

# CHURCH *Matters*



Glory Lutheran Church Newsletter - 08.21 Edition



Blue Herons on Glory Property, photo by Doug Sime, July 25, 2021

# Message from Pastor Markus

August 2021

Dear friends in Christ,

It has been an exceptionally hot summer, in an exceptionally anxious time, amidst exceptionally difficult global challenges. COVID was our immediate threat over the past 18 months. But there are others at least as urgent. One of them is the farming crisis in Canada and other countries due to the ongoing drought and heat. Existential fears have entered the consciousness of many, also among us.

Christians, however, are a hopeful people transformed by God's love for the world. We know of our lostness because we have been found. We know of our inability to save ourselves because we have been saved. We know our sins, our griefs, our losses, because God has forgiven, comforted and gifted us in Jesus Christ. Because of what God has done, we see the ourselves and our world with clarity, but also with hope.

One thing we need not do is be afraid. "Fear not", Jesus said again and again. "There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear", wrote the apostle John (1 John 4:18). As we read the headlines and see the images, let us look to the head, that is to Christ. Christ Jesus is the head of the church, which is called his body. The body of Christ is the incarnate presence, the flesh and blood hands and feet of Jesus. These hands and feet are turned towards each other and towards our anxious world in hope and love, never in fear or despair.

We anticipate a more regular return to in-person worship starting in September. I believe it will not only be a re-turn but a new beginning. Our first well-attended outdoor service in July felt a bit like a joyful reunion. Worship will be somewhat different going forward, even when we move indoors, but God's grace and love remain constant.

I also look forward to our new intern, Kathie Goertz-Thompson joining us on the second Sunday of September for the start of her 12 month internship. Our internship committee will meet soon to make the necessary preparations to welcome intern Kathie.

Our bishop, Larry Kochendorfer, has recently written a pastoral letter to the congregations of our synod. I share it with you here. It includes a prayer which I also encourage you to pray.

Yours in Christ Jesus, Pr. Markus Wilhelm

## Pastoral Letter from Bishop Larry - August 4, 2021

Dear Beloved of God —

***The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.***

*O God, you are my God, I seek you, my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water. Psalm 63:1-2*

*Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life." The woman said to him, 'Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water. " John 4•.13-15*

This prayer from Psalm 63 and Jesus' conversation with the woman at the well resonate with our current situation of drought and thirst as parched conditions continue to plague crops and pastures, and as many areas across our Synod have been declared states of agricultural disaster.

When synod staff meet with lay and rostered leaders, we often invite people to share a "weather report," inquiring, "How is the weather outside?" These days the response is "dry," "in need of rain, extremely dry," "a disaster."

I write to invite your fervent prayers.

We are now experiencing what is turning into one of the most severe droughts in our history. I have heard from many who care for the land, including my own family, that they have never seen it this dry in many many years of farming.

The lack of appropriate moisture is hard on our land and on all of us, but, it weighs especially heavily upon our farmers and ranchers and all who draw their living from agriculture. I am asking you to join me in daily prayer for their well-being, and also that these same concerns be included in the prayers of the church.

Pay attention to how people are doing, and do not hesitate to ask for or offer help. Remind each other that you do not have to wait for a crisis to reach out for support, counseling or tangible assistance. Provide a local resource directory in your Sunday bulletin and other publications. Refer to it often, so that the practice of seeking help is normalized. Consider giving to local agencies that provide mental health services or direct aid.

Ask how you can be helpful. The simple acknowledgement that the road has been rough and that you care could be the cool cup of water that is needed just now.

*continued on next page...*

*continued from previous page...*

Perhaps the following might guide our prayer:

Stir up your power, O God, and save your good creation. The earth groans in travail. Forests fall, oceans rise, crops fail. The air is thick with so much burning. Free us from the powerful who destroy the air, water, and land. Frustrate their violence, expose their lies, overthrow their schemes. Pour out over the earth justice that rolls down like water to nourish the life of the world. Preserve the health of your beloved creation [especially \_\_\_\_\_]. Strengthen those who serve and protect the garden of this earth. Restore the choir of your creatures and let us sing for joy. Gather us at your river, under the tree of life. Send forth your Spirit and renew the face of the earth; in the name of the one who from a wounded tree birthed a new creation, Jesus our redeemer.

*(All Creation Sings: Evangelical Lutheran Worship Supplement, page 47)*

God our comforter, you are a refuge and a strength for us, a helper close at hand in times of distress. Enable us so to hear the words of faith that our fear is dispelled, our loneliness eased, our anxiety calmed, and our hope reawakened. May your Holy Spirit lift us above our sorrow to the peace and light of your constant love; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

*(Evangelical Lutheran Worship: Pastoral Care, pages 360-361)*

And perhaps the following resources may be helpful in your context:

ELCA Worship Resources in Time of Drought

<https://blogs.elca.org/disasterresponse/files/2012/07/Worship-Resources-Drought.pdf>

Liturgy and Prayers for a Time of Drought — The Rev. Thomas L. Weitzel

<https://www.liturgvbvtlw.com/OccChs/Drought.html>

Thank you for your leadership and prayerful attention to the shared burdens that we are carrying together (Galatians 6:2).

Once again, I remind you to be humble and gentle with one another. Honour each other. Welcome moments of joy; make space for lament. Help each other live into hope.

In the midst of this crisis may we together find refreshment in the good news that Jesus Christ is our living water.

***The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13***

In Christ Jesus — Shalom,

The Rev. Dr. Larry Kochendorfer, Bishop

Synod of Alberta and the Territories - Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

for more info visit [retreatofourown.ca](http://retreatofourown.ca)

# Retreat Of Our Own 2021

a theological reflection retreat  
for Lutheran & Anglican  
learners at 坎里雅斯坎里雅斯

**September 10 - 12**

**VALUING CREATION: THE ECONOMICS OF SAVING**

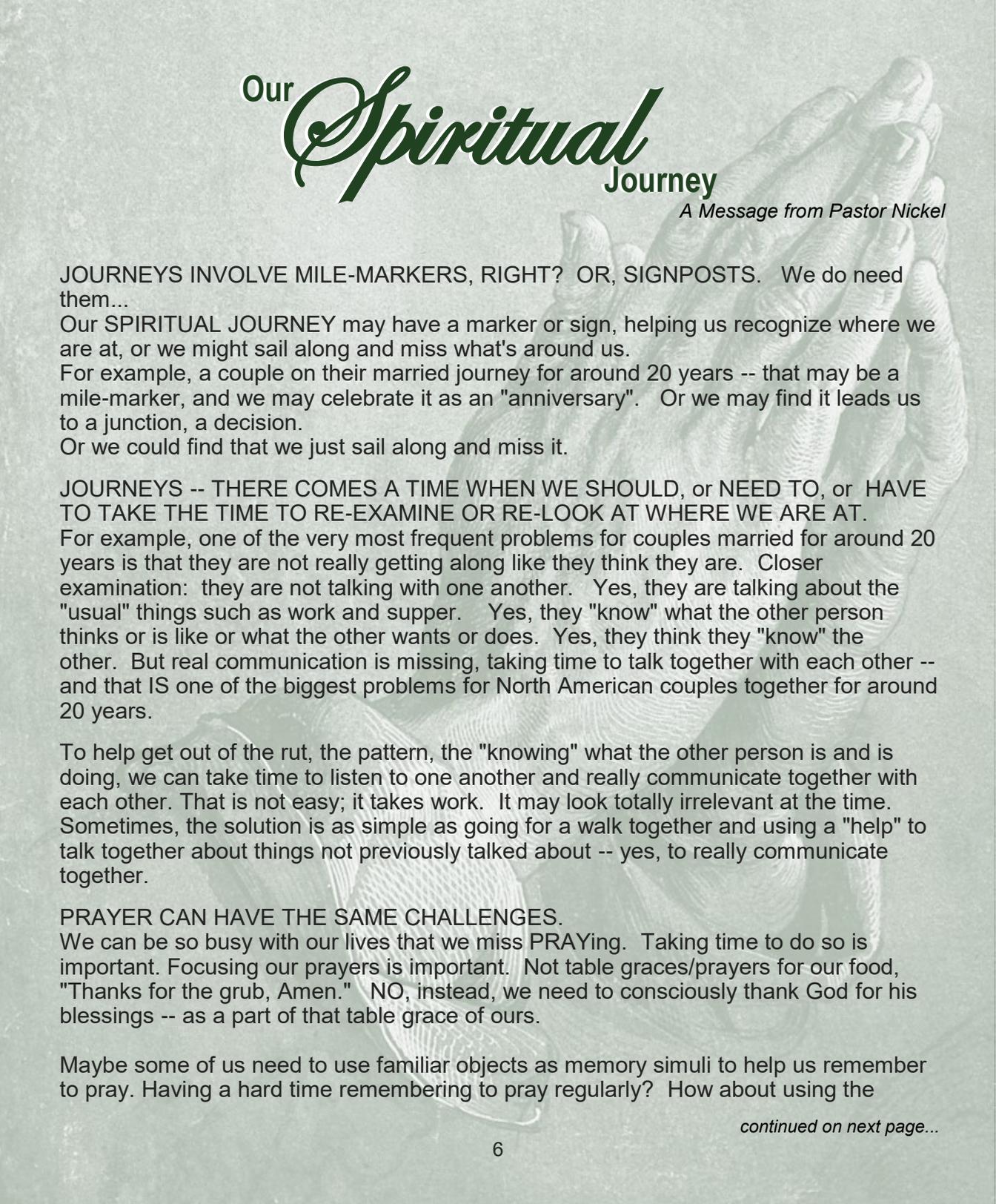
WITH  
**REV. DR. TIM WRAY**

Registration is now open for the **2021 Retreat of Our Own!** This year's retreat will be held in person at Kuriakos, **September 10-12**, following Covid-safe guidelines in effect in September.

The speaker, Rev. Dr. **Tim Wray**, will explore the intersections of climate change, farming, theology, and salvation in his theme, "Valuing Creation: The Economics of Saving." This retreat is open both to lay people and clergy; attendees tend to be Lutheran, but this is not a requirement.

More information about the Retreat, including registration instructions, can be found on the Retreat of Our Own website, <https://www.retreatofourown.ca/> .

Questions may be directed to the organizers, Joe Stolee ([joestolee@shaw.ca](mailto:joestolee@shaw.ca), 403-478-9684) and Pamela Giles ([pamelagiles@shaw.ca](mailto:pamelagiles@shaw.ca), 306-717-1209).



# Our *Spiritual* Journey

*A Message from Pastor Nickel*

JOURNEYS INVOLVE MILE-MARKERS, RIGHT? OR, SIGNPOSTS. We do need them...

Our SPIRITUAL JOURNEY may have a marker or sign, helping us recognize where we are at, or we might sail along and miss what's around us.

For example, a couple on their married journey for around 20 years -- that may be a mile-marker, and we may celebrate it as an "anniversary". Or we may find it leads us to a junction, a decision.

Or we could find that we just sail along and miss it.

JOURNEYS -- THERE COMES A TIME WHEN WE SHOULD, or NEED TO, or HAVE TO TAKE THE TIME TO RE-EXAMINE OR RE-LOOK AT WHERE WE ARE AT.

For example, one of the very most frequent problems for couples married for around 20 years is that they are not really getting along like they think they are. Closer examination: they are not talking with one another. Yes, they are talking about the "usual" things such as work and supper. Yes, they "know" what the other person thinks or is like or what the other wants or does. Yes, they think they "know" the other. But real communication is missing, taking time to talk together with each other -- and that IS one of the biggest problems for North American couples together for around 20 years.

To help get out of the rut, the pattern, the "knowing" what the other person is and is doing, we can take time to listen to one another and really communicate together with each other. That is not easy; it takes work. It may look totally irrelevant at the time. Sometimes, the solution is as simple as going for a walk together and using a "help" to talk together about things not previously talked about -- yes, to really communicate together.

PRAYER CAN HAVE THE SAME CHALLENGES.

We can be so busy with our lives that we miss PRAYing. Taking time to do so is important. Focusing our prayers is important. Not table graces/prayers for our food, "Thanks for the grub, Amen." NO, instead, we need to consciously thank God for his blessings -- as a part of that table grace of ours.

Maybe some of us need to use familiar objects as memory simuli to help us remember to pray. Having a hard time remembering to pray regularly? How about using the

*continued on next page...*

mailbox you pass by regularly on the corner, or when you leave the driveway of your house, or when you pass that tall building -- to remind you to pray for your family, for others...

Maybe, we need to sometimes take time to practice the presence of God. We can let examples from the Bible help. For example, Proverbs 3:5-6:

"Trust in God with all your heart,  
And do not lean on your own understanding.  
In all your ways acknowledge Him,  
And he will make your paths straight."

Or, maybe there's another PROBLEM: GETTING SO USED TO PRAYER THAT IT'S AUTOMATIC -- like taking a Journey on Cruise Control, and finding later that we have missed the sign telling us which way to turn, way back there. Prayer that it is automatic for us can become without thought, or without focus, no longer personal. If so, then what?

Do we need to REFOCUS? To help here, we could look at the "forms" of prayer we use. Mark Link has written that he sees that there's three "forms" of prayer: meditation, conversation, and contemplation.

- + Meditation: simply take some idea and explore it prayerfully with the mind. Consider - we think about Jesus and what he must have been like, and what if we'd been there.
- + Conversation: simply conversing with Jesus prayerfully from the heart. Consider - talk with Jesus the same way we would converse with a good friend.
- + Contemplation: we don't think about anything or say anything - but instead rest easily or silently in Jesus' presence, the way we pause, rest and enjoy that view of the mountains.

Another way to put it, the 3 forms of Prayer available to us during Our Spiritual Journey:

+pray with our MIND,      +pray with our HEART,      +pray with our SOUL.

...And always try to be willing to let them overlay/overlap each other. ...And, practice helps...

Soooo, may prayer help you with your Spiritual Journey.

Yours, Together in Christ,  
Gary Nickel

## Council Highlights

August 2021

### RETURN TO IN-PERSON WORSHIP

Online services will continue during August and for the first Sunday of September. While Pastor Markus takes some time off during the last three weeks of August, we will be using the Summer Sermon Series. These sermons have been prepared by the Bishops and Assistant Bishops of the ELCIC for use in congregations during the summer.

Our church council continues to follow the COVID–19 situation closely and, if all goes well, **we will return to in-person worship on September 12.**

The Public Health Agency of Canada has released its official guidelines for Canadians who have been vaccinated against COVID-19. You may find these useful. They can be found here: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/awareness-resources/vaccinated-against-covid-19-public-health-measures.html>

For now, as we care for each other’s wellbeing, all activities at Glory are proceeding with most precautions against Covid-19 still in place.

### INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The ELCIC requires all candidates for ordination to serve a 12-month internship. Katharine Goertz Thompson, a student at Lutheran Theological Seminary in Saskatoon, has been placed at Glory. We are looking forward to her joining us in September.

Please don’t hesitate to contact me with any feedback. Thank you.

Pat

Council Chair

STRATHCONA  
IN Bloom

*Congratulations*

YOUR ORGANIZATION HAS BEEN NOMINATED



## **STRATHCONA IN BLOOM: OUTDOOR SPACES RECOGNITION**

We are excited to announce that Glory Lutheran Church has been nominated for creating a beautiful outdoor space! (You can visit [Strathcona.ca/bloom](http://Strathcona.ca/bloom) to learn more.)

As you know, the beautiful outdoor space with which we have been blessed requires many willing hands to maintain. **Thank you to all those who garden** in the community garden and **to the committee** who looks after this initiative. A very heartfelt thank you **to Kwai-Lan Leslie** and **Tim Kihn** who not only ensure there is water for the garden but who spend countless hours adding to the beauty of this land. Thank you to **Dave Hauf** and **Lynn Spain** (council members who look after the property portfolio) and **to all of you who cut the grass around the church, maintain the trails, cultivate the community gardens** new and old, create and **maintain a tree “nursery”, plan and implement beautiful spaces for the future, prune, water, and weed.**

A decorative border of vibrant green leaves and branches frames the top and sides of the page. The leaves are of various shades of green, from light to dark, and are arranged in a natural, flowing pattern.

# Ready, Set, Grow!

Dear Glory Family,

We are so excited to share with you the plans for the  
Glory Lutheran Memorial Garden!

By now you should have received the Memorial Garden  
Fundraising Package in your mailbox. We hope you've had a  
chance to read through it and see how the plans have developed.

If you haven't been able to attend one of the information sessions  
yet, please join us for one of the remaining two sessions:

**Sunday, 15 August at 12 pm (via Zoom)**

**Join Zoom Meeting**

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87963661391?  
pwd=cDlva2hYRkllLORiWGxpRFZLT0JQdz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87963661391?pwd=cDlva2hYRkllLORiWGxpRFZLT0JQdz09)

Meeting ID: 879 6366 1391

Passcode: 390997

To join by phone:

+1 587 328 1099

Meeting ID: 879 6366 1391

Passcode: 390997

**Wednesday, 08 September at 7 pm (In-person)**

We are looking forward to seeing you,  
whether it be online or in person!

Blessings!

*Memorial Garden Committee*

# CHURCH Matters

## Newsletter Distribution



With in-person services resuming on September 12, we would like to suggest that those who have internet access continue to access the newsletter online.



Those of you who do not have internet access, and have been receiving a paper copy in the mail will receive a paper copy in your mail folder at the church.

Those who had paper copies mailed to them prior to the pandemic, will remain on the hardcopy mail list.

If you would like to be added to the mail list or would like a paper copy in your mail folder, please contact the office.

## Fund Raising - Bottle Drive

The Church is always collecting bottles so please keep those empty cans, bottles and milk cartons coming in. Thank you, **Doug Sime**, for taking them to the recycle station. All proceeds go towards the church general fund.

Please only include **REFUNDABLE beverage containers**.



## Finance Corner



## Update for January 1 to July 31, 2021:

Actual Offering\*: \$161,722

Budget Offering Goal\*: \$175,879

Short by **\$ 14,107**

\*(General Fund & Capital Building Fund)

Thank you for your ongoing financial support.

If you need any help with giving options  
(envelopes, PAR, e-transfer or Canada Helps)  
please contact the church office.

### **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



22577 Hwy 16,  
Sherwood Park, Alberta,  
T8A 4T7



Phone: 780.416.9594 E-mail: [glorylc@telus.net](mailto:glorylc@telus.net)  
Pastor Markus Wilhelm E-mail: [pastormarkus@glorylutheran.ca](mailto:pastormarkus@glorylutheran.ca)  
Check out our Website: [www.glorylutheran.ca](http://www.glorylutheran.ca)