



The Vine

August 2020

Ministry Team

All members of Lutheran Church of Our Saviour

Pastor

Pastor Greg Smith
403-464-8254 cell/text
pastorgreg@oursaviourchurch.ca

Office Assistant

Judy McDonald
office2@oursaviourchurch.ca

Office Assistant

Johanne Johanson

Office Hours

The LCOS office is currently closed.
Please email office2@oursaviourchurch.ca to arrange access to the building.

Church Board 2020-2021

Brent Anderson
Alfred Forbrich
Doug Gerbrandt
Kathy Gibson
Laura Lodberg
Iain McKay
Garry Mihaichuk—Chair
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Shirley Moule
Nick Perchthaler—Secretary

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Terrylee Mckay
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8831 Fairmount Drive SE, Calgary T2H 0Z4

Facebook: Lutheran Church of Our Saviour

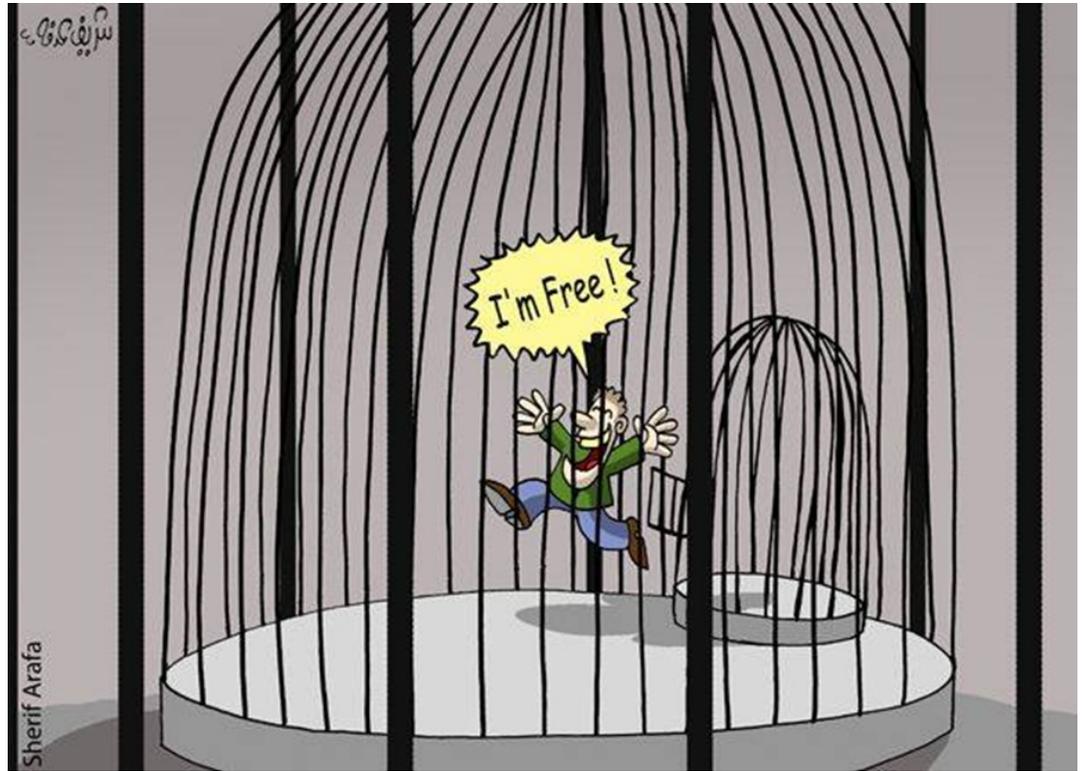
Website: www.oursaviourchurch.ca

Instagram: [icos_youth](https://www.instagram.com/icos_youth)

We invite you to review our LCOS website for ongoing information and updates,
as well as to view our online worship services.

Faux Freedom

I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate...Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! — Romans 7:15, 24-25a



Freedom is a word that seems to be batted around quite a bit these days. Nothing wrong with freedom. It is a noble pursuit for individuals, groups and nations. But, I want to focus on an independence that isn't always so positive: An independence that I take, often at the expense of another's; an independence that prevents me from giving to others; an independence that blocks me from serving those in my life whom I hold so dear. In my quest to be independent, I find myself taking action that later makes me wonder who I truly serve.

But it's all about grace and love, right?

I hope so because the above verses from Romans 7 resonate so clearly with my personal experience. That is why I find myself, like the Apostle Paul, clinging to the promise of grace and love found in Jesus. As I look back on this week alone, I can't begin to count how many times I've stumbled...with my wife; with my children; with strangers; with myself; with my Lord.

But here's the gift we read in Romans 7. Even when I blindly race through life full speed ahead, focused only on me and my agenda; it is by God's grace I am released. And in His amazing grace I am forgiven. Then I am truly set free to love and serve.

And so are you!

Live in true freedom that is yours in Jesus,

Pastor Greg

Summer Sermon Series

There is no better book to explain the distinction between the Law and Gospel of God than Galatians. Paul will take us on a tour de force defining the importance of the Gospel and what it means for our life today and for eternity. Here are the themes for the next nine weeks.



August 2 - Abba Father (Galatians 4)

August 9 - Freedom in Jesus (Galatians 5)

August 16 - Fruitful Living (Galatians 5)

August 23 - A New Creation (Galatians 6)

August 30 - What's So Good about the Good News?
(Overview of Galatians)

Drive In Worship Coming in August

On August 23 at 9 and 11 am we will be offering a unique worship experience. We will have worship in the church parking lot. In order to keep everyone safe, but also allow the congregation to gather, everyone will remain in their cars. Pastor Greg will lead a service from the steps in the corner of the parking lot. You will be able to hear the service through an FM frequency in your car. Pretty cool technology, eh?

We also ask everyone to bring their own bread and grape juice (no wine, since we are all in vehicles). Pastor Greg will lead the service of communion with a consecration and everyone can partake within the safety of their own automobile. A special thanks to Janice Hawkings for sharing this wonderful idea!

Parking ushers will make sure there is a safe flow in and out of the parking lot.

We hope that this temporary alternative will provide a much needed opportunity to gather as the body of Christ as we await the safe opening of the church facility. It is also our priority to assure your safety as we seek creative ways to be the church during unprecedented times.

Oh, by the way...our online worship services will continue each week!

See you safely in August for communion!



Board Report by Garry Mihaichuk

I continue to pray that this note finds you all safe and healthy.

The Board and Pastor Greg continue to consider how we can engage the congregation more in our services and when and how we will be able to open.

The first is an easier question to answer. We have offered the opportunity to come and view the recording of the Sunday services on Wednesday night. Some have taken this opportunity but it is still open to those that are interested. We are also examining how we can complete a drive through communion. One option is to have each member bring the elements (bread and grape juice) with them in their car and Pastor Greg will complete a communion service which will be broadcast over an FM transmitter at the church which you will be able to receive on your car radio if you are in 1000 feet of the church. This would eliminate all of the risk from the corona virus to anyone and be able to participate in a communion service. Stay “tuned” as we determine what we will be doing.

The second question as to the opening of the church for public worship services is very difficult to know. The opening of the province has resulted in more cases and there are some apprehensions from the Health Region and Bishop Larry that an opening in September is not a good idea. This continues to be a very fluid situation and there is no way that we can determine what the future will bring. We remain committed to protecting the congregation, Pastor Greg and the LCOS staff and our decisions will always reflect this. Again, stay tuned for developments and recommendations from our health professionals and our Bishop.

The Board has also been reviewing our expenses and donations since the start of Covid to determine what we need to do as a congregation to continue to thrive not just survive. At the end of February our year to date deficit was \$15,593. Covid started in March in Alberta and by the end of June the LCOS year to date deficit has been reduced to \$2,298. This has been a great response from our congregation. Thank you for your continued support of our ministry. In July we are expecting an expense level of \$22,000 to \$23,000 per month. Our donations in June were \$21,817. If we are able to continue that giving trend in July we will have a balance of revenue and expenses!!

During the month of July we continued our use of virtual worship services. These were completed by a dedicated group of people: 1) Pastor Greg completed wonderful services in the church sanctuary; 2) the praise singers which you all see and hear each week from our sanctuary included: Doug and Joan Drennan, Yvonne and Beth Eberhardt, Reiko Formella, Alex and Terrylee McKay and Jocelyn Smith; 3) the slides preparation by Lauren Dzikowski and Dorothea Schaab and running of the worship computer by Dorothea Schaab; 4) the videoing and editing of the worship services by Mike Mihaichuk; and 5) and any altar decorations provided by Karen Smith. A large thanks to you all for providing us with essential spiritual food for our souls.

Board Report by Garry Mihaichuk

The staff and a team of LCOS with over 50 members have ensured that every member is called each week, including Flock Care which continues to provide support on a safe and healthy basis. Pastor Greg, Judy McDonald and Johanne Johanson have worked diligently to prepare the package contents and delivery and call systems. There are also volunteers which are delivering items to members when they are needed. One of the best aspects of this Covid19 situation is that we are bringing people closer together even though we are required to stay physically apart. Thanks to all those that are volunteering as it is greatly appreciated. You are a blessing to the congregation. If you do require any assistance please contact Pastor Greg at 403-464-8254 so he can co-ordinate.

The Board continues to be concerned about the health and welfare of all of you in the congregation especially during these times. We are also dedicated to continuing the viability and spiritual strength of the LCOS family. Please keep up your contacts in a healthy and medically safe manner but please continue. If you have questions for the Board please send them to Garry Mihaichuk electronically at gmihaichuk@me.com or over the phone at 403-975-0081.

Yours in Christ

Garry Mihaichuk

Board Chair



STAY WELL

While You

STAY SAFE

**JOIN US FOR
VIRTUAL VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL**

August 17 - 21

f a i t h

LAB @ HOME

Call: 403-464-8254

REGISTER BY AUGUST 10TH!

IT'S FREE AND FUN!

faith

LAB @ HOME

Cool Science + At Home = Reach Families

Join LCOS for a *new* kind of **VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL!** **EASY** for you as parents, and **FUN** for the whole family. This year, we're providing a **FREE VIRTUAL** VBS, one that you can do with your whole family and friends from the comfort of your home!

MONDAY thru FRIDAY, **AUGUST 17th-21st**



REGISTER by Aug. 10 with Jocelyn: jocetonge03@gmail.com or 403-464-8254

In order to participate, you must register by August 10th to receive your licence to download the curriculum. Include the # of children you plan on hosting, along with their shirt sizes, so we can give you enough supplies!

PICK UP your VVBS Supplies in the LCOS parking lot on Friday, August 14th between 3:30-6:30pm.



Stewardship requires us to give what God actually desires us to give.

How are members of your congregation asked to serve? Do you primarily define service as volunteering within the church on boards or committees or other internal opportunities? Or do you provide more service opportunities that connect your members to the local community in ways that help those around you in need?

It is easy to over-simplify Christianity into a weekly worship service. We worship God and make sacrifices not out of adoration, but to make God happy so that things will go well for us. This is neither worship nor stewardship. It is selfishness. As Christians, we have been made stewards of God's name and reputation. How we care for the oppressed, the voiceless, and the weak amongst us impacts how those around us will think about our God. Proper stewardship will always take this into account and will always lead us beyond a tithe of our money, beyond religious practices, and into the humble service of others.

**Learn to do good;
seek justice,
rescue the oppressed,
defend the orphan,
plead for the widow.
-Isaiah 1:17**



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If you are able to contribute to the church during the church closure due to the Covid 19 pandemic, the following are options for giving:

Interac e-transfer:

Donations are made to email address: donate@oursaviourchurch.ca.

PAR Program Giving:

The Pre-Authorized Remittance program (PAR) gives the option to give monthly directly from a bank or credit union account. If you sign up by June 01, your monthly donation would begin June 20. Please contact the Financial Secretary Cliff Blumhagen (403-936-0419 or blumhagencg@gmail.com) to get a PAR sign up form and with any questions.

Online Giving (via credit or debit card) (NEW): Donations are made via the following secure link: <https://onrealm.org/LutheranChurchofOurSaviour/give/now>

Text Giving (via credit or debit card) (NEW):

Donations are made by texting **LCOSGive** to **73256** followed by the donation amount.

NOTE: Standard text message and data rates may apply.

The quarterly giving statements for quarter 2 were generated in early July and distributed via email to givers with an email address on file. For anyone without an email address, the statement can be printed. As the church is closed, they will not be printed at this time. Please contact Cliff with any questions.

LCOS is now using a new cloud-based system to track member and friend information and giving information. The system is called REALM. Individual logins can be set up for anyone who has an email address that is listed in the REALM system. An individual login allows view and update capability of personal information. As well, giving information can be viewed anytime. If you would like a login, please contact Cliff at blumhagencg@gmail.com.

Thoughts on End Times by Jens Kaack



I have had people asking if I think the Covid 19 pandemic is part of OR is the end times. The end time is a future described variously in the different world religions, which teach that world events will reach a climax.

There are many prophecies and writings about end times or second coming of Jesus, or the day of the Lord, or the kingdom of heaven coming to earth in both the Old and New Testaments. Some of these prophecies are very vague, and not very clear, and that's why there is all kinds of speculation, and now especially with the Covid 19 pandemic. But let's see what Jesus had to say about the signs of the end times.

Matthew 24-25

I have a picture hanging in the hallway of our home. It is Jesus sitting on Mount Olive Matt 24:3. It is where the disciples came and asked him about the end times. Jesus begins by warning the disciples, and us, not to be deceived by people that come along (in the name of Jesus) and claim to know the time when the end time will come. He says do not listen to them. When Jesus comes again we will all see Him without exception.

Matthew.24:4; 26-28

He then goes on to warn us that many events will take place before He comes again. There will be wars and rumours of wars and nations will rise against nations; there will be famines and earthquakes, floods, pandemics, plagues, pestilences. There will be divisions in countries. We are told that we can expect all these things most certainly to take place, and if we look back in history, we see that it has been going on all along.

Matthew 24: 6-14

In chapter 25 Jesus tells three parables to clarify further what it means to be ready for his return and how to live until He comes. In the story of The Ten Virgins Matt.25: 1-13 we are taught that every person is responsible for his/her own spiritual condition. The story of The Talents Matt. 25: 14-30 shows the necessity of using well what God has entrusted to us. The parable of The Sheep and Goats Matt. 25:31-46 stresses the importance of serving others in need. No parable by itself completely describes our preparation, instead each points one path of the whole picture. We know that Jesus is coming back, so we do not need to fret and worry about it. No, we just need to carry on as usual, by using our gifts that God has given us and serving each other in LOVE.

Thoughts on End Times (continued)

I was looking for some words of encouragement to end this teaching , and I found some verses in the end of The book of Hebrews 12:28, 13: 1-9a.

Hebrews 12: 28 “Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our “God is a consuming fire”.

Hebrews 13:1-9a “Keep on loving each other as brothers. Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it. Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering. Marriage should be honoured by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral. Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said,

“Never will I leave you; Never will I forsake you, “So we say with confidence,

“The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?”

Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. Do not be carried away by all kinds of strange teachings. It is good for our hearts to be strengthened by grace.”

Your servant in Christ Jesus,

Jens Kaack

James Cook Update

On Facebook his mother sent greetings of thanksgiving to all who have prayerfully supported James and his family.

He was discharged from St John’s Rehab Center in Toronto. The picture showed James walking out the front door of the Center. He is now home with his loving family in Bobcaygen, Ontario. He will have much more work to be done with skin grafting but for now the family is so happy they can now hug James.

Remember when he was put into an induced coma he had no idea that the world stood still, masks came on, lockdowns, no touching no visual contact at his bedside. When he came out of the coma the nurses came to his bedside and for the first time he saw and heard his family on FaceTime. What a marvellous invention. Thank you prayer warriors for keeping James in your prayers . James still has a long road ahead and God will plant him on a solid rock to guide him in peace within himself, and walking James thru the grief process and a spirit of courage to move forward with a reconstructed body .

I sent a note that we are praying for him out here in Calgary Alberta.

Pat Kaack

Submitted by Pat Kaack

These last five months our “hands” have been washed over and over again with soap and water, hand sanitizers, and even covered with disposable gloves. Our mind has said, “do not touch another’s hand, do not hug, use your elbow to touch elevator buttons, open doors and the list goes on and on. We have been programmed (for the good of our health and other!!!). And more so, the spirit of fear has been set over us.

Thankfully we feel safe in our own homes. A safe place with no gloves and no masks.

Continuing forward we all are asking ourselves.. Where do we go next? What do we do next? Do we go back to the things we did, our old routine? Or has complacency set in!!!!

God’s hand leads us forward. His plans are not our plans. “Let go and let God.”

There is plenty of food for thought in this poem.

The Loving Hand of God

When life with all its struggles just seems to pass you by, true happiness is gone from life,
You only sit and sigh.

The joy is gone from living, the tears run down your face.

The world is full of sorrow, which time cannot erase.

The only way to ease the pain is to take hold of God’s hand;

It will uplift and guide you, through the barren, lonely land.

God will plant your feet upon a rock, give you peace and courage too,

And you will never feel alone— He will always be with you.

Written by. Frances Culp Wolfe

Read Psalm 86: 1-13. (Very uplifting)

Going back to the poem. Read it again, very slowly. What stood out for me was “God will plant your feet upon a rock”, give you peace and courage too.”

Plant my feet upon a rock It is not soft earth, it is solid cold stone. Work on that one for yourself.

For me, I will take God’s hand. He is there always, His smile, His comforting hand.

He will plant me on that solid cold rock, I will not sink, I will stand tall, let the wind blow His Spirit through me, and He will guide me, perhaps today with a spirit of kindness, or compassion, or joy that I can share with those around me. Or through a phone call, text message, email. Or a written greeting card of encouragement to one who needs it today. Take my hand Lord lead me forward. Most of all bless my spirit with Your Joy.

Your faithful servant,

Patricia Kaack

Operation Christmas Child

At Home Project Volunteers

We are taking an optimistic outlook, hoping we can do the Operation Christmas Child Shoebox work-bee again this year. We have a lot of donated materials ready to be sorted and put into bundles. For example lace and buttons for little sewing bundles.

If you have time and interest in helping with this project please give me a call.

Thanks!

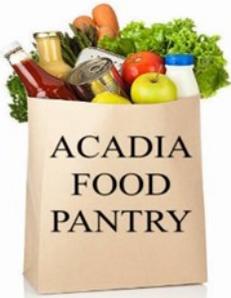
Jaqui Anderson

403-453-4071



Acadia Food Pantry

Schedule Change



The Acadia Food Pantry has been pleased to offer two pantries each month for the initial stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. During this time, we have been grateful for the help of extra volunteers who assisted while on leave from their work. As these volunteers return to their jobs and the space at McDougall United Church begins to open up to other renters, we will revert back to one pantry only per month on the 3rd Tuesday, beginning in September.

The remaining 2020 schedule for food distribution will be the following Tuesdays, 12 noon – 12:45pm:

August 4 & 18, September 15, October 20, November 17, December 15

Should you know of anyone experiencing a food emergency and requiring a referral to the Calgary Food Bank, please contact Lily Pang at South West Communities Resource

Centre, 403.238.9222 ext. 224, lily.pang@swcrc.ca.

Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are still needed to assist once or twice a month for a few hours to help organize and prepare for food distribution at the pantry. If you know of someone who would consider helping out at the pantry, please have them email acadiapantry@gmail.com.

CONTACTLESS
CLOTHING DRIVE
for Alpha House

supporting marginalized men and women
struggling with homelessness and addiction

Accepting the following items:

Gently used

- Walking shoes
- Casual shirts and tops
- Slacks and pants
- Light jackets

New socks and underwear

Saturday, August 8, 11 am – 2 pm
Christ Moravian Church Parking Lot
600 Acadia Drive SE

Alpha House provides emergency shelter and care for adults under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, and offers residential care for clients to safely withdraw from drugs in a medically supportive environment. They also provide supports to help clients safely move to permanent housing or long-term drug treatment facilities. Alpha House reduces the impact of street level intoxication and homelessness on the broader community and public systems through their mobile outreach teams. For more information on Alpha House, visit their website at www.alphahousecalgary.com.

Bishop's Message by Bishop Larry Kochendorfer

July-August 2020 Message for Congregations and Lay and Rostered Leaders



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.

I am writing to a future that is uncertain and unknown, to a situation that is changing not by the month, week, day, or even by the hour, but literally minute by minute, with the certainty that nothing will be the same again. Our church and our world will be very different for all of us on the other side of this coronavirus wilderness.

In many ways, this tragic time has accelerated the movement of the church into profoundly adaptive changes and challenges. And we need to address these challenges in order to be vital communities of witness to Jesus in the 21st century.

There are new opportunities and possibilities before us, including recommitting to a missional model of listening, discerning, experimenting, reflecting, and learning. And, all the while, to keep asking the questions: where is God in our neighborhood? Our community? Our world? And equally importantly: how might we join God in God's mission?

Dear Church, I continue to wonder, to reflect, to pray:

- What is God calling us to be and do in the time ahead? What is God's purpose for us – what is God's mission through us – moving forward?
- What have we learned during the last few months about what is most important in our life together as the body of Christ? And how can we use that knowledge to shape how we will live, work, and serve together? What might we bring into the future from this experience?
- What new skills have we picked up? What other skills and gifts will we need to embrace a New future?
- How might our theological, denominational, and biblical perspectives and traditions inform how we move forward?
- What were the things that seemed so important before the coronavirus crisis that we might give less attention to, or let go of altogether?

Bishop's Message (continued)

Dear Church, I wonder, reflect, pray:

Our life together as the body of Christ, in service to our neighbours and all of creation, is going to be very different moving forward. Be humble and gentle with one another. Honor each other. Make space for lament. Welcome moments of joy. Help each other live into hope. Learn from this journey through the coronavirus wilderness and let the learning lead you forward. Trust that God is at work in this time and look for the new things God is doing even now.

Thank you for your witness to patient trust in God and to sacrificial, cruciform love for your neighbours. And know that God is with you and even now is planning and nourishing seeds of resurrection life.

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,

+Larry