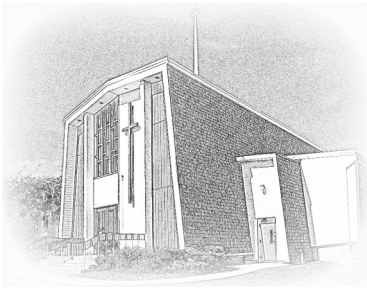


# HIGHWOOD HIGHLIGHTS

March 2023

The Newsletter of Highwood Lutheran Church



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## We're on the Web!

[www.highwoodlutheran.com](http://www.highwoodlutheran.com)

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## OUR PARTICIPATION IN THE SUNDAY SERVICE

Lutherans generally believe in the importance of active participation in the service and view it as a communal act of worship in which all church members participate. Our participation is a big part of worship. The Sunday gathering, or any gathering as a faith community for that matter, is for the whole community, as the Body of Christ, to be united with Christ, its Head, coming together as one body to celebrate the sacramental liturgy.

The pastor's vestments remind us that Christ himself presides over the Eucharist. We understand that the pastor is ordained to operate as Christ himself, as Jesus' visible representative, acting "in persona Christi capitis" (in the Person of Christ's head), and not out of some self-appointed authority or power. Consider who is ultimately in charge as we read the words for the pastor from the last clause of the absolution:

*As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.*

The Rite of Baptism and the associated acts of Reconciliation and Absolution, which stem from our baptism, point to the Eucharistic Celebration. Presiding at the Great Thanksgiving is the highest purpose of the ordained pastor.

Other roles operate in support of the Eucharist. We must each have a different role, as we are all called to participate profoundly in every service. By joining the faith community and participating in the service, we give public witness that we belong to Christ and his Body, the Church. Communal worship is also a public testimony of our faith in God and our hope for salvation. The various roles fulfilled by the laity in the service—providing music, ushering, reading from the Scriptures, serving at the altar, distributing Communion, etc.—are essential contributions to worship, all vital parts of the whole. At various times of the worship service, we all move from active engagement to passive involvement. Each individual is uniquely intertwined in the great mysteries of faith to which we are called to participate, contemplate, and experience in the celebration of the liturgy.

In the Eucharist, we all participate in Christ's sacrifice on the Cross, where he offers himself and all creation to the Father. Even those who choose to simply attend join the service by actively listening to the readings and liturgical prayers and perhaps reciting the responses appointed for the congregation. In this action, we consciously and intentionally unite ourselves to the sacrifice of Christ.

These communal elements have an impact on the experience of worship. Perhaps this is why Lutherans place such a great emphasis on the congregation's role. We believe all church members should actively participate by singing hymns, reciting prayers, and listening to the sermon. A service is a communal act of worship in which the entire congregation gets involved, rather than a performance by the priest and other ministers, with the community serving as passive spectators. Consequently, watching on some screen can seem to diminish worship by shifting away participation and making the sacrifice seem more like a show where the pastor and assistants, and perhaps the choir, lectors, and altar servers, are the ones "doing" the service, while the watcher is just part of an audience.

*Continued on Page 2*

### *Pastor's Message continued from Page 1*

To participate in the liturgy is to participate in the church community and, by extension, engage in the works presented to us by God, and sometimes it just isn't possible. In our prayers every Sunday, we include an intention for those attending to beneficial endeavours, making them unable to participate. Perhaps the first Eucharistic prayer sums up this challenge most aptly, as we pray, "we give thanks to you, O Lord God Almighty, not as we ought but as we are able." Amazingly, we return to the foot of the cross as we confess our state and seek forgiveness.

In the sending, we strive to give God all praise, honour, and glory. We make a living offering of ourselves, united to the perfect offering of Christ. This self-offering is, therefore, our final act in our participation in the service. We carry with us into our daily lives the love and grace that we have first experienced in God coming to us. So, yes, that is why we leave the sanctuary saying, "Thanks be to God."

See you all soon,

Pastor Mike

## HIGHLIGHTS OF ANNUAL VOTERS MEETING

This year's AGM was conducted in the Church basement and remotely via Zoom. The Highwood 2022 Annual Report package had been prepared and distributed two weeks prior to the meeting. Following an opening devotion by Pastor Mike, Chairman Cam Schneider presented the agenda, which was accepted. There were only a few questions and comments arising from the Annual Report package. The 2023 budget as prepared by Treasurer Darcy Anderson and recommended by Church Council was presented to the Voters and was passed, with major provisions as follows:

For a balanced budget 2023 current offerings will need to increase 6% compared to 2022. (i.e., a \$100 donation in 2022, would be \$106 in 2023.)

Rental income assumed to be the same as 2022.

Salaries remain the same. No salary increases.

Church expenses budgeted to remain consistent with 2022.

Total church receipts budgeted at \$173,655 made up of \$146,584 for current donations, \$8,290 for Christmas/Easter donations and \$18,781 for church rentals. Total church expenses of \$173,655 are budgeted with \$101,581 for cost of pastoral ministry, \$24,947 for parish programs and \$47,127 for church plant expenses. No major capital spending.

Gerry Patychuk was appointed as financial auditor for 2023.

Elections for Church Council Officers and Board positions were held with the following results:

Chairman - Cam Schneider re-elected for 2-year term.

Treasurer - Darcy Anderson re-elected for 2-year term.

Secretary - Barb Patychuk elected for 1-year term.

Board of Trustees - Vern Schnell and Phil Tang re-elected for 2-year term.

Board of Elders - Helga Schneider re-elected for 2-year term. Bill Strand elected for 2-year term.



The Laudate Community Singers under the direction of Dr. Don Quantz will be joining us and singing several choral selections during our worship service on March 5th. This will be a rich service as we dig deeper into our journey into Lent. Invite friends, neighbours, and relatives to join us next week.

Laudate Community Singers was formed by Dr. Don Quantz in 1996 as a community choir associated with Canadian Nazarene College, then Ambrose University. Since Dr. Quantz's retirement in June 2018, the choir has been independent and is now an Incorporated Society in Alberta.



Those interested in attending a Wednesday evening service at 7:00 PM during the Lenten Season please sign-up downstairs.

## MARTIN LUTHER HOUSE

### Intentional Christian Community

Martin Luther House in Edmonton offers intentional Christian community for five students

Just steps away from the U of A campus, and near LRT to NAIT and MacEwan.

- Five spacious, furnished bedrooms accommodate the residents
- Large, cozy living room with fireplace and an ample kitchen, both fully furnished.
- Several convenience stores, restaurants, and a grocery store all within short walking distance
- Bus and light-rail transit to NAIT and MacEwan are also just steps away.
- Rent for a student-budget includes: power, water, heat, internet & laundry.

For further information and to apply, contact:

Rev. Richard Reimer, Lutheran Campus Chaplain

E-mail: [rfreimer@ualberta.ca](mailto:rfreimer@ualberta.ca)

Or visit: [www.lcmedmonton.ca](http://www.lcmedmonton.ca)

Early bird deadline: May 31st



### MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Bruce Cooper  
 Chloe Giacomini  
 Norma Gummo  
 Thelma Jung  
 Joyce Rasmussen  
 Philip Tang  
 Andres Torres Ferrerosa  
 Sandra Whitehead  
 Megan Whitehead  
 Jamie Whitehead  
 Laura Woycenko

### SOME LENTEN THOUGHTS

What is more important than the practices we take on is the heart attitude behind them. If there's anything we should give up this time of year, it's our sense of superiority either to those outside the church or those inside the church who do things differently than we do. The cross levels us all. And that's true whether or not you practice Lent. *Trevin Wax*

Lent is a time of going very deeply into ourselves...What is it that stands between us and God? Between us and our brothers and sisters? Between us and life, the life of the Spirit? Whatever it is, let us relentlessly tear it out, without a moment's hesitation. *Catherine Doherty*

You learn to speak by speaking, to study by studying, to run by running, to work by working and just so, you learn to love by loving. All those who think to learn in any other way deceive themselves. *St. Francis de Sales*

And he said to all: If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. *Luke 9:23*

The command to love and serve—not merely tolerate—each other requires more commitment and sacrifice than we care to give, and so we do the polite minimum from afar. The seasons of Lent and Easter bring thoughts of surrender and sacrifice. *Nana Dolce*

## NOTES FROM PASTOR MIKE

### BAPTISM



Baptism is God's most beautiful and magnificent gift... We call it gift, grace, anointing, enlightenment, garment of immortality, bath of rebirth, seal, and most precious gift. It is called gift because it is conferred on those who bring nothing of their own; grace since it is given even to the guilty; Baptism because sin is buried in the water; anointing for it is priestly and royal as are those who are anointed; enlightenment because it radiates light; clothing since it veils our shame; bath because it washes; and seal as it is our guard and the sign of God's Lordship.

### CONFESSION



In Lent we are called to daily spend a few minutes examining our conscience to call to mind our big sins and also our little habits of selfishness that do so much hidden damage. No need to wait though. On Sunday we kneel down in the confessional and follow the lead of Christ's ambassador, the pastor. Luther linked confession to our baptism and in a way, Confession is like a new baptism, a fresh start, a rebooting of the spiritual life, a simple, concrete way that God has given us to let his grace and forgiveness replenish our hope and relieve our anxiety.

## TREASURER'S REPORT



1 month ended Jan.. 31, 2023

### Financial Summary

January current offerings were \$11,974 and church rental receipts were \$2,048. Synod benevolence receipts were \$185 and non-budget benevolence receipt consisted of \$110 for the Calgary Foodbank and \$25 for CLWR. Total January 2023 current offerings and church rentals of \$14,022 is \$2,797 more than last year.

January expenses of \$15,097 were \$626 over budget because of higher utilities.

Highwood had a shortfall of \$1,075 for January 2023 compared to a shortfall of \$3,405 last year.

Church receipts for January 2023 were \$2,797 higher than last year (\$2,374 higher on offerings and \$423 higher on church rentals) and church expenses were \$467 higher than last year.

Capital fund – Highwood received a \$80 donation for Building fund and \$120 for the Highwood Lutheran Women account. The balance in the capital account at the end of January was \$45,612.

Memorial fund – No changes. The balance at the end of January was \$5,375.



## Bishop's Message for March

The message can be found online by clicking [here](#)

### JOSEPH, GUARDIAN OF JESUS

On March 19th we commemorate Joseph, Mary's husband and guardian of Jesus. What do we know about the history of Joseph?

The biblical record related to the life of Joseph starts with Jesus' birth and ends some time during Jesus' youth. Ancient writers or biographers did not value the early years of a person's life. A complete biographical sketch of an individual's life was avoided. They usually focused on only important events in the life of the person. How a person died was considered to be of greater value in assessing the character of a person than the early or middle years.

We know that Joseph was not a professional man but a carpenter, since some people made the following comment: "Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary, and His brothers, James and Joseph and Simon and Judas?" Matthew 13:55.

The Greek word that is translated as carpenter is *tekton*. The word can refer to a craftsman that used wood, metal or stone, but a carpenter was more common. Joseph was a laborer.

Joseph was poor at the time that Jesus was born. The offering Joseph made at the temple at the time of Jesus' circumcision was the offering a poor man would give (Luke 2:24). Joseph gave to God even when he did not have much to give. Joseph was self-sacrificing. He was not selfish. Joseph loved and cared for Jesus, as

was evident at the time the family visited Jerusalem on Jesus' twelfth birthday (Luke 2:41-51). When His parents left the city, Jesus did not follow them but remained in Jerusalem and talked with the religious leaders about scripture. His parents thought that He was with them, but several days later discovered that He was not. So they went back.

"When they saw Him, they were astonished; and his mother said to him, "Son, why have You treated us this way? Behold, Your father and I have been anxiously looking for you." Luke 2:48

This event reveals that Joseph really cared for Jesus even though He was not his biological father. Joseph was a wonderful dad. Everybody considered Jesus to be his son (Luke 4:22).

That is the last glimpse we have of Joseph. He is not mentioned at the cross when Jesus died, but Mary was there. Scripture says absolutely nothing else about him. Why? The answer is probably found in the fact that the gospels are about Jesus and no one else – not his mother, brothers, or sisters. But what God does say about him, Joseph believed God. He was righteous, compassionate, obedient, caring, loving, a great father, and a man who financially supported his family. It appears that Joseph was not consumed with himself. He was a godly man who followed God.

### SEEN ON CHURCH SIGNS

We've given God so many reasons to walk away. Thankfully he never does.

When life isn't a bed of roses, remember who wore a crown of thorns.

If you walk with God, you will never be out of step.

Tomorrow's forecast: God reigns and the Sun shines.

Store the Bible in your heart, not on a shelf.

If you are more fortunate than others, build a longer table not a higher fence.

Lord, help us to be the people our dogs think we are.

God loves you, whether you like it or not.

God didn't create anything without purpose, but mosquitoes do come close!

We've given God so many reasons to walk away. Thankfully he never does.

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Lord, help us to be the people our dogs think we are.

God loves you, whether you like it or not.

Eternity is a long time to think about where you went wrong.

What is missing from ch\_\_ch? U R!

ATM inside: Atonement, Truth, Mercy

Free Coffee! Yes, membership has its benefits!

Wrinkled with problems? Come to the Lord's House for a faith lift.