

Our Saviour Lutheran

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Newsletter

I am writing this on a beautiful day in late September, while the sun is flooding my office. I love the sun any day but I am especially thankful for it as we are about to enter into the colder season. Many of the restrictions COVID placed on us are easier to navigate when the weather is warm (unless you find yourself on a crowded beach). In March and April, when our kids weren't in our bubble, we would meet them for physically distanced picnics in public parks. And being unable to travel far, we could at least walk on the dike, or go hiking in the mountains.

July 12th was the day of our first parking lot service and for the last 16 weeks we have been able to gather every other week for worship in our parking lot, able to see each other, celebrate worship, and celebrate Holy Communion. I am profoundly grateful.

Entering the colder season will be different. We will have to find other ways to remain connected, to share with one another, and to be

disciplined to go outside even when the weather is not favourable.

It will take creativity, discipline, and prayer, and I ask you to share any ideas you may have that will help us remain connected, aside from us trying to find some regular visiting times on zoom.

I am profoundly grateful for your remaining connected to the church and each other, your ongoing support of our congregation, the work of council and committees, as well as Alex, Bev, Calla, and Jordan for providing and delivering worship that we can celebrate together and allows us to continue to share in the same story: God's story in Jesus.

Back in March when we had to figure out how to move forward, we not only needed to figure out the technology to stream our services but also what model would make the most sense. We opted for YouTube because it's public and no one needs an account (also, Smart-TV's can access YouTube, even if one does not have a computer), we

We continue to stream our services.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbept7VZLuIp09qRvvd64p9QQ>

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decided to live stream because it honours the rhythm of our life and gives us a sense that we still gather as a community, and we didn't want our services to look like TV, we wanted you to see what you'd see if you were here.

What these decisions included was a sense of continuity. We do not know what tomorrow will bring and we may be anxious about the future, but just as Jesus says, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away," (Matthew 24:35) we trust that amidst all uncertainty we are safe in God.

Psalm 103 is a meditation on the fleeting nature of human life but even so, David can say, "But the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, and his right-

eousness to children's children ..." (Psalm 103:17-18a)

And so continuing our worship, continuing being the people of God also holds that while we may be anxious, our anxiety has no hold on us because "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God." (Psalm 90:2)

Yours,



Orange Shirt Day

I know, there is a day for everything and more, and I can't keep track of them all. But Orange Shirt Day is different. Perhaps you have heard of Orange Shirt Day. Our Schools mark it and the church does, too., and Kairos Canada promotes it.

It began in Williams Lake in Spring 2013, but its legacy dates back to 1973 when 6 year-old Phyllis Webstad had her brand new orange shirt taken away as soon as she arrived at St. Joseph's Residential School.

Today, the orange shirt commemorates the experiences of Residential School Survivors, honouring their stories and reaffirming that they, and all those affected by residential schools, matter. By honouring those who attended residential schools we have the opportunity to learn to understand each other better and to own our history. You can find more information here:

<https://www.kairoscanada.org/join-us-orange-shirt-day-september-30>

Thanksgiving Offering

As in previous years we will gather a special Thanksgiving Offering. This year the offering is designated for the food delivery program for homeless people in our community. About 30 meals are delivered on five days a week. Please mark your special Thanksgiving offering simply "Thanksgiving." The funds will be administered by the good people of St Albans in cooperation with the Salvation Army. God bless you and our community.

Purdy's Chocolates

Purdy's approached us about Fundraising. It's very straight forward. You pay the regular Purdy's price for whatever product you choose and the church gets 25%. So, if you are planning to buy some anyway, this would work. Delivery between Nov 23 and December 13. Only catch, our combined order needs to be \$1000.00 before taxes. So, we would like to know who may be interested as it will help us decide whether to proceed. Thank you in advance!

Our Graduates

This is a different year for all of us, it is also a different year for all students, teachers, and families. It is also a different year for post-secondary students. Carmen, Joel, Joshua, Kayla, Sarah, and Tom were so kind to provide us with a picture and a paragraph about their plans for this year. We hold them and their families in our prayers.



Carmen moved to London ON, and writes: “I am very excited to continue my education at the University of Western Ontario. I will be living on residence and plan on majoring in criminology. I am very grateful for all the support from my family, friends, teachers and community.”

Joel graduated from R. A. McMath Secondary school and writes, “I am looking forward to pursuing a career in the area of science. As I have many different interests in a variety of areas, such as science and information technology, and I hope to find my passion when start my studies at Langara College this Fall.”





Joshua graduated this year from Vancouver Christian School. Next year, he is planning to study business at UBC while continuing to pursue music composition and production. Joshua is very thankful for his family for supporting him, as well as this church community.

Kayla plans on taking some time off to work but eventually will be attending Langara to study business. In the future she plans on going into Real Estate.



Sarah writes: “This spring I graduated from Douglas College with a Diploma in the Foundations of Music Therapy, and plan to continue on to Capilano University next year to finish the last two years of my degree. I hope to do some volunteer work, both with disabled youth as well as with seniors if I’m able to do so in the fall. I can’t wait to continue my learning journey to help and heal others through music.

PS: I don’t have a photo of me graduating, well because there was no graduation, but here’s a photo from my Europe trip last summer!



Tom: “After thirteen years of public education in Richmond, I had my virtual graduation ceremony on June 16. I am excited to have finished high school at R.A. McMath Secondary and look forward to the coming years. This September I will begin my education at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver. I will study within the school’s faculty of Arts and look forward to pursuing an eventual degree at the school. Law, history, and social sciences are among my passions, and while I have not a specific degree in mind, I expect my studies to eventually narrow to one of these fields. Next year, I plan to take a variety of courses at UBC as I discover more about what I plan to do in the coming years. More specifically, I am interested in UBC’s Coordinated Arts Program. There are several versions of the program that focus on various topics; I will choose one of them. I have always loved sports and plan to continue to play soccer and ball hockey once the global pandemic subsides. And of course, I will still be found at Our Saviour Lutheran Church next year. I look forward to challenges, opportunities, and a wide range of experiences next year and throughout my future.”

Beginning October 18th,

We will be offering “**Narthex time**” Sunday mornings from 9:20 to 9:50am. Narthex time is something we learned about from Jean R. who has recently moved to Nanaimo. This is just as it sounds, an opportunity for people to sign on before Worship service on Sunday mornings and visit (just like you would if you were at church). The invitation for signing on will be included in each Thursday email with the bulletins. You will need to download Zoom onto your computer (just the free personal one).

Beginning October 13th,

We will be collecting donations of new/used rubber boots, outdoor/indoor, clothing sized for school aged children. These items will be donated to inner city schools in Richmond for those children who do not have them. According to the Vice Principal at one of the elementary schools, the need is there.

Study on Holy Communion

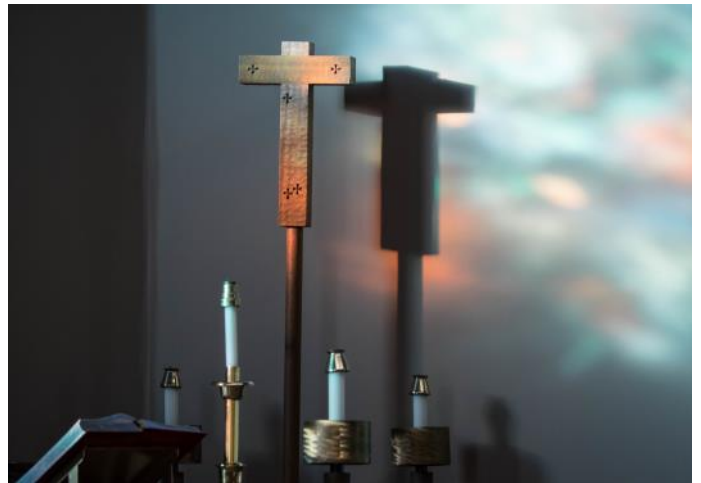
When the pandemic first hit we suspended the celebration of Holy Communion, seeking for information on the transmission of COVID-19. For our parking lot services we restored the celebration of Holy Communion, using only bread (wafers). As we head into the colder season of the year, we will gather outdoors less, and more often via YouTube. What does Holy Communion mean to you, what does Lutheran theology say about it, what does it mean to fast from Holy Communion? We will do a weekly study on Zoom, beginning on Tuesday October 20 at 7 pm and going to November 10. Please register with the church office. It will be beneficial to attend all sessions, but if you can only attend some, you are still welcome.

Lutherans and Catholics

continue to engage each other in conversation, three years after the joint commemoration of the Reformation. A working group has planned a conversation and reflection about the sacrament of Holy Communion or the Eucharist. This will take place Saturday on October 17 from 10:00 am to 11:00 am on Zoom. It is hosted by the Archdiocese of Vancouver and the BC Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. You can register here:

<https://beholdvancouver.org/events/ecumenical-faith-break-2-together-in-thanksgiving>

Beginning November 29th, we will be preparing our own bulletin covers for the parking lot/ in church services. We have chosen not to get the pre-printed ones for the 20/21 Liturgical year, as the minimum purchase requirement makes it not very cost effective for our current worship arrangements. Consequently, **we are looking for photograph submissions** from the congregation for our bulletins. The pictures can be of the church, inside or out, or perhaps pertain to the liturgical season, or the season of the year, or maybe it's just a good picture and you think we may be able to use it. If you could limit your submissions to your top 5, it would be appreciated. Email them to office@oursaviour.ca



Hymn Sing

After the service on Sunday Sept 27, we recorded a short hymn-sing with worship music. We have created a new page on our website for you to find it: <http://oursaviour.ca/hymn-sing/>

We hope to record more hymns for you to listen to and sing along to. The hymn sheets for each hymn sing will be posted on the hymn sing page.

We look forward to your input and your suggestions.

If you are saving your used **coffee grounds and egg shells for the church gardens**, we are changing the way we will collect them. Unfortunately people are using the bin for garbage so we have removed it. We have created a new spot for these to be placed. It is straight down the driveway and straight into the parking lot, first stall on the right, in the bed on the right side. There are signs at each designated spot! Please note for the coffee, it is grounds only, no filters or k-cups, for the eggs, just a quick rinse off so we don't attract rats. Our pest guy says they won't be interested in coffee grounds and eggshells. The gardens really appreciate your help!!! Thanks!

Google Reviews:

We are always thankful to those who review our church on Google (via Google search). It is a way to recommend our church to others.



Canadian Lutheran World Relief

Dear friends,

This weekend, the **Canadian Lutheran World Relief** (CLWR) Board of Directors, leadership team and denominational leaders gathered for our annual September meeting. As we came together — completely online for the first time in our history — we were all forced to confront the fact that we are working in a new reality, one that is marked by change and new circumstances.

Everyone at CLWR is committed to meeting the challenges of this moment with humility and courage. We are steadfast in our responsibility to ensure CLWR can respond with integrity, efficiency and kindness in a time of soaring global need, and to make sure Lutherans in Canada can continue a tradition of working toward justice and peace for all people.

Based on those commitments, this weekend we made the decision to begin transitioning We Care, CLWR's long-standing and beloved commodity shipment program, with the intent that the shipping component of the program will be fully closed by the end of 2021. While many of us feel a deep, personal connection to this aspect of We Care, the decision was made with the unanimous support of everyone involved.

Despite some sadness in making this change, we are united in confidence that **this decision affirms CLWR's most deeply-held values, including responsible stewardship, shared learning and honouring the voices of those we are called to serve**. We are encouraged and optimistic at the commitment everyone at CLWR has shown to being the most responsible, effective organization we can be on behalf of Lutherans in Canada.

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, the need experienced by our global partners has never been greater, and they are urgently calling on Lutherans in Canada to respond as generously as possible. The decision to revise the We Care program comes both in response to those calls, and as part of our deeply-held commitment to honour the kindness of our church communities, making sure to do as much good as possible.

We are proud of CLWR's long history of growth and adaptation as an organization. Since as early as the 1950s, the organization has continually adapted its efforts in response to shifting contexts, and especially to the voices of our partners. CLWR has always tried to exemplify the spirit of "*semper reformanda*" — always reforming — that has guided our faith tradition as Lutherans

Today, facing the prospect of a post-COVID world, we are united in our belief that we must not cease learning, growing and reforming.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought new complications to We Care and has amplified existing challenges to a point where continuing the program in its current form would not be a responsible course. Shipping and travel restrictions have left our warehouse nearly dormant for months, despite significant donor dollars continuing to pay for the warehouse space.

At the same time, the supplies provided by our current We Care program are neither a rapid nor a cost-efficient way for CLWR to respond to the immediate, critical needs faced by so many around the world.

While earlier in the program's history, We Care filled a vital gap of needed items, in the world we now face, many of you have expressed growing concern about the climate impacts of shipping supplies from Canada, especially when they are available for purchase much closer to the regions where we work.

The communities and beneficiaries we work with around the world, in places like Ethiopia, Uganda and Jerusalem, have also continued to shape our understanding of their needs. Our work began evolving long ago in response to feedback from our partners, who have taught us to listen to those we serve, to help them build and rebuild livelihoods, and to work alongside them for justice. The transition of our We Care program continues this long and continual process of examining ourselves and our work.

The We Care program, in its decades of operation, has provided comfort and care to tens of thousands of people. **To our incredible community of faithful, loyal volunteers and churches, we want to say that we are inspired by you.** Your generosity has wrapped warm quilts around those who have lost their homes, put supplies in otherwise empty school classrooms, and has given young mothers the very first clothes their new babies will ever wear.

Your efforts have made such a difference. You have our deep thanks. And we also want to say you are needed now — as much as ever.

Our warehouse will remain open for some time to allow for a transition period, and we expect one final shipment to go out this fall, with supplies that are already in the warehouse. If your congregation is holding on to supplies, we encourage you to reach out to local organizations in your community and ask what their needs are. Many are in need of these items right now. We have identified a number of local organizations who are eager for We Care items to support their critical work. We are well aware of how hard our own country has been hit by this pandemic, with food bank visits rising, many people out of work, and a cold winter coming. Please continue quilting, continue gathering supplies, and contact us if you need help finding an organization in your area who can put these supplies to good use.

Thank you for being a partner of CLWR, and of those we serve. We understand the changes to We Care will be disappointing for some, but we have heard from so many of you who cherish CLWR because of our commitment to faithful stewardship and to being responsible with the calling we have been given.

The need experienced by our global partners has never been greater or more urgent, and the COVID-19 pandemic is disproportionately affecting those who already face hunger and poverty, with millions more being pushed into extreme poverty. In this context, particularly with ongoing restrictions, it is clear to our Board, staff, and the leaders of our supporting churches, that shipping supplies from Canada is no longer an effective nor a responsible way for us to respond.

As this work evolves, we will count on your continued partnership, and we pledge to continue in our commitment to doing everything we can to be faithful and responsible partners in this ministry.

If you have any questions or comments about this decision, or about what do with existing items, our Community and Donor Relations Director, Carla Blakley, is eager to hear from you. You can reach her at **204-230-1323** or carla@clwr.org.

We invite you to join us in prayer today for the ongoing ministry of our organization, for those we serve, and in gratitude for the incredible legacy of kindness that has reached across the world for so many years through We Care.

Deepest blessings,



Cheryl Bauer Hyde
President of the Board
Canadian Lutheran World Relief



Karin Achtelstetter
Executive Director
Canadian Lutheran World Relief