

We Worship, We Grow, We Serve,
We reach out in love sharing God's
message of hope through Jesus Christ.

March 2022
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Inside this Issue

- 1 Pastor's Message
- 2 Chairperson
- 3 In-Person Worship Resumes
- 4 Learning Opportunities in Lent
- 5 AGM Highlights
- 6 Community Connections
- 7 Bits & Pieces

With constant changes in public health protocols, check the church website for updates on in-building worship and gatherings.

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We recognize and acknowledge the Qayqayt First Nation, as well as all Coast Salish peoples, on whose traditional and unceded territories we gather.



mount zion **Message**

LUTHERAN

2022 Lent Newsletter

Lenten LOVE

PASTOR'S PEN

A word from the heart

Pastor Marlys

Traditionally, the 40 days of Lent (which do NOT include Sundays!) are spent in increased prayer, repentance, acts of mercy, and ensuring our focus is on Christ, perhaps by giving up something that takes our time or attention away from him. Lent can seem to be a rather somber time, especially when the skies are grey and the days are short, when we come to grips with the realities of our lives that are not always heading in the right direction. But the purpose of Lent is not to leave us wallowing in the dirt of guilt, shame and sin!

Yes, Lent is a journey towards death (isn't all of life, actually?!) which we remember especially on Good Friday, but again that is not the end goal. Lent is a journey towards Easter, to resurrection, to fullness and life with God.

Just as seeds and bulbs in the ground need that time of preparation, before giving up their old identity in order to rise from their tombs of soil and burst forth into the sun, so too do we need a time to be still, to die to our old ways of being, in order to be transformed into the fullness of who God intended us to be. We too are intended to bloom! There is new life! Hope! This is a journey towards LOVE. The love of God for the world, the love of Christ for all humanity...and the love we then get to bask in as we grow and reach towards the Son.

Already we are seeing signs of spring – even if spring is not here yet officially. Thank you to the photographers in Mount Zion who send their hopeful photos. Those pops of colour, of new life springing up through the dark soil are reminders of what the season of Lent yields: hope in the midst of hopelessness, new life in the midst of death - something to look forward to as we follow the Son, Jesus Christ.

The sunflower is a powerful example for Christians, because they truly do follow the sun. If you have had the opportunity to see a field of sunflowers, you know that the direction those yellow heads face changes throughout the day, as they seek the sun. What an incredible life lesson for us all –to follow the Son! And isn't that what Lent is all about?



Worship in the building resumes on March 2

Following Jesus, knowing that he leads us through all the twists and turns, joys and sorrows, challenges and opportunities we may face, and yes, even ultimately death. But following the Son also means experiencing a resurrection like his.

So let's follow the Son! Let's be sunflowers! And, as we do so, may we also be reminded to pray for our sisters and brothers in Ukraine who are experiencing horrors and violence which many of us hoped never to see again. The sunflower is their national flower.

We pray for the peace of God which passes all understanding to keep our hearts and our minds in Christ Jesus as we seek to grow in love for God and for one another. -Pastor Marlys



I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to all who attended our Annual General Meeting. I would also like to thank all who contributed to the Congregational Annual Report. These reports

are important. Each report tells a story and will be preserved as a part of Mount Zion's history. Finally, my thanks to our dedicated council members who, in accordance with our Constitution, "serve as trustees of the congregation and have general oversight of the life and activities of the congregation."

What comes next? First, it is important to note that there is little change to council as most members have agreed to remain in place for

another year. The installation of our new council will take place on March 6, 2022, and at the next council meeting, we will elect a chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary, and treasurer. From there the newly elected council along with the various teams, committees, working groups and volunteers will continue to do the work that makes our church a wonderful place to worship and gather.

One last item: at the recommendation of council, we now have a Transition Team that will focus on "handover planning" in anticipation that there may be a gap upon Pastor's Retirement. More on that to come.

In the meantime, we will continue to go forward in peace to serve the Lord.

Lyna Kiviste
Chair of Council



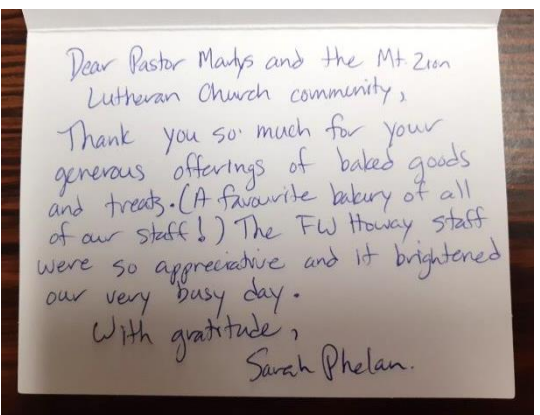
Can You Help?

Aluel Nyok's orphaned 16-year-old niece, Nyakong Nyok, is living in a refugee camp in Uganda. Because she is a minor Aluel is unable to sponsor her at this time. Prior to COVID-19 Aluel had been providing financial support for her niece's living expenses and schooling. However, due to the pandemic and loss of employment Aluel is unable to send money at this time. She is grateful for the generous support she received throughout 2021. Currently Aluel needs \$120/month to assist with supporting her niece. **Can you help? Please contact Aluel or the church office. Thank you!**

Your prayers are also appreciated for everyone in Uganda which is currently experiencing much violence and political unrest, in addition to COVID-19.

Community Connection

On February 9, on behalf of Mount Zion, Pastor Marlys delivered an assortment of pastries to FW Howay School, to let them know in a tangible that we were thinking of them, in addition to praying for them. The timing was a God-send, because the teachers were staying late that evening for conferences.



In-Person Worship Begins Wednesday, March 2

We return to worship in the building on March 2, Ash Wednesday, followed by Sunday morning services at 10:00am. As long as we maintain 50% capacity or less we can gather for worship without requiring proof of vaccination. **Masks are required to be worn for worship.** Other events and gatherings are now permitted in the building with **proof of vaccination and masks required by the public health order.**

In order to continue to worship in person, we need a number of volunteers who are well and feel safe to assist with worship. This photo shows some of the people involved, but there are several other tasks that need to be done, including video recording, pew markers, offering box, physical distancing signs, lector, windows, tech set-up and tear-down, sound, counting offering. We usually have 7-10 different individuals who



come early and/or stay afterwards to ensure worship can happen in a safe and timely manner. If you are interested and available, please contact Norma Houde or Pastor Marlys.

Please note: **Coffee Time after the service requires additional volunteers!**

Sunday In-Person Worship Services with Holy Communion Resume March 6 at 10:00am
We will gather in the building for worship.
The services will be recorded and posted to Mount Zion's YouTube channel if you are unable to attend in the building.

In order to maintain good health, out of love for one another and for the sake of those who are not vaccinated, such as children, **we require everyone to wear a mask indoors, sanitize hands, and maintain physical distancing.** That also means we are able to **SING** safely 😊

Please also note:

- ☆ We will meet upstairs in the sanctuary.
- ☆ Offering box will be in the foyer at the end of the service
- ☆ We will resume serving refreshments in the Lower Hall, beginning March 20 **if we have enough volunteers** 😊

Help Prevent the Spread of COVID-19 and other illnesses. Please DO NOT COME if: you have any of the following symptoms:

- ☆ Fever
- ☆ Chills
- ☆ New or worsening cough
- ☆ Shortness of breath
- ☆ New muscle aches or headaches
- ☆ You have travelled outside of Canada within the last 14 days
- ☆ You are a close contact of a person who tested positive for COVID-19

Mount Zion's Online Presence



Check out online worship services on our YouTube channel, Mount Zion Lutheran Church, New Westminster BC.
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCxctwh0wAVAJqBzV3B3eApw>
We are always looking for people to video the Bible readings. Please contact Pastor Marlys at 604-521-0120.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES IN LENT



World Day of Prayer Service

Mount Zion regrets not being able to host this year's World Day of Prayer Service on Friday, March 4. This year's service materials, were prepared by the women of England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada have used these materials to create a virtual service available at <https://youtu.be/JDtjQU--vdE>

2022 LENTEN SERIES That We All May Be One



**Tuesday Evenings
(on Zoom)
7:00-8:00pm
March 8 through April 5**

Reflect on Scripture

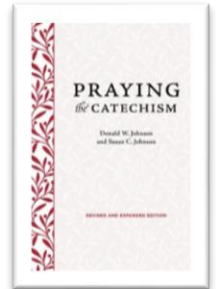
Discuss

Pray

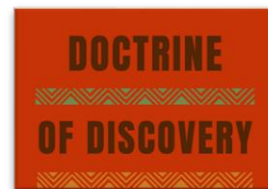
- Tuesday, 8 March:** John 16.7-14 led by Richard Leggett of Holy Trinity Cathedral
- Tuesday, 15 March:** Matthew 20.20-28 led by Marlys Moen of Mount Zion Lutheran
- Tuesday, 22 March:** Luke 12.32-40 led by Carole Neilson of Holy Trinity Cathedral
- Tuesday, 29 March:** Matthew 28.16-20 led by Jack Herklotz of Saint Peter's Roman Catholic Church
- Tuesday, 5 April:** Matthew 11.25-30 led by Jocelyn Melder of Olivet Baptist Church

Please contact prmarlys@shaw.ca for the Zoom link.

**Lenten Reflections:
Wednesdays
7:00pm via Zoom
March 2 – April 6**



Mount Zion is joining with others from across the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada in a Lenten Study, using the resource *Praying the Catechism* and the Gospel texts for Ash Wednesday and the Sundays. Our Lenten Reflections we will also include *Holden Evening Prayer*. Contact mountzion930@gmail.com for the Zoom link



**Lenten Series
Thursdays
7:00pm
via Zoom**

March 3 - April 7

The Doctrine of Discovery is a document that has shaped western attitudes towards indigenous people for the past five centuries. Organized by the BC Synod's Journey Towards Reconciliation Group each evening will

start with a 20 minute Lenten Vespers (Evening Worship) led by different congregations in the BC Synod. There will be a short break before a one-hour discussion with video on the Doctrine of Discovery. Please sign up on Eventbrite so we can get an idea of how many people are coming. Eventbrite Link: <https://bit.ly/3IQ3peD>

Confirmation Classes have resumed on Sundays from 4:00-6:00pm. Students, ages 12+, are welcome but must show proof of vaccination and be masked.

Annual General Meeting



Annual General Meeting Highlights

Mount Zion's Annual General Meeting was held on Sunday, February 27 at 11:00am. Thanks be to God for many answered prayers! More than 25 people participated via ZOOM on their computers, tablets and telephones. Here are some highlights from this meeting:

Mount Zion Lutheran Congregational Council

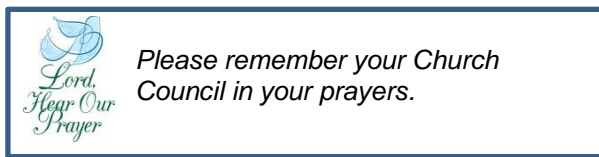
Terms are for two years. The council elects from its own membership a chairperson, vice chairperson and secretary at its meeting in March.

New Members (terms expire in 2024)

1. Bernice Birzneck
2. Norma Houde
3. Lyna Kiviste
4. Wayne Weholm
5. Vivienne Welters

Current Members (terms expire in 2023)

7. Bruce Cornish
8. Beverley Cuthbert
9. Akok Deng
10. Monica Deng
11. Len Imrie
12. Bob Kochendorfer
13. Don Leech
14. Katie Nieman
15. Paulos Nizghi
16. Yohannes Solomon



Auditing Committee (one-year term)

1. Stephen Scheving
2. Shirles Burton

Nominating Committee

1. Victoria Dobson
2. Joanne Ganske
3. Tigisti Glaizghi

Memorial Secretary

1. Barbara Davison

The congregation voted for the following special offering designations for Easter (Seminary Support), Pentecost (Padang Relief Society), Thanksgiving (Emergency Relief Fund) & Christmas (New Westminster Food Bank.)

Joy and Celebration 😊

There are many events which have been put on hold due to COVID restrictions and protocols. So now that such restrictions are easing we are looking forward to celebrating baptisms, new members, installation of the lift, etc. as well as Pastor Marlys' 20th anniversary of ordination, 20 years of ministry at Mount Zion, and her impending retirement (November 27 is her last Sunday at Mount Zion.)

Transition Team

Katie Nieman is leading the Transition Team, which is responsible for creating a plan to deal with the time between Pastor Marlys' retirement and the arrival of a new pastor. Because there is a shortage of pastors, the reality is there may be no interim pastor available. The Transition Team's function is different from a Call Committee which is tasked with the responsibility of conducting the call process for a new permanent pastor. **Please pray! Contact Katie if you are interested in learning more about the Transition Team.**

Stephen Ministry

Mount Zion is also looking for two people to train as Stephen Leaders for Stephen Ministry. Stephen Ministry offers a proven and effective way to organize, equip, and supervise a team of congregation members—called *Stephen Ministers*—to provide high-quality, one-to-one, Christ-centered care to people in the congregation and the community experiencing life difficulties. Your prayerful consideration is appreciated!





Connections

I recently read a quote from Ann Voskamp: *“The promised answer to our prayers may not be found in promised lands, but in wildernesses.”*

Something to ponder for sure as we move through Lent this year. In some ways we have been journeying through a kind of wilderness for a couple of years now because of the pandemic. Or maybe it would have come anyway, but change seems to have come with the speed of light, because of all that has taken place due to COVID.

We have talked about those wilderness places before. We have referred to them as threshold or liminal places. If we are willing, they are places with the ability to break us open to seeing things differently. This can be hard for any of us, and especially hard for organizations that have been years in the making, just like structures in the church.

Community Connections is about experimenting in the midst of change, doing things in new and different ways. It is about being curious about why we do what we do. Mostly it is about finding ways to *‘be with’* our neighbours, specifically the people who live around Mount Zion. We wonder how we might do things differently to get to know our neighbours. It is about breaking out of old patterns, changing and letting go of some things we need to let go of in order to do other things. It is about trying new things that offer ways to experience face-to-face encounters with people outside our church building. It is about stepping out, even risking failure, as we seek ways to get to know people who may be different from ourselves but, once we get to know them, find they are not so different after all.

We live in a hurting world with people crying out for connection with others and with God.

Community Connections asks the questions: “What are we called to be for those around us...our family, our friends and our neighbours? How might we begin to break down old barriers which us apart?”

Fortunately, the BC Synod wants us to explore new ways of doing things too! Once again funding is available to keep building on what we started last year with the Book Nook. We are curious to see where God might lead.

One possible way to meet neighbours may be in remembering together the children of residential schools through an Honouring Memories Planting Dreams Garden.



If you want to learn more, click on the link <https://fncaringsociety.com/honouring-memories-planting-dreams>. We welcome your thoughts and ideas. This might be our next experiment. Look for an update in the April Newsletter.

In closing we ask that you remember the neighbours around Mount Zion and the Community Connections group in your prayers. God was so gracious to us last year with the help of so many people who made the Book Nook and Bench a reality. We still have funding for a second bench! Plus I know other ideas will surface as we seek to try new things. We trust the Spirit of God will guide our decisions and continue to nudge us in the way we should go.

I am often reminded of my Confirmation Bible Verse. I remember being so nervous saying it in front of the congregation! It still guides me today, all these years later...

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths. Proverbs 3:5-6.

-Vivienne Welters

Devotional Booklets

The January-March edition of *Eternity for Today* is still available. The April-June edition is here already. Please contact the church office to arrange for pick-up or delivery.



Pray for peace in Ukraine

Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR) is accepting donations online at clwr.org/Ukraine or by designating CLWR-Ukraine on your offering envelope.

Mutual Ministry Team

Mount Zion is looking for new people for the Mutual Ministry Team. Please pray for people to come forward to serve. The following items identify the role for the Mutual Ministry Team.

- a. To work with the congregational council/board to ensure clear and realistic expectations are developed for council/board members, rostered ministers, congregational ministries and staff.
- b. To support effective communication among the congregation, rostered ministers and staff.
- c. To act as a confidential sounding board and support team for rostered ministers and staff.
- d. To review and provide timely compensation recommendations to the congregational council/ board for rostered ministers and staff if there is no other personnel team in place.
- e. To work towards conflict resolution as it arises and involves the rostered minister or other staff members.

For more information contact Norma Houde or Vivienne Welters who have served with the Mutual Ministry Team.

2022 CAN New Westminster

The BC Poverty Reduction Coalition is offering a second Training Program to empower more people with lived and living experience and to replenish the membership of the City’s CAN Learning Network. The Community Action Network (CAN) Leadership Training Program is intended to increase the involvement of people with lived and living experience in poverty and homelessness in civic planning, policy development and decision-making, thus making these processes more representative and responsive. **Monica Deng has taken the training and is looking for other New Westminster citizens to participate.**

Program Highlights include:

- Training Workshops will occur on Fridays in April to May 2022
- No experience necessary, but must commit to the entire program
- Applications are open to all those who have lived/ living experienced in poverty.
- Breakfast, lunch and snacks will be served at all workshops, plus coffee and tea.
- Childcare subsidy for at-home childcare is available for all workshops.
- Transportation costs are covered for all workshops if need be.



This Quarter’s Events

Wednesday March 2
7:00pm, Sanctuary & via Zoom
Ash Wednesday Service

Friday March 4
YouTube
World Day of Prayer Service

Sunday March 6
10:00 a.m., Sanctuary
(posted to YouTube later)
Worship Service with Holy Communion & Installation of Church Council

Tuesdays in Lent
7:00pm, via Zoom
New Westminster Ministerial Association Lenten Series

Wednesdays in Lent
7:00 p.m. via Zoom
Mount Zion Lenten Reflections

Thursdays in Lent
7:00 p.m. via Zoom
BC Synod Doctrine of Discovery Series

Sunday April 10
10:00 a.m., Sanctuary
Sunday of the Passion/Palm Sunday Worship Service with Holy Communion

Thursday April 14
7:00 p.m., Sanctuary
Maudy Thursday Service with

Friday April 15
10:00 a.m., Sanctuary
Good Friday Service

Sunday April 17
10:00 a.m., Sanctuary
Easter Sunday Worship Service with Holy Communion

Significant damage occurred by the 10th Avenue (office) entrance to Mount Zion, following a motor vehicle accident in the evening of February 28. At this time, the office entrance and stairs to/from the parking lot are not accessible. Thank you to Don Leech for following up with police, ICBC and insurance.