

CHURCH *Matters*

Glory Lutheran Church Newsletter - 08-09.23 Edition



The Luther Rose Memorial Garden In Bloom
Photos by Rita Spain - August 2023

Message from Pastor Markus

August/September 2023

Dear Friends,

In late July I visited a Lutheran school in the town of Sogamoso, Colombia. It didn't occur to me until afterwards that this was an odd time to be in school, at least from our Canadian perspective. Colombian children don't have summer holidays! Their big break begins at the start of December and lasts until the end of January. September is just a regular month for them and their parents. Blessing the backpacks, if they do that, would happen in early February.

We are often like fish in the water: we don't recognize the water around us, because we have never experienced anything different. Sometimes, when we leave the fishbowl, when we go somewhere else, we recognize the differences and experience our own surroundings in a new way.

The church can be a fishbowl. We are often not aware of the institutional elements that surrounds us, the atmosphere of our particular "churchiness". We all have preconceived ideas about how the world works, and how the church works or should work. Like school holidays, our traditions are sometimes no longer understood. That's not the fault of the traditions, and probably it's nobody's fault, it's just how it is. We swim in a particular water.

The fish was an early Christian symbol that summarized the confession of Jesus as Savior and Son of God. ΙΧΘΥΣ (pronounced Ichthys, meaning "fish") is an acrostic, which means the word is formed by the first letter of each word in the phrase: "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior". This confession has often been used in an exclusive way, to divide the world into believers and non-believers, into the saved and unsaved, into Christians and heathens, those inside and those outside our bowl. Churches have traditionally understood their mission as "fishing for people": going out to the nations and 'reeling' people in to make this confession and enculturate them into our particular form of Christian faith and culture.

But the confession of Jesus Christ as Son of God and Savior was originally not understood like that. Jesus encountered the strongest faith in the God of Israel outside of Israel, e.g. in the Canaanite woman who asked him to heal her daughter, or in the Roman Centurion of Capernaum whose servant Jesus helped. By the same token, missionaries today must expect to encounter faith even where there is no church, or where people believe differently in the God of Israel. Those nations and people that have not heard the biblical story or

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encountered Jesus Christ may have as much or more to teach us about God than we do them. As God's creation they are already in the hand of the Father of all. They are already included in the universal love of Jesus Christ and his atoning work. They are already called by the one Holy Spirit.

In Colombia I encountered church differently, and a different church. Most Christians there are Roman Catholic. The church came with the Spanish explorers and conquerors in the early 16th century. Church and state supported one another in bringing this continent under the control of European powers. Those Amerindians who converted were integrated into the new religious and economic order, those who didn't convert were eliminated, killed or driven away. Lutheran missionaries arrived in the 1930's, primarily to work among the poor. The Lutheran idea of mission, however, is not to "convert the heathens and reform the Catholics". It is rather to accompany people on the journey of faith wherever we find them by showing them the love of God in Christ through deeds and words.

The first step is to find out what God is already doing among those we encounter and then to ask how we might be partners. That will include telling the story of Jesus where it is not known. It will also include financial and material help. In the past many children in rural Colombia lived too far from a school to be able to attend regularly. Lutheran missionaries therefore opened schools in remote places. Our Synod supports these schools with a number of scholarships. We also support other projects, like the True Vine Center (La Vid Verdadera) in Bogota which provides underprivileged handicapped people a place of community, learning, work, and food, and the Good Shepherd Center in Soacha (a poor neighborhood of Bogota) which does similar work for seniors.

If we as Glory congregation or as individuals would like to support a project like the scholarship program at the Sogamoso school, the lunch program at "La Vid Verdadera", or the Good Shepherd Center for Seniors, we could coordinate this through our synod office. Our Synod mission team, in ongoing conversation with their counterparts in Colombia, would help us identify a project where our participation can be of the most benefit.

As we enter the Fall season, let's remember our siblings and friends in Colombia. Let's remember that there is a rich variety of ways to be the church. Let's remember that the mission we have is inclusive, not exclusive, of the gifts of others.

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Let's also be faithful in our own walk with God. In Canada, Fall means a new beginning, a return to school and church activities. Confirmation classes will start up soon. Sunday school and youth activities will pick up again. Let us all renew our commitment to worship regularly, to pray, to read and study Scripture, to discuss, and most of all – to listen to each other, especially those who differ from us.

Yours in Christ, Pastor Markus

Council Highlights

August/September 2023

Well, here we are at the end of summer and the start of another school year. And likely it's "back to work" on a more regular schedule for many of us until that next holiday opportunity!

Looking back over the summer, I'll start with a "thank you" to everyone who attended and helped out with set-up and clean-up on Fireside Wednesdays. Special thanks go out to Dave Hauf for looking after the fire and Doug Sime for starting the BBQ. Thanks also to everyone who contributed salads and desserts for sharing (and thanks, Linda, for the extra sloppy joes!). For the most part we had good weather and few mosquitoes, and we always had good food and fine fellowship. I'm still hoping, though, that we'll get someone to come out with a guitar and lead a sing-along around the campfire one day – maybe next year!

Looking forward to the months ahead, I'll start with a "thank you" to everyone who attended and helped out with Council's annual retreat and planning day on August 19, 2023. Special thanks to Neil Querengesser, who acted as our facilitator. Our planning retreat centred around "new visions of community" and where God wants us, here at Glory Lutheran, to go as a community. The reflections and discussions over the course of the day provide an opportunity for rejuvenation, as well as the opportunity to outline goals and objectives for the coming year.

I'm also looking forward to the return of our littlest members for the blessing of backpacks on Sunday, September 10, 2023 and the start of Sunday School on September 17, 2023. Other events to look forward to include the ICPM luncheon in September and the Ecumenical Mission of Strathcona County service in October. Watch for more news on these events in our bulletins and weekly e-news.

Many blessings, Rose Schlegl, Council.chair@glorylutheran.ca



Edith Viola Sitler (Sorensen)
March 13, 1935 - August 27th, 2023

It is with great sorrow and thanksgiving for a life well lived that we announce the passing of our sister in Christ, Edith Sitler.

A celebration of Edith's life took place on Sept 4th at Glory.

A livestream of the service will be available:

<https://www.glorylutheran.ca/funeral-service-edith-sitler.html>

"Edith, go forth from this world in the love of God who created you; in the mercy of Jesus Christ who died for you; in the power of the Holy Spirit who strengthens you, at one with all the faithful, living and departed. May you rest in peace and rise in the glory of your eternal home, where grief and misery are banished, and light and joy abide."

Obituary:

<https://www.weberfuneralhome.ca/obituary/Edith-Sitler>

"Lord, now let your servant go in peace for my eyes have seen your salvation." (Luke 2:29)



SEASON OF CREATION



PRAYER GUIDE



Inspire your faith community with this spiritual tool and join together in prayer. This Prayer Guide has a prayer for each Sunday of the Season of Creation including World Day of Prayer for Creation and the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi on October 4th.



Season of Creation 2023 – September 1st to October 4th

What is the “Season of Creation”? Every year, from September 1st to October 4th, churches are called to participate in the “Season of Creation”. The World Council of Churches has been promoting this theme since 2008. This special time of year has gained popularity in Europe, and the United Church of Canada was the first to celebrate it here in Canada. Since 2017, all churches in Canada are invited to celebrate the “Season of Creation” in their faith community. The Green Churches Network offers a “box” of resources designed to make creation care more relevant and “doable” for our church. This “box” includes a prayer guide, and the weekly Sunday prayers will be included in the enews (and bulletins if space allows).

CONFIRMATION MINISTRY 2023-24

Are you confirmed? Are you baptized? Yes, No, or You don't know? Do you care? Are you looking for The Answer? Do you have questions? Do you want to have some fun? Are you confused? Then you are a candidate for confirmation ministry. You may not get all the answers, but you will learn to ask good questions.

Confirmands are generally in grades 7 and 8, but we have been known to make exceptions. We meet on Thursdays at 6:30, unless there is a unanimous decision to change, from October until May, except when there is a school holiday.

In confirmation we create a community, we practice ping pong, literally and figuratively: we toss questions back and forth and look for answers.

With the Bible as our guide, we learn about Jesus and God and ourselves. We also go for walks, have snowball fights, and play fetch with Otto, "the God-dog". At Christmas we bake cookies for seniors. Another day we'll make pizza for each other. We'll light candles, pour water and do some other things in worship on Sundays. It's called acolyting. We try to never get bored.

To register for confirmation or for more information, please contact the office or Pastor Markus directly. We start October 5th.

**Thursdays @ 6:30
Starting**

October 5, 2023



Our *Spiritual* Journey

A Message from Pastor Nickel

-- **OUR SPIRITUAL JOURNEY** -- Part 3, on “Fear” = dealing with it.

“Fear not” or “Don’t be afraid”, Jesus said. Or, recall: “The only thing we have to fear is fear itself”. Today more and more people are calling on experts to help “sell” their product, ideology, politics, etc., USING FEAR. While fear is normal and can be useful, fear is often used today to try to make people do things they would not otherwise do.

Let’s take Our Spiritual Journey BEYOND FEAR to DEALING WITH IT.

-1- I like, “Don’t let people “con” us into buying, doing, or believing” something. Avoid “conspiracy theories”; look to facts and truth [no, not “alternate truths” as was invented not long ago] – because the Bible warned us against those with “itchy ears”, [listening for, and then promoting, the latest conspiracy theory, for example]. Avoid people who make issues and concern a matter of: us versus them, or, we are right and “they” are wrong. [I heard a discussion of Christians who believed certain political beliefs and felt that the “other side” could never be Christian – BUT they had not talked to any on that other side.]

- Remember that fear of other races or groups is the seedbed of prejudice everywhere.
- Know that fear can destroy, and is the enemy of, happiness. Fear can make us suspicious, self-centered, immobile, and full of self-pity.
- BUT GOD’S LOVE is bigger than all of our fears. Trust in God and take heart in Psalm 27:1: “The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid.”

-2- Jesus said to his followers, “Peace be with you” when they were afraid. Listen to Jesus’ message of God’s love for us, and the message of Easter that Jesus lives! Replace fear with God’s peace. No longer need you fear death or the fears of this world for they are not as great as God’s love and presence with us as He helps us on our journey of life and faith.

“Jesus comes to help you in the hospital room. He comes to you in the midst of a family tragedy. He comes to you in the midst of a business tragedy or a physical tragedy”, as Billy Graham once said. Jesus has overcome death, is raised from the dead, and is here to help you and me – in whatever our situation is. He is as close as a prayer, or closer...

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- 3- Focus on other things than fear. Jesus said in answer to his disciple's fears, "Bear witness – Go and make disciples". Do not let fear guide or determine your pathway in life. Do **LET THE BIBLE AND OUR FAITH** guide you as a Christian through today's current events and problems.
- 4- Move beyond fear. Receive power from the Holy Spirit to *move beyond* fear. Then use your time, efforts, and focus to be Jesus' hands and feet, mouth and more -- through your hands and feet, mouth and more. "Seek this and you shall receive power," Jesus said. Witness to the message of God's love for us through Jesus! -- and be of service of others.

Mary K. as a girl, was afraid to cross the street after having been hit by a car. One day, an elderly woman noticed her fear, came up to her, and asked for her help: May I hold your hand when I cross the street?"

After crossing, the old woman recrossed the street without trouble; she had pretended, in order to help a fearful girl. The woman's gesture was noticed by the little girl and **LEFT A POSITIVE LASTING IMPRESSION** on Mary.

Deanna was fearful of using her musical talents in public. Today she is a therapist in hospitals and her music helps bring healing and hope to thousands of patients and their families. Deanna said, "Once I began to allow my love to outgrow my fear, volunteer service became very important to me." The Bible says, "Perfect love casts out fear" [1 John 4:18].

- 5- For personal fears, turn to prayer, meet fears head on [practice to overcome doing what you naturally fear to do, like public speaking], act decisively [gather up courage to take the first step and then follow through], talk through your fears [with a counselor, friend, family member], or join a support group to help work through your fear to get beyond.

St. Francis de Sales wrote: "DO NOT FEAR what may happen tomorrow.

The same loving Father, who cares for you today, will care for you tomorrow and every day. - Either he will shield you from suffering or he will give you unfailing strength to bear it. - Be at peace, then, and put aside all anxious thoughts and imaginings."

Yours, Together in Christ,
Gary Nickel

GLORY 50 PLUS



UPCOMING EVENT Friday, September 22, 2023

Special Guest

Sherwood Park's very own

"Chef John" Pidhirniak

Most recently owner of
Chef John's le Grand Gourmet

*A learning affair with a
gourmet flair!*

Chef John will demonstrate the
preparation of a special meat dish
which we will enjoy for dinner.

Cost: \$10 per person

**All Glory 50 Plus
individuals are required to
sign up for this event
on the sign-up sheet
in the narthex.**

**Attendance at this event
is limited so
be sure to sign up early!**

**Please inform us of any
food allergies when you
sign up.**

Please note the schedule:

2:00 pm Everyone is seated
3:15 A short break
3:30 Glory 50 Plus meeting to **elect
a new Executive & Group Leaders**
and confirm October plans (Grp 3)
while our dinner cooks
4:00-4:15 Appetizer served.
Chef John demonstrates
the carving and plating of our dinner
entrée
4:45 Dinner is served - prepared by
Chef John with assistance from
Group II

Chef John began his career at the Hotel Vancouver then moving east to Jasper Park Lodge and settling in Edmonton. After completing a degree in Education from the University of Alberta, Chef John went on to become the Chair of the Culinary Arts Department at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology. After NAIT, John traded in his stove for a computer and partnered with a Registered Dietitian. Together they developed many recipes for Lilydale, Alberta Turkey, Alberta Elk, and Alberta Milk. Chef John now spends time with family and friends, splitting his year between Sherwood Park and Palm Springs!



WE ALL ARE ONE IN MISSION

We All Are One in Mission.....

"We all are one in mission, we all are one in call."

Rusty Edwards penned this hymn that we sang last week. It is a call to each of us to consider our own unique strengths and gifts and look for ways to use them in service at Glory.

"Our varied gifts united by Christ, the Lord of all."

Church Council will have vacant portfolios in the new year as current Council members complete their terms.

The portfolio of Secretary, for example, will appeal to someone capable of taking "minutes of the meeting" notes, is organized and has good communication skills.

The portfolio of Congregational Life will appeal to someone who appreciates the rich history of fellowship and activity we enjoy at Glory.

Our goal for the next Council is to have a full quota of people ready and willing to work together to steer us forward supported by committees ready and willing to carry out the decisions made by Council.

There are many ways to serve. There are many ways to help.

"A single great commission compels us from above to plan and work together that all may know Christ's love."

Rhonda Berg and Donna Dawson
Nominating Committee



Bishop's Message - June 2023

Dear Beloved of God -

On a regular basis I have folks ask me, what are you reading? Many know that I read ferociously, with several books always on the go, ranging from popular novels to church leadership, poetry to mystery novels, light reading to heavy-duty reading. Over the next few months and columns, I will be sharing some excellent reads.



Recently I have been appreciated a newly published book which is very accessible. A great resource for small group study and conversation, and/or for congregational councils: Leading Faithful Innovation: Following God into a Hopeful Future Dwight Zscheile, Michael Binder and Tess Pinkstaff, ©2023 Fortress Press, Minneapolis.

What might God be up to amid the seismic changes the church and our culture are undergoing? What opportunities will congregations encounter if they rediscover and follow God's leading? Leading Faithful Innovation offers a practical, hands-on approach to addressing this challenge, a process that culminates in the hope that comes from following the Spirit.

Leading Faithful Innovation explores Acts 16:6-15, the story about the biblical Lydia, to embody the key themes of this book. Jesus' followers are led by the Holy Spirit on a path where the destination isn't clear when they start. The road isn't straightforward. They discover where to go by listening, acting, and reflecting. They must practice being hosted by others in neighborhood spaces they don't control. They are redirected multiple times as dead ends lead to open doors but not necessarily the open doors they expected. Throughout, they must depend on God's leading, not their own strategies and plans.

This is the kind of journey that characterizes much of what we read in the New Testament about the early church. The Jesus movement was about a group of strangers and friends being joined together by God into a community practicing a distinct way of life that crossed cultural and geographical boundaries. That movement was animated by the life-giving Holy Spirit, which broke down walls, bound people together, and freed them to take risks in love. It was a subversive movement that called into question the predominant narratives and structures of the day.

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Many church leaders today find themselves on an unexpected journey. We are learning/relearning how to be led by God's Spirit like the early followers, exercising both patience and the willingness to move quickly and responsively. This journey means learning to pay attention to the Holy Spirit in new ways.

Dwight Zscheile, Michael Binder, and Tessa Pinkstaff (each from Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota) build on Scripture, theology, and the latest leadership and change theories to guide church leaders on a journey toward grassroots, participatory spiritual growth.

Innovation, for the authors, is defined as the adoption of a new practice in a community. Innovation is not invention, rather it is the adaptation of Christian community life and witness to changing cultural circumstances. Something which the church has always done. Above all, innovation recognizes the agency and activity of God. God continues to create, re-create, restore, reconcile, and heal the world. Faithful innovation is about joining the Spirit's movement.

This faithful innovation begins with a three-step process: listen, act, and share. Listen – listen to God, one another, and our neighbours. Act – try something new based on God's leading. Share – reflect on your actions and share your story. Real-life stories and supportive spiritual practices make each step toward effective change accessible and actionable.

The book then examines how these steps change the culture of a church, establishing a new, biblically grounded way of being church. The authors present leadership practices that invite readers to redefine their leadership identity, accept the loss of their role as the primary driver of their congregation, and discover new hope and possibility. These topics are again fleshed out with real-life stories and undergirded by suggested practices.

The authors believe that the church's future is waiting to be discovered not inside the walls of church buildings or in committee meetings but on journeys into the neighbourhood, "outside the gate" at the "place of prayer" (Acts 16:13 where the spiritually curious gather in dynamic relationship with both the Spirit of God and the Lydias of our own day.

It's worth a read.

In Christ Jesus –
Shalom, +Larry

Sunday School

Registration: September 10 in the Narthex after worship

Start Date: September 17

SUNDAY SCHOOL...a unique time set aside for kids during the church service

Following the kids story time, children are led to the Sunday school rooms or outside to participate in their own church time . Children will learn about God's word, participate in crafts or games, share their offerings and pray together as a Sunday school family. At the conclusion of kids church, children are led back to join their families in the worship service .

You may have noticed that a lantern is carried out of the sanctuary and then brought back in when the children rejoin us. The lantern stays lit during kids church and is a way of showing that we are still connected as a church body even though we exit for a little while . As well this lantern reminds us that Jesus is the Light of the World and as Christians it is our privilege to share this light with others.



"Make music to the Lord with the sound of singing!"

You are invited to join our choir; learn some wonderful choral music; and make friends with a great group of people.

The first choir rehearsal will be on September 14.



***"Sing to Him, sing praises to Him,
tell of all His wonderful works!"***



**Rehearsals are
Thursdays 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.**

Come and experience friendship and fellowship as we join our voices in prayer and in praise!

Please call if you have any questions.

Pat (780) 998-5345.

DATES TO REMEMBER

September 10	Blessing of Backpacks - during worship Sunday School Registration - after worship
September 11-21	Pastor Markus is on holidays
September 13	Council Meeting 6:30pm
September 17	Kids Church / Sunday School Starts
September 22	Glory 50 Plus Event with Chef John 2:00pm
October 5	Confirmation Starts - Thursdays 6:30pm
October 11	Council Meeting 6:30pm
October 22-25	32nd Annual Ecumenical Mission of Strathcona County
October 23	Ecumenical Mission of Strathcona County - Monday evening service @ Glory 7:00
October 28	Festival Singers Workshop
Tuesdays	Praise Band Rehearsal 7:00pm
Thursdays	Choir 7:30pm (starting Sept. 14)
2nd Thursdays	Worship at Strathcona Care - Monthly 10:15am
4th Thursdays	Worship at Hardisty Care Centre - Monthly 10:00am
Sundays	Worship 10:30 am (Communion 2 nd & 4 th Sundays)

No Sunday School on long weekends.

Fall Sayings:

- * Remember that you're unique. Just like everyone else.
- * Never test the depth of the water with both feet.
- * Everyone seems normal until you get to know them.
- * A closed mouth gathers no foot.

Did you know?

Did you know that our community garden has been benefitting several families/people this summer? Every Monday morning (beginning the 1st of August) approximately 50 lbs. of potatoes are dug. Once out of the ground and boxed up, I take them to our garage where they are washed or brushed free of excess dirt. Sue Paskar from Mount Olivet then picks them up along with a few more vegetables from Kwai-lan Leslie's garden plots and delivers a week's supply to a Ukrainian refugee family and an organization called the L.O.O.P. (a food recovery program) which provides food for

families in need. There are several Syrian families who receive food/potatoes from this organization. Sue. P. also makes a point of delivering some to Jim Gurnett, the pastoral associate of I.C.P.M., who delivers them to families and single moms in need who reside in the inner city. This potato process will continue throughout the fall but starting in Sept. a lot more potatoes will be dug and distributed to the Sherwood Park Food Bank, the Youth Emergency/Empowerment Shelter and a church in N.E. Edmonton which caters to a high immigrant population. Just in case you were wondering, the potatoes/vegetables from the community garden at Glory Lutheran Church are nourishing adults and children. And now you know.

~Orleen Pearson



Tuesday - Friday, 11:00 am to 3:00 pm.

Please note that Heidi may be working from home.

Email and phone calls will continue to be answered during office hours. Please call the office if you would like to visit the church.

OFFICE
HOURS



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