls for carbon reduction are most difficult to make and may sound most disingenuous, hypocritical, or out of touch, since many



people's livelihoods are built on the industry, and indeed many have gotten wealthy from it. Blue and white collar participants in the industry have viewed their jobs as a blessing from God. Many of them sit in church pews on Sundays, including Lutheran pews. So how to speak about and work on carbon neutrality in Alberta, and to speak with a voice of faith to people of faith? I believe the first step is honesty. Honesty about the benefits people have reaped from the industry. That includes everyone, whether our jobs are in it or not. Most of us heat our homes with fossil fuels and use fossil fuels for transportation. Even our food and other products use fossil fuels to be

produced and shipped. Honesty means admitting we are all participants and benefactors, we are all complicit. In a way, we are all trapped.

That means I cannot speak about carbon reduction from a high horse. I have to be honest about all of the above. I am reminded of Luther's insight that each of us is saint and sinner simultaneously. That does not mean saying or doing nothing, however. If I listen to people with empathy, I will learn that high-carbon life has also demanded sacrifices. For example, working away from home in remote camps, a breathless pace of life, feeling alienated from creation or one's own conscience, the anger or despair of one's children or grandchildren, being evacuated or even losing one's home, suffering from smoke, and so on.



So what is the way out? Is there any hope, any good news (gospel)? I propose two things: First, even in Alberta practical and affordable low-carbon options are becoming more available. Second, there is good news for people who are trapped. We are all trapped in sin (the sinner side of us), but Jesus Christ overcame sin for us. United with him, we have access to his power. The power to love, to be compassionate, to be righteous, including in our carbon struggles.

Perhaps we need to pray about this more earnestly in our churches. In John 14, towards the end of his life, Jesus promised his fearful disciples that those who believe (trust) in him “will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father” (v. 6).

That is immediately followed by “I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it” (vv. 13-14).



Let us encourage one another. Let us share useful information. And let us ask God in Jesus’ name for strength and wisdom to reduce our carbon emissions for real, for the benefit of all humanity and creation, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. Right here in Alberta.

LOVING OIL & GAS

I love oil and gas too.

They have kept me warm, and moving, and fed.

Thank you, energy workers, for making oil and gas available to so many.

But I also love air and land water and animals and plants people and Creator of it all.

And they tell me it’s time to change.

And it seems to me that oil and gas too, have not been happy being burnt.

They have made smoke and a stink.

Being burnt - perhaps that’s not their purpose.

Perhaps we love oil and gas better by leaving them in the ground, for the most part.

And save them for rare uses, like diamonds.

Sorry oil and gas, for corrupting you.

Sorry air and land water and animals and plants people Creator for all the waste and stink and smoke.

Much of it is avoidable.

I want to change. Friends, will you change with me?

*By Andrea Wilhelm **

(I wrote this about 2019 in response to “I love oil & gas” signs in Alberta.)



WITNESS & MISSION REPORT

CLWR BRINGS HOPE TO CHILDREN

Submitted by Joan Nolting

Providing trauma support for youth impacted by the war in Gaza

Young people are suffering from grief and stress as violence erupts across the region. Many have witnessed death and injuries of fellow classmates and friends, which has severely impacted their mental health and emotional well-being.

CLWR’s partners organize individual counselling sessions and small and large group sessions for young people. Social outings and activities are essential aspects of this work, alongside the trauma support that is offered.

Supporting children’s education in Ukraine

We are approaching three years since the start of the conflict and many Ukrainian children are still living under stressful and difficult circumstances, having been living in temporary circumstances for some time, while dealing with the trauma of being forced to flee their homes.

Music and art programs have helped many children to feel safe in their new communities; distance learning tools and school kits have insured learning continuity for those who had to leave so much behind when they fled their homes.

Offering therapy to children with disabilities in Somalia

Children in Somalia have faced significant challenges due to conflict, political instability, and poverty. Many are affected by violence, displacement, and lack of access to healthcare. Education is also disrupted, with many children unable to attend school due to safety concerns or lack of resources. For those with disabilities, things are even more difficult.

Community-Based Rehabilitation Centres offer children with disabilities occupational therapy. This includes learning to walk and speech therapy, to help remove some of the barriers to education that children can face.

With your compassionate support this Lent, CLWR will be able to continue to help vulnerable children and young people through these kinds of projects and initiatives. Your impact will be immediate, helping to give them a renewed sense of safety and security.

Contributions can be made through your church envelopes designating it as: "CLWR Hope to Children".



CALL COMMITTEE REPORT Submitted by Rosalind Schramm



The Congregational Mission Profile is now complete. It was reviewed and approved by Church Council on March 22, and presented to Bishop Kathy. (This document consists of five parts - Congregation Information, Ministry Practices and Structure, Mission in the Community, Where is God Leading Us?, and The Leader We Seek. These five parts incorporate the information shared by the congregation, along with other pertinent and required information.)

Our Congregational Mission Profile is now available for viewing, in its entirety, if desired. If you would like a copy of this document, please contact John Musgreave by email: john.musgreave@gmail.com If you require a paper copy, please contact John Musgreave by phone: 250 585-1085.

We met with Bishop Kathy on March 15, to discuss our Congregational Mission Profile, and our future steps. A number of potential candidates have been confidentially identified, both from our congregation, and from Bishop Kathy.

The most recent meeting of the Call Committee was on March 26, where we reviewed these potential candidates. Bishop Kathy is now soliciting the candidates to see if they are interested or curious for a Call. Interested candidates are required to complete Mobility Forms, which I understand take a long time to complete. Once completed and given to Bishop Kathy, these forms will be forwarded to the Call Committee. All members of the Call Committee will read every mobility form independently, making extensive notes, prior to the Call Committee coming together as a group to discuss each candidate individually.



The Call Committee will create a short list of names for initial interviews. We will continue to meet and interview the short-listed candidates, gradually narrowing them down to one candidate, the candidate we feel will best fit our church, based on the invaluable information we received from our congregation.

This candidate will be invited to come to our church, and meet all of us.

The Call Committee will present this preferred candidate to our Church Council; who will then make the recommendation to the congregation. The congregation will then vote on whether to accept or reject issuing a Call to the candidate. Successful votes require a two-thirds majority from our congregation. If the call is approved, the candidate is notified through the Bishop's office. The candidate has thirty days to respond. If the answer is favourable, the Bishop makes arrangements with the congregation for the installation of our new pastor. If the candidate rejects the call, the Call process would begin all over again.

Once again, the Call Committee would like to thank you for your patience and support during this process. Change can be challenging, and we welcome any questions or concerns you may have. I would encourage you to reach out to any member of the Call Committee as needed (Pastor Bill Fehr, Bonnie Law, John Musgreave, Martin Madelung, Gerry Owen, Rosalind Schramm, and Randi Turner).

A Message from the Call Committee: Council has approved sending our Congregational Mission Profile to Bishop Kathy. You may recall that the Profile is really our Story. It describes where we are as a congregation, what excites us, what challenges us & areas we, along with our new Pastor, would like to focus on over the next 3 – 5 years. Bishop Kathy will now send this document to potential pastoral candidates identified during our January Workshops and by the Bishop.

We are proud of this document (All 29 Pages!). If you would like to receive a copy of the Congregational Mission Profile, please contact John Musgreave @ john.musgreave@gmail.com or phone 250-585-1085. John will email you a copy of the Profile or, upon request, leave you a printed copy in your mail slot. *John Musgreave, on behalf of your Call Committee: Bill Fehr, Bonnie Law, Gerry Owen, John Musgreave, Randi Turner & Rosalind Schramm*

Prayer taken from the website of St. John the Baptist Anglican Church in Duncan B.C. Archdeacon Brian Evans, previously of St. Paul Anglican Church in Nanaimo is the current presider. Submitted by Carolyn Iles

*Almighty One,
Creator God
Walk with us
that we might be guided back onto the good road
that we might
again walk in the footsteps of
your Son Jesus Christ
whose ministry by
example & prayer
witnessed*



peace & forgiveness,
&
who prayed that we might
be one in the body
&
family of faith.
Today, bless us
that we might be a blessing to all...
humble us
that we might not judge others
&
guide us that we might walk in truth.
Accept...our prayers;
in Jesus' name...
Amen.



ANNOUNCEMENTS



**MEN'S CHORUS
BEGINS PRACTICE
FRIDAY, APRIL 4TH
AT 10:15 A.M.**



**Pastor Terry's Retirement
Pot Luck Party
will be held at Hope Lutheran on
May 3rd at 5:00 p.m.**

Please indicate on the sign-up sheet posted by the kitchen door whether you are coming and what you will be bringing for the pot luck. Hope will be providing the meat. Entertainment will follow the meal.



We Celebrate Birthdays



For the month of **April 2025**:

April 5 Peggy McManus

April 14 Audrey Strauss

April 8 Daniel Haase

April 14 Joan Roszmann

April 12 Garry Heiman

April 14 Finn Thiedeke

We Celebrate Anniversaries



For the month of **April 2025**

April 8 Norman & Jackie Pallard

April 21 David & Beth Paton

Special Prayer Requests:

The nations declare your praise, O God. Where religious differences divide, bring together those who worship you in the name of Jesus Christ and those who call to you with different names. Guide interreligious dialogue, that faith may unite rather than divide communities.

God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

The people declare your praise, O God. Restore those whose hope has been dampened through a health diagnosis, job or home loss, divorce, or death. Bring healing to those in need,



especially... *Shauna B; Cynthia C; Judy F; Gary G; Ahmad H & family; Dennis K; Donna K; Don & Vicki; Kari K; Colleen M; Marjorie M; Shirley M; Steven M; Katja R; Colette S; Doug S; Pastor Kristen Steele; Dave S; Colin F; June V-C; Gloria; Susana; Annie; Trisha; Zack; Sonja; Doug C & family; Lane W & family; Vi A; Pope Francis; Cody E; Theresa H; Deborah V & Theresa; Tanis.*

May all who weep now sing songs of joy again.

God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

The gifts of the Spirit declare your praise, O God. We thank you for artists who proclaim the gospel, and for all our musicians and worship assistants who assist us. Inspire music, poetry, and images that proclaim the new thing you are doing.

God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

