
THE MESSENGER OF HOPE



HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Easter 2 to Easter 5

April 2024



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! He is Risen! Alleluia! Life can be new again!

I like it when people are kind. It warms my heart to receive kindness and to see it shown toward others. Kindness toward strangers and those closest to us makes a huge difference in the background of life that we build for ourselves.



The alternative is competition. That usually happens when we don't want to get left behind or see others get something that we wanted. Nastiness may be another alternative to a lifestyle of kindness. I know people who have had a history of meanness or aggression directed at them. It is easy then to become remote or appear uncaring, or become defensive and feel tempted to pass nastiness on.

Jesus used kindness as a way to bring hope to people who struggle.



Kindness is a human quality that can be a missing piece in the bump and grind of daily existence. It pauses to take time for someone else and can happen anywhere. The offer of kindness often comes back to us. We realize that when the gift is given.

Why not try a little experiment? Show kindness in the neighbourhood to someone who looks like they need a nice moment. 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 with kindness for your children or parents.

Easter weekend is about God being kind to us and sending Jesus to bring us hope. His Spirit ensures that kindness and care for others will always continue. Try being kind to yourself. It's a great way to discover life anew.



WORSHIP NOTES

Submitted by Carolyn Iles

What's in a 'word'?

Our congregation likes to sing. We have many people who enjoy doing 'harmony', and (I am told) the result is a lovely sound.



If you are a long-term Lutheran church-goer you may have noticed some changes in the name of the hymns each week. In fact the editors of the ELW, (our hymnal), were very intentional when they decided what to call each piece of music in the service.

When I was growing up, the first hymn was called a *processional hymn*. Our pastor and the senior and junior choirs would actually walk in, (process in), during this hymn. Now we call the first hymn the *gathering song*, which is more inclusive, we are all gathering together. Sometimes this isn't even a hymn, but could be a well-liked piece of the liturgy, like "Glory to God".



The term "*hymn of the day*" actually dates back to the 16th century. It has been called the "*sermon hymn*" by some people because it follows after the sermon. Sometimes this hymn actually does reflect on the pastor's sermon. However, it may reflect on the themes of the day, all lessons and the Psalm. It can be a musician's opportunity to use music to relay the day's message as they understand it.

The term "*closing hymn*" seems to imply the service is over, the church is closing. Today the term "*sending hymn*" reminds us that we are being sent out of the church and into the world to carry His love to those in our neighbourhood and the world in need. We are sent on our way, out on our mission.

As you can tell, the change in wording reflects a changing church. We gather together to listen, learn, to be fed. We learn not just through words of the sermon, but through music that reflects the day. Our church services don't close, but send us forth to care for those in need, people and creation.

Season of Easter.

There is Easter Sunday...and the three days leading up to, and including Easter... and there is the Easter season. The Easter season is 50 days long and it stretches from Easter Sunday to Pentecost-the birthday of the church. It is a time of considering what the church of the resurrected Lord could look like. Are you ready for the Easter Season??? Take a moment and consider what you think our church might look like...

CONTINUOUS LEARNING

Submitted by Carolyn Iles

April 23 - St. George's Day and Earth Day - April 22

St George's Day commemorates the life of St George, a Roman soldier and Christian martyr. St. George's Day is a provincial holiday in Newfoundland and Labrador in Canada. It is observed on the Monday closest to April 23 each year.



Is St. George's Day a Public Holiday?

St. George's Day is a public holiday in Newfoundland and Labrador, where it is a day off for the general population, and schools and most businesses are closed.

Since St. George's Day is celebrated on a Monday, it is enjoyed as part of a three-day weekend by those who would otherwise be at work [Canadians in Labrador & Newfoundland]. Some people take a scenic drive, while others engage in sporting activities. Many people in these provinces spend time on personal hobbies and some use the opportunity to catch up with friends and family.

St George's Day celebrations are not limited to Newfoundland and Labrador. Some societies, such as the Royal Society of St. George (British Columbia Branch), celebrate St George's Day. There are also calls from groups devoted to the saint to make St George's Day a national holiday in Canada.



Who was St. George?

St George was born sometime around the year 280 CE in what is now Turkey. He was a soldier and rose up through the ranks of the Roman army, eventually becoming a personal guard to the Emperor Diocletian. He was executed for being a Christian on April 23, 303 CE, and is buried in the town of Lod in Israel.

St George is most widely known for slaying a dragon. According to legend, the only well in the town of Silene was guarded by a dragon. In order to get water, the inhabitants of the town had to offer a human sacrifice every day to the dragon. The person to be sacrificed was chosen by lots. On the day that St George was visiting, a princess had been selected to be sacrificed. However, he killed the dragon, saved the princess and gave the people of

Silene access to water. In gratitude, they converted to Christianity. St George is the patron saint of some countries around the world, including [England](#), Ethiopia, Georgia, Greece, and Russia.

Earth Day April 22

Give it up for the Earth! is a national faith-in-action campaign that raises awareness about the climate crisis and mobilizes people across Canada to reduce personal and household greenhouse gas emissions, engage in acts of solidarity, and collect signatures as a demonstration of support for increased federal climate action. Join us now!

Addressing the climate crisis in a just and equitable way prioritizes Indigenous autonomy and considers the needs of communities who have been historically marginalized and are particularly vulnerable to the climate crisis.

Together, through the **Give it up for the Earth!** campaign, we are calling on the federal government to *increase* its emissions reductions target, *increase* support for grant-based climate finance, and *end fossil fuel subsidies* to fund a fair, inclusive and just transition.

Give it up for the Earth! 2024 includes three action items:

1. A pledge to reduce your personal and household greenhouse gas emissions.
2. A Commitment to embrace eco-spirituality through climate action and by building relationships with the Indigenous communities on whose traditional territories we live, work, and play.
3. Sending a letter to the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change, Steven Guilbeault, urging him to set more ambitious climate action targets and expressing support for a just transition towards a low-carbon economy. *(Copies of a letter that could be sent to Environment Minister Guilbeault are on the bulletin board at Hope. Please take one home if you would like to use it as a model of what to include in a letter).*



TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION CALLS TO ACTION



We have committed to including 10 of these calls to action each month in the newsletter. Hopefully you can read through them, and reflect on the how and the why each call was crafted.

28. We call upon law schools in Canada to require all law students to take a course in Aboriginal people and the law, which includes the history and legacy of residential schools, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*,

Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal–Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.

29. We call upon the parties and, in particular, the federal government, to work collaboratively with plaintiffs not included in the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement to have disputed legal issues determined expeditiously on an agreed set of facts.

30. We call upon federal, provincial, and territorial governments to commit to eliminating the overrepresentation of Aboriginal people in custody over the next decade, and to issue detailed annual reports that monitor and evaluate progress in doing so.

31. We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments to provide sufficient and stable funding to implement and evaluate community sanctions that will provide realistic alternatives to imprisonment for Aboriginal offenders and respond to the underlying causes of offending.

32. We call upon the federal government to amend the Criminal Code to allow trial judges, upon giving reasons, to depart from mandatory minimum sentences and restrictions on the use of conditional sentences.

33. We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments to recognize as a high priority the need to address and prevent Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), and to develop, in collaboration with Aboriginal people, FASD preventive programs that can be delivered in a culturally appropriate manner.

34. We call upon the governments of Canada, the provinces, and territories to undertake reforms to the criminal justice system to better address the needs of offenders with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), including :

- i. Providing increased community resources and powers for courts to ensure that FASD is properly diagnosed, and that appropriate community supports are in place for those with FASD;
- ii. Enacting statutory exemptions from mandatory minimum sentences of imprisonment for offenders affected by FASD;
- iii. Providing community, correctional, and parole resources to maximize the ability of people with FASD to live in the community;
- iv. Adopting appropriate evaluation mechanisms to measure the effectiveness of such programs and ensure community safety.

35. We call upon the federal government to eliminate barriers to the creation of additional Aboriginal healing lodges within the federal correctional system.

36. We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments to work with Aboriginal communities to provide culturally relevant services to inmates on issues such as substance abuse, family and domestic violence, and overcoming the experience of having been sexually abused.

37. We call upon the federal government to provide more supports for Aboriginal programming in halfway houses and parole services.

SPRING CLEANING BEE FOR HOPE LUTHERAN
Linda Harvey, Fellowship/Membership Committee

1954 - THEN

As memory serves me (69 years ago now), every spring, a group of Ladies' Aid members gathered to "spring clean" a Lutheran Church in small town Saskatchewan.

The attached picture: The Ladies' Aid cleaners in 1954. My mother with the pail and mop looks ready to get to work!



Hope Lutheran's "Clean Team"
2024 - NOW



Bible Study

Psalm 119 is the longest of the psalms, stretching to 176 verses in 22 sections. Each section begins with a different letter of the Hebrew alphabet, making it an acrostic. Psalm 119 echoes other Psalmic themes of lament, anxiety, despair, hope, gratitude, thanksgiving and praise in its prayer that God be manifest among the faithful. And it also stands apart. If we can imagine a choir of 22 different individuals coming from different points of view and social locations, we might have a closer window on the voices that actually live within the psalm.

Lutherans Connect - The next time you read Psalm 119, how many different 'voices' can you hear?

CALLS TO WORSHIP EASTER SEASON 2024

Second Sunday of Easter April 7, 2024

One: The tomb is empty and darkness has lost.

All: We dance in the light of His resurrection!

One: No more do we have to fear!

All: No more does worry reign!

One: Be joyful! He is victorious and so are we!

All: Because in His victory, we are free! Hallelujah! Let us celebrate! Amen



Third Sunday of Easter April 13, 2024

One: We are here Lord, your people, your Church gathering together in your presence.

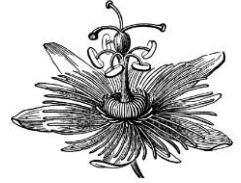
All: We are open to each other, and we are open to You. Today, make yourself known to us through our worship, our prayer, and our understanding of Your Word.

One: You free us from fear.

All: You free us for faith.

One: Let us be His witnesses

All: Let us do His work in the world. Amen



Fourth Sunday of Easter April 21, 2024

One: In a universe that seems so immense it is easy to feel insignificant as we stand here today.

All: Yet we know that we are His precious children, the sheep of His flock– unique individuals loved and blessed in so many ways.

One: As our Good shepherd, He helps us to love, not just in word or speech but in truth and action. Help us to love You and love one another.

All: Accept this offering of love we pray, our sacrifice of praise and worship. Amen

Fifth Sunday of Easter April 28, 2024

One: Come to the vineyard of God.

All: We seek Christ, the vine of great love.

One: Drink from the waters of life.

All: We live in the light of God's grace.

One: Come to the vineyard of God,

All: God of love, nurture us with the strength of Christ, the vine of everlasting life.

One: Let us worship the True Vine together.

All: Hallelujah.



Sixth Sunday of Easter May 5, 2024

One: We meet as a family in the presence of our heavenly Father, who calls us to abide in His love.

All: We meet as brothers and sisters in Christ, accepting the responsibility this places upon us to love one another as you have loved us. Help us learn to embrace the other – those who are marginalized, - those ignored, feared.

One: We meet as Your lights in this dark world and pray that through our words and our lives others might be drawn onto You.

All: Let us worship together in love.

Seventh Sunday of Easter May 12, 2024

One: In the meeting of our lives, be the focus of all that we are.

All: In the singing of the hymns, the prayers that we shall make

One: And the reading of your Word, and the preaching of the same.

All: Speak to us, encourage and forgive us

One: In the meeting of our lives, Lord, be the focus of all that we are

All: As Easter people we say Amen.



We Celebrate Birthdays



For the month of **April 2024**:

April 2 Caleb Banner
April 12 Garry Heiman
April 14 Finn Thiedeke

April 5 Peggy McManus
April 14 Audrey Strauss
April 17 Sivert Vedoy

April 8 Daniel Haase
April 14 Joan Roszmann

We Celebrate Anniversaries

For the month of April 2024

April 8 Norman & Jackie Pallard

April 21 David & Beth Paton

Special Prayer Requests:

Loving God, we pray for *Hope Lutheran Church, Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church* in Comox, and for your Spirit in our midst. Feed us at your Easter table and fill us with your wisdom, that we may serve and care for others. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for... . . . *Carolyn B; Bill & Donna B; Mike B; Richard B; Bonnie C; Bill L; Kaela D; Ken D; Gary G; Helena G; Ahmad H; Glenys L; Tyler L-R; Alyx M; Charlotte M; Marjorie M; Hans N; Janet O; James S; Birgit S; Evan S; Alana; Audrey; Bernie & Erna; Chittri; Colleen; Ezra; family of Gilbert H; Gloria; Graham; Julie's family; Kristi; Leah & the Nicholsons; Louise; Makai; Margaret; Quinn; Tanu; the Vosper family; Zack...* God of grace, **hear our prayer.**



Eternal God, we remember those who have gone before us in death. Renew our trust in your promises, that we live with joyful courage and compassion. God of grace, **hear our prayer.** Into your hands, most merciful God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your abiding love; through Jesus Christ, our resurrected and living Lord. **Amen.**



*Adrian
Jacobs*

Photo taken at
"Bridging
Divides"
Conference.

Article on
conference
follows on
next page by
Tim Stime &
Peter Clark

Building Relationships Weekend Workshops 2024.03.08-09 Nanaimo, BC: Brechin United, Holy Trinity Catholic, Hope Lutheran and BC United Way (Phase II of a Continuing Process)

"Bridging Divides: A Journey of Reconciliation through Indigenous Wisdom"

Introduction: In a world often fraught with division and discord, moments of genuine reconciliation stand as beacons of hope, illuminating pathways towards healing and understanding. Recently, an extraordinary event unfolded, one that echoed with the voices of Indigenous speakers, resonating themes of treaties, language revitalization, relationship building, allyship, and the nurturing of friendships. This event was a testament to the power of dialogue, empathy, and the willingness to confront historical injustices. As we delve into the heart of this important occasion, we uncover a narrative of unity, respect, and the power of embracing Indigenous wisdom.

A triad of local churches, Brechin United, Holy Trinity Catholic and Hope Lutheran, plus the BC United Way hosted this two day event called *Reconciliation – Building Relationships* the weekend of March 8-9, 2024. The venue was the spacious new Brechin United Church facility near Departure Bay.

Opening with Indigenous Voices: The event began with a solemn acknowledgment of the land, a recognition of ancestral territories, and the enduring presence of Indigenous peoples. Through ceremonial song, sacred prayer and Snuneymuxw protocol, the voice of Snuneymuxw Elder Geraldine Manson carried the weight of centuries-old wisdom. Her words invited all present to reflect on the interconnectedness of past, present, and future.

Exploring the Significance of Treaties: Central to the discourse were teachings and discussions surrounding treaties. On Friday evening Snuneymuxw Elder and VIU professor Collette Jones provided basic history of the Snuneymuxw people, the language, territory and how historical agreements were often marred by exploitation and broken promises. Elder Collette helped us to distinguish the three very different language groups on Vancouver Island.

The focus of settler demands and imposed law took lands outright. On Vancouver Island the Douglas Treaties were characterized by a huge power imbalance and the clash of cultures, which led to displacement and dispossession. The Indigenous spiritual understanding and sharing of the land as opposed to a western transactional understanding to treaty and ownership were major components of that culture clash. On Saturday Morning, Cayuga Elder Adrian Jacobs, Senior Leader for Indigenous Justice

and Reconciliation for the Christian Reformed Church of Canada, spoke of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy treaties (the Wampum Belts) before and after European contact. Similar treaties dealing with First Nations not on Vancouver Island, were brought to the forefront, acknowledged as living documents that continue to shape contemporary relationships. Adrian shared insights into the importance of honoring the spirit of treaty obligations, emphasizing reciprocity, respect, and shared responsibility.

Revitalizing Language, Reviving Culture: Language, as a vehicle of culture and identity, emerged as a focal point of the reconciliation process when Cowichan Elder and Language Specialist Mena Williams presented on Saturday afternoon. Attendees were invited to participate in language exercises. Through these sessions, we gained a deeper appreciation for the profound connection between language revitalization and the preservation of Indigenous culture and knowledge systems.

Building Bridges: Becoming Allies and Cultivating Deeper Connections with Indigenous Peoples: A recurring theme throughout the event was the notion of allyship—a commitment to standing in solidarity with Indigenous communities in the pursuit of justice and reconciliation. In breakout group sessions, participants were encouraged to reflect on their role as allies, recognizing the importance of active listening, humility, and the willingness to amplify Indigenous voices.

Conclusion: As the event drew to a close, it left an indelible imprint on all who participated—a testament to the transformative power of reconciliation when grounded in Indigenous wisdom. The Elders' teachings linger still, serving as guiding lights for those embarking on or continuing on the journey towards healing and understanding.

It is our hope that in fostering genuine relationships, inspired by this gathering, we are taking a collective step towards a future anchored in unity and respect, shaped by the principles of reconciliation and the 94 Calls to Action of the TRC.

Oh, by the way, the food at the gathering was awesome! It took a Dream Team of eager planners and generous volunteers and funders to pull this workshop together, for which we are very grateful.

*ED. Note: A major benefit of cooperating with other groups in our region, is the growing network of like-minded folks seeking opportunities to listen, learn and build relationships with First Nations neighbors. May 8th at VIU's Malaspina Theatre is the venue for one of these opportunities. **Winds of Change** features works by Stz'uminus First Nation artist Daniel Elliot. The exhibit explores the impact of colonization and how healing can be achieved. Watch for more details on this event.*

Submitted by Peter Clark and Tim Stime

Collette Jones



Great Food!



(Continued)

Workshop Group



Small break-out Group



THE END