



Agape

OCTOBER 2023 – ANNIVERSARY EDITION

Rev. M. Zeuch

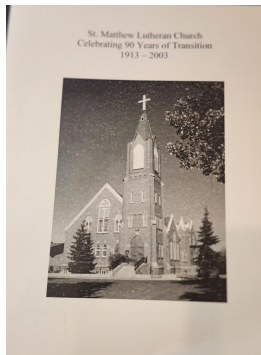
ST. MATTHEW LUTHERAN CHURCH

110 years proclaiming Christ in Bridgeland!

Autumn greetings, dear Saint Matthew family and friends!

I am not quite sure where to start. We are in October, and I know I should write about many topics at the same time: Thanksgiving, our anniversary, maybe the origin of Halloween? Maybe not...and oh, right, Reformation, of course!

Maybe I should also mention that, on October 5th I will be celebrating fifteen years (can you believe it?) since the day I was installed here as your pastor! I really feel I'm a tiny part of this trajectory of 110 years. Think about how many celebrations of life took place among us since 1913: baptisms, confirmations, weddings and funerals!



That being said, I think we have lots to thank God for! It's very appropriate that we have Thanksgiving in October! We want to thank the Lord for our congregation, since we have adopted the month of October to be our special anniversary month. For the 110 years of blessings, sharing God's love in Christ with people from all generations and proclaiming the Gospel of Christ to so many hearts...and still going!

Keep on reading, there's lots of content in this special edition.

Back in 2003, when our congregation celebrated 90 years, the "message from the pastor" in the first page of the anniversary booklet had no name, but it was pastor Smallwood who was serving back then. In his message he quotes two authors as the source of most of that text. At some point, we read the following:

"Whether St. Matthew shrinks or grows lies hidden in the inscrutable will of God. The Holy Spirit has never told the church to be concerned about such question, because her survival into eternity is already assured. *Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age*" (Matthew 28:20). We would do well to remember this whenever we are distracted by the ambition to be the greatest among our brothers,

or by our fear – like those who belong to the world – to look first to the saving of our lives.”

And the text goes on with “ninety Years (A hundred and ten years we say today) of God’s grace! Ninety (110) years of forgiveness! A milestone and a miracle in the making, and the Lord is not finished with us yet! Our splendor this anniversary is not in what we have done or intended to do, but what God has done for us in spite of what we have done poorly or not at all”.

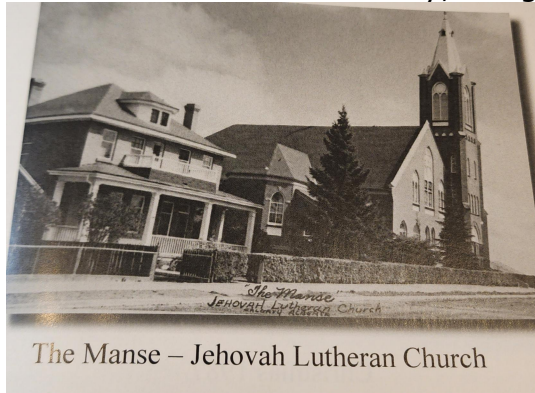
This history and Lutheran tradition goes back all the way to the sixteenth century with the Protestant Reformation. In fact, this ministry goes farther back until it reaches our Lord Jesus Christ giving his church the Great Commission in Matthew 28:20:

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in^[b] the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

To wrap it up, does anybody remember what was our motto or Bible verse for the 100th anniversary back in 2013? It is still our guiding words for our 110th anniversary: *“And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful”*. Col 3.15

Blessings to you as you read on...and Happy birthday, St. Matthew Lutheran Church!

Soli Deo Gloria – To God only, the glory.



That old parish house (parsonage or “manse”) looked amazing!



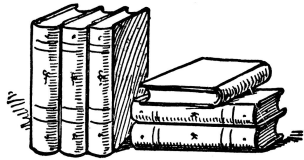


A FEW ANNOUNCEMENTS

BIBLE STUDY: We have changed our Bible study evenings from Wednesdays to Tuesdays. This is an opportunity to study God's Word, grow in our faith and in fellowship with one another. Please consider in your heart to commit to these one-hour meetings. You will be blessed!



NEW BOOKS! The board of elders is planning to upgrade and revitalize our library. We are ordering four new books from Concordia Publishing House for our library. They will be here soon. You may enjoy reading them; Check out our library but please don't forget to return them! The titles are:



- 1 - Faith that Shines in the Culture
- 2 - Martin Luther on Mental Health
- 3 - (Dis)ordered: Lies about Human Nature and the Truth that Sets us Free
- 3 - The Spirituality of the Cross

WOULD YOU LIKE TO ORDER A BIBLE OR A HYMNAL?

We will be ordering study bibles and hymnals before Christmas. An excellent idea for a Christmas gift!

If you are interested, there will be a sign-up sheet at the church. Here are the choices (in US dollars):

- 1 - The Lutheran Study Bible hardback - U\$ 60.00

<https://www.cph.org/the-lutheran-study-bible-hardback>

- 2 - The Lutheran Study Bible - compact paperback - U\$ 40.00

<https://www.cph.org/the-lutheran-study-bible-compact-paperback>

- 3 - Lutheran Service Book - pew edition (hard cover Hymnal) - U\$ 30.00

<https://www.cph.org/lutheran-service-book-pew-edition>

- 4 - Lutheran Service Book: Personal/Gift edition (soft cover Hymnal) - U\$ 50.00

<https://www.cph.org/lutheran-service-book-personalgift-edition>



BABY BORN IN THE FAMILY: Last Sept 27, our Eritrean members Dermas and Suzan welcomed their third child to this world - a baby boy named Areli. Congratulations! God bless the boy and his family!

HOLY BAPTISM: We thank God for the little ones brought to the baptismal font and for the new life in Christ they received in this Sacrament. We baptized Caden Harvey on Sept 120 and will baptize Sadie Walkeden on Oct 15!

FUNERAL: We commended Reinhard Felde to the Lord's care on Sept 16. Reinhard was baptized, confirmed and married at our church. He loved his Saviour Jesus and died of cancer at the age of 62.

YOUTH MINISTRY:

Our youth activities are now up and running! Our youth leaders are planning the monthly get-togethers to strengthen Christian fellowship among the young (members or non-members). These in-person gatherings include a devotional time around a campfire (weather permitting), games, movies, snacks, going somewhere etc. We will have our first gathering tonight, on Sept 29th (since I am writing on this day). We will keep you posted on the dates for that. Please invite friends for this fun and meaningful ministry.



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY:

Our Eritrean group has started Sunday school during worship service in the church basement. They do it in Tigrinya, their native language. We will also have a children's message during worship on the first Sunday of every month, with a brief pastor's message and some song singing. All children present will be invited to come forward for this little moment. And yes, this will be in English, of course.

COMMUNION CARDS: Due to Covid 19, we had stopped using the "Registration for Holy Communion & visitor cards" available in the back of the sanctuary. We are now ready to use them again. If you plan to receive the Lord's Supper during our regular worship services, please fill out that card and hand it over to the ushers when you go to the altar. This helps us to have an idea who took part of this Sacrament on that specific Sunday. It also lets us know if someone wishes to either get a call from pastor or join our church membership. Thank you for doing it.

BIBLE STUDY IN PORTUGUESE: As you know, we started a monthly Bible study in Portuguese a few years ago. Back then we used to meet in the homes of participants (mostly Brazilian families). Then a few people moved away from Calgary and we stopped meeting. Then came the pandemic and ever since we have resumed our Bible studies, this time online. If you know someone who speaks Portuguese, you may tell them. We meet for an hour every last Sunday of the month on zoom and we have participants both from Canada and from Brazil.

SAINT MATTHEW IS A MULTICULTURAL AND MULTILINGUAL CHURCH!

Our 110 years of ministry started with mostly German immigrants who came to Canada after WWII. With the exception of those years during war, the German

language has been used for worship every Sunday to this day. We are one of the few Lutheran churches that still hold services in German in Calgary!

Obviously, the services in English were always there, every Sunday as well.

During these many years, our church went from bilingual to multicultural and multilingual. We now have a group of brothers and sisters from Eritrea who became members of our church. They have their Bible studies and Sunday school in their native language, Tigrinya. In other words, at our church, the word of God is proclaimed in **English, German, Tigrinya and Portuguese!** And, since we also rent out our church building to an Ethiopian group of Christians (Global Faith Ministries), they have their worship in **Amharic**. So, under our roof, God is worshipped in five languages. Isn't that a blessing?

OROMO EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF CALGARY

And, speaking of languages, did you know there is a Lutheran Oromo (Ethiopian) congregation that worships in Oromo language at Foothills Lutheran Church? Their pastor is Rev. Gisaw Chuta. They just received a new assistant pastor, Rev. Ephrem Gemta who will be installed on October 15 at 3 p.m. at Foothills. The service will be there during their regular worship time, with Pastor Bode preaching and Pastor Mohns conducting the installation. Pastor Bode writes: "We rejoice in this gift to the Church, and pray for God's blessings on Pastor Gemta and his work with this congregation."

OFFERINGS: Our tithing and offerings are a vital part of our Christian faith. We show our gratitude to the Lord by giving back part of what He has blessed us with. This is called a good "Christian stewardship". It helps support our mission & ministry, as well as to keep our properties in shape. Since Covid 19, we stopped "passing the offering plate" through the pews as we used to do before. You may leave your offering in the plate as you enter or you exit on Sundays. We also encourage you to consider sending e-transfers (smlccsecretary@shaw.ca) to the congregation. Your generosity is appreciated!

LUTHERAN HOSPITAL MINISTRIES VISITOR TRAINING: Fall Training for folks interested in Visiting or others who wish to refresh their Visitor training with Lutheran Hospital Ministries. Fall training will take place on **Saturday, October 14, 21 and 28th from 10 am to 2 pm**. Please bring a bag lunch. The training will take place in the basement of St. Matthew Lutheran church. Training will be provided by Pastor Mark Rekken, our Director of Pastoral Care. Parking is available in the back of the church, spots 1-7 and 16.



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY, ST. MATTHEW!

St. Matthew Lutheran Church is celebrating its 110th anniversary



this year with thanksgiving to our God. We are so thankful to our Lord for his presence, His providence, and His blessings, nourishing His people with Word and Sacraments all over those years!

I want to invite you to come celebrate with us what God has done through our congregation. Mark it on your calendar:

110th ANNIVERSARY OF ST. MATTHEW LUTHERAN CHURCH

Sunday, OCTOBER 29 (Reformation Sunday)

Festive Worship Service at 10 a.m.

Guest Speaker: Rev. Jack Hetzel (pastor @ SMLC from 1996 to 1998)

Guest choir: The Master's Singers

Followed by a delicious luncheon! **Tickets are \$20.00 and will be available as of October 8 (Sunday). We only have room for 100 people, so first come first serve**".



WHAT'S PLANNED FOR THE MONTH?

| October 2023 | | | | | | |
|--------------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 | 30 | 31 | | | | |

Oct 1 (Sun): Worship services: In German @ 9:30 a.m. In English @ 11 a.m. Children's message.

Oct 3 (Tues): Online Bible Study at 7 p.m.

Oct 5 (Thurs): Board of Elders meeting (online).

Oct 8 (Sun): Thanksgiving Sunday. Worship services: In German @ 9:30 a.m. In English @ 11 a.m.

Oct 9 (Mon): Thanksgiving Day. Church office is closed.

Oct 10 (Tues): Pastor holds worship service at Bethany Riverside Senior Home.

Oct 10 (Tues): Online Bible Study at 7 p.m.

Oct 14 (Sat): Visitation training session from Lutheran Hospital Ministries (for those who signed up only) @ 10 a.m.

Oct 15 (Sun): Worship services: In German @ 9:30 a.m. In English @ 11 a.m. Baptism of Sadie Walkeden.

Oct 17 (Tues): Online Bible Study at 7 p.m.

Oct 19 (Thurs): PPC budget meeting (online) at 7 p.m.

Oct 21 (Sat): Visitation training session from Lutheran Hospital Ministries (for those who signed up only) @ 10 a.m.

Oct 22 (Sun): Worship services: In German @ 9:30 a.m. In English @ 11 a.m.

Oct 24 (Tues): Online Bible Study at 7 p.m.

Oct 25 (wed): Pastor attends the Calgary Circuit winkel (monthly pastors' conference)

Oct 28 (Sat): Visitation training session from Lutheran Hospital Ministries (for those who signed up only) @ 10 a.m.

Oct 29 (Sun): Reformation Sunday, 110th Anniversary joint service @ 10 a.m. Guest speaker Pastor Hetzel. Anniversary luncheon to follow. Limited seats, please purchase your ticket soon.

Oct 29 (Sun): Bible Study in Portuguese (online).

Oct 31 (Tues): Online Bible Study at 7 p.m.

UNSERE DEUTSCHE ECKE

Es ist wieder Zeit, dem Herrn für all seine Güte zu danken. Kennst du dieses schöne Lied? Dies werden wir im Gottesdienst am 1. Oktober singen. Sing Mal mit oder mache einen Dankgebet daraus.

Danke, für diesen guten Morgen,

Danke, für jeden neuen Tag,
Danke, daß ich all' meine Sorgen
Auf Dich werfen mag.

Danke, für alle guten Freunde,
Danke, o Herr, für jedermann,
Danke, wenn auch dem größten Feinde
Ich verzeihen kann.

Danke, für meine Arbeitstelle,
Danke, für jedes kleine Glück
Danke, für alles Frohe, Helle
Und für die Musik.

Danke, für manche Traurigkeiten,
Danke, für jedes gute Wort,
Danke, daß Deine Hand mich leiten
Will an jedem Ort.

Danke, daß ich Dein Wort verstehe,
Danke, daß Deinen Geist Du gibst,
Danke, daß in der Fern' und Nähe
Du die Menschen liebst.

Danke, Dein Heil kennt keine Schranken,
Danke, ich halt' mich fest daran,
Danke, ach Herr, ich will Dir danken,
Daß ich danken kann.



ARE YOU A SENIOR?

Here is a seniors' version just for those who have white hair or no hair at all. For us over middle age (or even those almost there) and everybody else. Check out this newest version of "Jesus loves Me". You may just sing it to someone or for yourself:

Jesus loves me, this I know
 Though my hair is white as snow
 Though my sight is growing dim
 Still He bids me trust in Him.

Yes, Jesus loves me...yes, Jesus loves me
 Yes, Jesus loves me, the Bible tells me so.

Though my steps are oh, so slow
 With my hand in His, I'll go
 On through life, let come what may
 He'll be there to lead the way.

(Chorus) Yes, Jesus loves me...

When the nights are dark and long,
 In my heart he puts a song
 Telling me in words so clear
 "Have no fear, for I am near".

(Chorus) Yes, Jesus loves me...

When my work on earth is done
 And life's victories have been won
 He will take me home above
 Then I'll understand His love.

(Chorus) Yes, Jesus loves me...

I love Jesus, does He know?
 Have I ever told Him so?
 Jesus loves to hear me say
 That I love Him every day.

(Chorus) Yes, Jesus loves me...



Did you enjoy this special edition of Agape? Let me know. I love your feedback and suggestions. You may also contribute if you like to write and have something that should be mentioned here or a nice article to share. I always wonder how many people take their time to read it! 😊

I hope to see you at church, especially on Oct 29th for our anniversary service to thank God for what He has done through St. Matthew Lutheran Church. We will welcome pastor Hetzel from Oshawa, ON, as well as the male's choir, the Master's Singers who will bring beautiful music to celebrate with us both Reformation and our anniversary. Don't forget to purchase your ticket as of Oct 8 and after that, any time with our secretary Andrea. Office phone is 403-266-1458.

May God's amazing and unconditional love (*agape*) reach you and your family during this autumn season!



EIN FESTE BURG IS UNSER GOTT!
A MIGHTY FORTRESS IS OUR GOD! (LSB 657)

(Luther was inspired by Psalm 46 when he wrote this powerful and beautiful Reformation hymn back in 1529)

In His service,
Rev. Markus Zeuch
Calgary, on Sept 29, 2023