

HIGHWOOD HIGHLIGHTS

October 2024

The Newsletter of Highwood Lutheran Church



Rev. Michael Wellman
Pastor
Rick Vander Woude,
Music Director
Liz Northam
Office Secretary

Highwood Lutheran Church
419 Northmount Drive NW
Calgary, AB T2K 3H7

Office Phone:
403-289-8206

Pastor's Phone:
403-282-1772

Office Email:
secretaryhlc@outlook.com

Pastor Email:
pastorhlc@outlook.com

Organist Email:
highwoodorganist@gmail.com

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PASTOR'S MESSAGE

The Contemporary World Propaganda Mills

The contemporary world, characterised by the rapid dissemination of information and the prevalence of social media, has witnessed a surge in anger and the manipulation of information, particularly by Russian propagandists. Lutheran theology, rooted in the teachings of Martin Luther, offers a unique perspective and guidance for navigating these challenging times. By emphasising the importance of Scripture, grace, and the forgiveness of sins, Lutheranism provides a framework for discerning truth, resisting manipulation, and hearing the Christian message amidst the noise.

One of Lutheranism's fundamental tenets is the Centrality of Scripture. Luther argued that the Bible is the sole source of divine revelation and provides the ultimate authority for faith and life. In the age of information overload and the proliferation of fake news, Scripture is a reliable compass for discerning truth. By grounding beliefs in the Word of God, Lutherans can critically evaluate information and resist manipulation. The Bible offers a coherent narrative and a consistent worldview that can help individuals navigate the complexities of the contemporary world.

In addition to Scripture, Lutheran theology emphasises the doctrine of grace. Luther understood grace as the unmerited favour of God that is freely given to all people through faith in Jesus Christ. This emphasis on grace is particularly relevant in a world of division, anger, and judgment. By recognising that all people are sinners needing God's mercy, we cultivate a spirit of compassion, forgiveness, and reconciliation. Our understanding of grace can help individuals resist the temptation to indulge in anger and resentment and respond critically to the challenges of the contemporary world with love and understanding.

The doctrine of the Forgiveness of Sins is another aspect of our theology that offers guidance for navigating the "age of indignation" and information manipulation. When we emphasise the importance of repentance and faith in Christ to obtain forgiveness, we acknowledge our sins and trust in God's mercy, and forgiveness. We can help individuals resist the temptation to dwell on negative emotions and instead focus on the hope and joy of a relationship with God.

Considering, the 5 September 2024 announcement (and many subsequent ones), of coordinated government-funded Russian propaganda mills generating discord and information manipulation, a robust theology provides a framework for discerning truth, resisting manipulation, and hearing the Christian message amidst the noise. (See "Beyond our Website".)

By grounding our beliefs in Scripture, experiencing and sharing grace, and embracing God's forgiveness of sins, we can cultivate a critical and discerning mind, a compassionate and forgiving heart, with a hopeful and joyful spirit.

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Examples of how Lutheran theology addresses the current Age of Indignation and information manipulation:

- **Scripture as a compass:** We can use the messages and examples Scripture provides to evaluate news stories, identify bias, and discern truth from falsehood.
- **Grace as an antidote to anger:** Understanding grace can help individuals resist the temptation to indulge in anger and resentment and instead respond to challenges with compassion and understanding.
- **Forgiveness as a source of peace:** The doctrine of Law and Gospel is a powerful tool for helping individuals experience a new life, having been freed from guilt and resentment. It offers a pathway to peace and freedom from condemnation, providing reassurance in the face of contemporary conflict.
- **Community as a support system:** Gathering as congregations can provide a safe and supportive space for individuals to discuss current events, share their perspectives, and learn from one another.
- **Prayer as a means of connection:** Prayer is not just a ritual but a powerful means of connecting with God. It can help individuals seek guidance, find strength, and feel spiritually connected.

As we embrace these principles, we are more than just navigating the challenges of the contemporary world; we also play a vital role in addressing them. Our commitment to scripture, grace, forgiveness, and community can promote a more just, peaceful, and compassionate society, empowering it with a sense of responsibility and purpose, rooted in the grace we first receive from Christ.

Pastor Mike



OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

Diane Anderson
Walter Anderson, Jr.
Simret Bogale
Ahmed Conteh
Ryan Ford
Ida McConnell
Bronson Patychuk
Eden Tang

REFORMATION



October 31st is Reformation Day, the day when Martin Luther nailed his 95 Thesis to the door of the chapel in Wittenberg. We will celebrate the Reformation **on Sunday, October 27th**. We invite you to wear red on that day.



8 Months Ended August 31, 2024

Financial Summary

August current offerings were \$12,025 and church rental receipts were \$2,850. Synod benevolence receipts were \$110 and non-budget benevolence receipts consisted of \$250 for CLWR and \$100 for Calgary Foodbank. Total August 2024 offerings and church rentals of \$14,875 was \$714 more than last year.

August expenses of \$15,182 were \$1,371 higher than last year as the major expense for the month was \$1,569 for the repair and replacement of the hot water tank.

Highwood had a shortfall of \$307 for August 2024 compared to a surplus of \$350 last year. Year to date, Highwood has a shortfall of \$10,429 compared to a shortfall of \$2,861 last year. Church receipts for 2024 are \$1,646 higher than last year (\$2,186 higher on church rentals but \$540 lower on Offerings) but church expenses are \$9,214 higher than last year (up 8%) relating mainly to higher repairs and maintenance (up \$3,577 or 155%), compensation costs (up \$4,080 or 4.8%) and Synod convention fees and Synod study conference (up \$1,695).

Capital fund – \$20 was donated to the Building Fund. The balance in the accumulated operating surplus account at the end of August was \$25,888.

Memorial fund – No changes. The balance at the end of August was \$12,000.

OUR HIGHWOOD FAMILY VERN AND LINDA SCHNELL



Vern

I was born in Estevan, SK Feb. 12, 1950. I was told I rode the train 25 miles to Torquay SK and then a horse drawn sleigh to the family farm, 10 miles south and 1 mile from the US border. I don't have a lot of early childhood memories, but one scary memory was when I was a 4-year-old being awakened by a very frightened mother, as I had fallen asleep just outside the pig pen.

At the age of five the family home caught fire, and I remember being passed out a bedroom window by one sister and received by another. I have four older and one younger sister and two younger brothers. After the fire we moved to the village or really Hamlet of Torquay and farmed the small family farm till 1971. I was living in Coaldale Alberta and working in Lethbridge when the farm was sold.

I attended grades 1 through 12 in Torquay. I lived on the family farm until I was 5. We then farmed from town till 1971. I helped on the farm from about the age of 1 but did work for a neighbouring farmer one summer to earn a few dollars. I also worked for a summer for a brother in law's drywall company. Other early jobs were at a Texaco service station and building granaries at a Weyburn lumber yard.

Next between 1969 and 1973. I moved to Calgary and got a job as a baker's helper at a pie bakery. I still like pie even after working at making many thousand pies. From there, I moved to Lethbridge/ Coaldale area where I worked with a couple of drywall companies, mostly sanding and texturing ceilings.

Then it was back to Torquay and Estevan Sk. where I worked for a mobile home builder as a Sawyer and became a union chairperson while at this job.

I met Fran in Estevan in 1976, and we married in a mixed marriage (Roman Catholic and Lutheran) in Maple Creek, SK Sept. 3, 1977. I was working at a lumber yard at that time.

In 1978 I attended Assiniboin Community College in Brandon Man. To take pre-employment heavy Duty Mechanics while Fran stayed teaching in Estevan.

Unable to find work as a HD Mechanic in Estevan, Fran and I moved to Calgary where I worked for four different companies to complete my HD mechanic apprenticeship. Finding employment with Public Works Canada allowed me to take more courses at SAIT and NAIT Edmonton where I achieved Journeyman Millwright and 3rd class Steam Engineer status. I again became union chairperson and later union regional vice president. This Union work I consider my greatest work achievement.

The federal government decided to contract out building maintenance of all Federal buildings. They say when one door closes another opens. For me, it was employment as Chief Engineer for five different companies over the next 15 years before retiring.

Fran and I were married almost 41 years before she passed. In early years of marriage, we worshiped separately as Roman Catholic and Lutheran. Following the birth of Aaron and Vaughn, I started to attend more and more frequently with Fran and the boys at Faith and Highwood Lutheran Church. In 1991, I became a member at Highwood Lutheran Church and soon after reluctantly a member of the Church Council, where I am now somewhat of a fixture.

Fran and I travelled together to Hawaii, Mexico, Germany, Poland, Lithuania, Alaska, California, North and South Dakota, Spokane, Washington, Halifax, Toronto, Winnipeg a few BC trips and many Saskatchewan trips. When Fran became ill, I travelled to Israel, Cuba, a Caribbean Cruise, Russia, South Africa, and Madagascar.

Linda

I was born, the oldest of two, in Stratford Ontario, on July 4th, 1946. My childhood memories are happy. I am a Railway Brat. Dad worked for the CNR (CPR was a naughty word in our home!) Getting advancement with Dad's job meant lots of moving from town to city, I am going to blame that on my poor sense of direction.

One of my clearest memories was at the age of 4. I was heading out to kindergarten. I had been walking for what seemed to me, hours when I knew I had no idea where I was. There was a store which seemed like a good place to get help. Not knowing my address was scary, but I knew my phone number. The clerk called my mom, who came to pick me up, about eight houses from our home.

Compared to Vern's family, mine is tiny. My whole family, including aunts, uncles, cousins, and grandparents is dwarfed in comparison to the over 250 members, now my family too.

As a child, moving almost every year and sometimes twice a year had its benefits. Unlike my brother, I am an extravert. The frequent change of addresses was an opportunity to use my people skills and talk to everyone. A wall flower I am not.

When it was time to decide my life career it was an easy decision. Talking with my mom was always pleasant and educational. As a nurse she was a planner and organizer. She suggested that I make a list of my two options under the headings of “for” and “against”. I had decided early in high school that it would be nursing (like mom) or teaching. Nursing won, or should I say, I won.

I have done many different nursing areas: bedside nursing, OR, ER, senior facility management and STD clinic. But my most rewarding position was helping set up and working at the HIV Clinic. That was my dream job. I loved working with the patients, Doctors, and families. I eventually set my own business working lecturing and educating on all aspects of infectious diseases. I worked for several years in Corrections with adults and young offenders. Besides nursing, I farmed with my first husband. Cash crop, beef cattle and fifty thousand laying hens. The chicken barn allowed me to remain home. Collecting over 500 dozen eggs a day gave me little time for myself, but I loved the challenge. When the children came along, I would take them to the barn and set them in their sitter on the egg cart then, off we would go. During seeding they would sit in their sitter on the ledge of the tractor cab while I worked in the field. This marriage was a tough one and ended in divorce after 18 years.

While working in corrections, I met Peter, an RN divorced with two sons. We married and were joined at the hip for 28 years. He passed away from pancreatic cancer ten years ago.

I have always had a strong affiliation with church. Born an Anglican, I am proud to be a member of our congregation at Highwood, where the feeling of family is strong and comforting. When I told Pastor Mike on my first visit the Highwood that I was Anglican his response was “that is ok we will take you”. So here I am.

Present

Life will do strange things, and God works in mysterious ways. In 2019, an online dating app introduced us. A tall, big footed gentle giant, and an incredibly charming lady stole each other’s hearts.

A whirlwind romance for sure, and a shock for our kids. After the second or third date we knew, we were meant to wed. Covid mask conditions were removed so we set the date, but unfortunately masking restrictions were re-instated shortly before our wedding. We joined our families on December 27, 2021. We now have seven children (I lost my stepson in a tragic vehicle crash three years ago) and 12 grandchildren. Our combined brood of children all took part in the ceremony with Pastors Aaron and Mike officiating, Vaughn best man, Suzzie, maid of honor and Dan, Scott, Sally, and Sandy forming the remainder of our wedding party. My brother game me away (he hopes this will be the last time).

We enjoy family get togethers and travelling. So far, our destinations have been Africa, (South Africa, Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Tanzania) for our honeymoon, Cairo, Hawaii

(twice), London England, and a road trip taking us across Canada (from tip to tip) and several trips to Saskatchewan and Alberta areas.

We like to tell people we have been married almost 50 years but only over two to each other.

NORMA GUMMO OBITUARY



After a remarkable life filled with love and devotion to family, Norma Gummo (nee Burmeister), born in Cadillac, Saskatchewan on March 17, 1923, slipped quietly from this earth at her Manor Village Varsity home in Calgary on Saturday, September 21, 2024.

She leaves to remember a life well lived, her four surviving children: Dianne Wood Palgova of North Vancouver, Alan (Ruth) of Calgary, Cheryle Adams (George) of Trochu, AB, and Kenneth (Karen) of Calgary; 16 grandchildren, 21 great-grandchildren, extended family and friends. Norma is predeceased by her husband of nearly 60 years, Thomas Gummo, in 2003, her eldest son Gerald (Katie) in 2021; her parents, Henry and Mary Burmeister; her brother Roy and her sister June Peterson.

A service to celebrate Norma’s life was held at Highwood Lutheran Church, 419 Northmount Drive N.W. Calgary on Monday, October 7, 2024, Interment followed at Queen’s Park Cemetery.

Rest eternal grant her, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon her.

THANK YOU

To all who helped with the celebration of life service for Norma Gummo. Thank you especially to Pastor Mike, Liz, Rick and Phil. Those who helped with making the luncheon, set up and clean up deserve a huge round of applause. It was delicious. Thank you also for your caring, your cards, and your condolences. It is very much appreciated.

The Gummo family.

SAINT MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS

September 29th is the Feast of the Archangels, honoring saints Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael. Did you know that an angel's name reveals their identity? Some believe the fallen angels rebelled because they rejected the names given to them by God. Today, we celebrate three angels with names that reveal their unique missions, guiding us to discover our own identities in God.

Michael means "Who is like God?" He embodies God's humility. In Revelation 12, Michael leads God's armies against the rebellious angels, triumphantly proclaiming "Quis ut Deus?" "Who is like God?" This declaration humbles Satan's pride, affirming the power of humility to conquer sin.

Raphael means "God's Healing." In the book of Tobit, he guides a man to find a wife, frees her from demonic oppression, and heals the man's father of blindness. Raphael's mission is to restore God's people through healing.

Gabriel means "God's Strength." He wrestles Jacob in the desert, silences Zachariah, and greets Mary with "Blessed" and "Full of Grace." While Jacob and Zachariah struggled, Mary responds with humility, revealing God's true strength—Jesus, our Savior, who restores all people. Because of her humility, Mary becomes Queen of Angels, having learned the lessons of all three archangels. She teaches us that by embracing humility, healing, and strength, we can also discover our true identities.

If you're seeking a way to remember the powerful presence of these archangels, we offer special blessing bracelets for both kids and adults. Each bracelet features a St. Michael medal, reminding you daily to proclaim in your heart, "Who is like God?" and to conquer sin with his protection.

Pastor Mike



STEWARDSHIP
Managing God's Gifts To Us

For the month of October, we are focusing on stewardship. Listed below are some thoughts we should consider keeping our congregation successful and stable.

Time, talents and treasure are not something we wish for. It's something you make happen. Sharing your time, talents and treasure are something you do if able.

Do something! That's the point of stewardship. The gospel says, "we receive more than we give".

Mother Teresa says "We are just pebbles being thrown into the sea and causes ripples. One ripple can be made by one small act of service that is the start of many, is it not."

The generous prosper and are satisfied. Those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed. Proverbs 11:25.

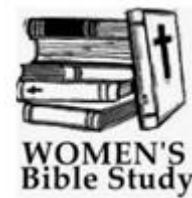
The secret of happiness is doing joyfully and willingly what ever needs to be done.

Bill Strand, Elder

BIRTHDAY SUNDAY

We celebrate the birthdays of our parishioners on the third Sunday of each month. To help us get to know each other better, we will have nametags for everyone to wear during our worship service and fellowship time beginning on 20 October 2024.

To celebrate the October birthdays, and in honour of Thanksgiving, please bring a gift of non-perishable food or a monetary donation for the Food Bank. Thank you for your generosity.



We continue our new study (Growing Older and Wiser) on the first Tuesday of each month at 1:00 PM in the hall. All ladies are invited to bring a friend and join us for a couple of hours of learning and fellowship. Rides can be arranged with Pat, Clarice, or Helga.



SAVE THE DATE

Sunday, 17 November 2024

All are invited to a celebration of the Anniversary of Ordination for Jim Rasmussen. Everyone is welcome to attend this joyous milestone.

ALL SAINTS DAY

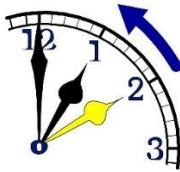
1 November



Western Churches use All Saints Day as a time to remember those who have died in the past year. It's a time to look back on our losses and mourn those who are no longer with us. However, Paul's letter to the Ephesians (Ephesians 1:13-23) reminds us that our inheritance with the communion of saints is greater than death.

Paul reminds us that we are subjected to and protected by powers greater than princes, principalities, and even death: the love of Christ Jesus. He writes that Christ has power over "every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come." We are unified in Christ's love through his resurrection. We may mourn those we see no more, but we also remain connected to them in his triumph over death.

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME ENDS



Daylight Saving Time ends on **Sunday, November 3rd**.



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LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY



"*Your Story is Our Story*" is Lutheran Campus Ministry-Calgary's Annual Fundraising event for 2024. There are two components to the fundraiser: an Online Auction; the Holden Evening Prayer and Simple Supper.

The online Auction begins on 6 November 2024. Go to the Auctria website [here](#).

Join us at Hope Lutheran Church (3527 Boulton Road NW Calgary) on Saturday, 16 November at 3:00 pm (doors open at 2:30) for Holden Evening Prayer, a short programme about LCM-Calgary, and a simple supper of soup and bread. Get your free ticket [here](#)

ON THE WEB BEYOND OUR WEBSITE

Here are some links that may be of interest to you:

The **Bishop's Message** for October may be found [here](#).

The link for Pastor's 's message

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/russia-disinformation-tenet-putin-1.7319469>

Because it is so hard to self curate the news

<https://disinfowatch.org/>

Professor John Lennox gives his argument for the existence of God to the Oxford Union Society:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=otrqiTuSqE>

Want to know more about angels?

<https://tabletalkmagazine.com/posts/what-does-the-bible-say-about-angels/#fn1>

Regarding All Saints Day:

<https://www.lonelypoland.com/all-saints-day-celebrations-in-poland-a-day-for-remembrance/>