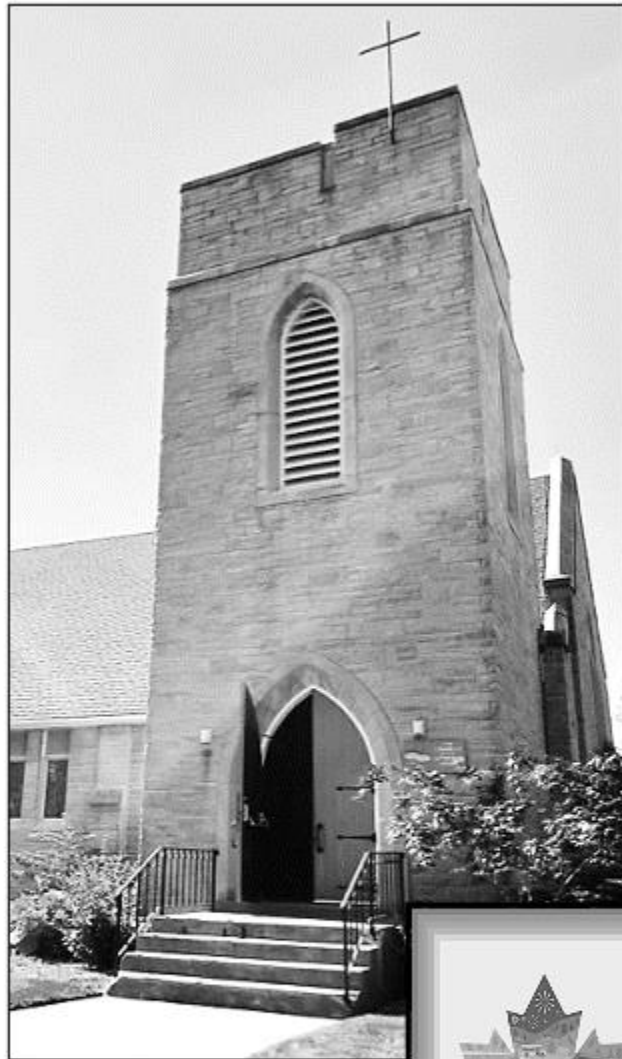


THE 5TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

July 2, 2023



Christ Lutheran is an open door.

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

140 Russell Avenue
St. Catharines, Ontario L2R 1W1
Church: 905-685-8294
www.christlutheransc.ca

Office Hours: Tuesday to Friday—9 a.m. – 12 noon
Bulletin Announcements: Please send to secretary@christlutheransc.ca.
Deadline for submission is Thursday at 9 a.m.

Pastor: Pastor Todd Hoeffs (289-362-0113) pastortoddhoeffs@gmail.com
Parish Assistant: Louise Gondosch (905-329-8579) parish.assistant@christlutheransc.ca
Business Manager: Karen McCumber business.manager@christlutheransc.ca
Secretary: Pat Kimpel secretary@christlutheransc.ca
Facebook: Lisa Gall www.facebook.com/ChristLutheranChurchSC
Bulletin by email: Judy Mason chairman.outreach@christlutheransc.ca

A recording of Sunday's service will be uploaded to YouTube at:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpING_TKT19c_OIBbMqGwLw

Prayer: O Lord, whose gracious presence never fails to guide and govern those whom You have nurtured in Your steadfast love and worship, make us ever revere and adore Your holy name; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

DAILY SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:

Monday: John 8: 1-11 Wednesday: Matt. 5: 43-48 Friday: Rom. 15: 1-7
Tuesday: 11 Cor. 2: 5-11 Thursday: Matt. 18: 15-20 Saturday: Gal. 6: 1-5

Musicians: Louise Gondosch
Reader: Paul Mason

YOUTH: The YOUTH are headed to FOOTGOLF (at the Brock Golf Course) on **Wednesday, July 12 at 6 p.m.** Meet at Christ Lutheran Church. \$10 per person. Footgolf is a fun blend of soccer and golf. Played with a soccer ball on a 9-hole footgolf course, you kick off (instead of tee off) toward special sups designed to fit a soccer ball. If you can kick a ball, you can play footgolf!! Please let Louise, Elizabeth or Valerie know if you can attend!!



Vacation Bible School

July 17 - 21

9 a.m. - 12 noon

Please Register as soon as possible!: parish.assistant@christlutheransc.ca
secretary@christlutheransc.ca

OR Register online at: <https://vbspro.events/p/c99985>

Come meet **'LUNA'** and other friends

"When life feels dark, Shine Jesus' Light!"

We are still seeking small group leaders, your job would be to take about 5 students from station to station & shine Jesus light into their lives. Even if you can assist for 2-3 days that would help greatly! Whether you can help out as little as 1 day, or as many as 5 days, your support might be just what one of these children needs. If you can assist us please fill out a Volunteer form in the narthex.

**(Sign-up Sheet for VBS SNACKS is now posted at back of church—
please sign-up if you can help)**



We are also in need of: fabric markers; washable markers, 1 liter canning jars.

Please share the date with family & friends & encourage them to preregister.

HERNDER WINERY SUPPER MARKET: Please join the Fellowship Committee on **Wednesday, July 19, 5-5:30 p.m.** We will meet at Hernder Estate Wines, 1607 Eighth Ave Louth. There is also a Farmers Market with local produce and crafters starting at 3 pm if you're interested in going early, followed by the Supper Market with food trucks at 4:30 pm, live entertainment from 5-8 pm. Amazing Food, free parking. Children and Pet Friendly.



July 2023 Worship Schedule

July 2 - Pentecost 5/Canada Day Creative Worship Service
 July 9 - Pentecost 6 Divine Service 4 Communion
 July 16 - Pentecost 7 Gospel Melodies Service of the Word
 July 23 - Pentecost 8/Mary Magdalene Day Communion LSB Setting One
 July 30 - Pentecost 9 Creative Morning Praise



August 2023 Worship Schedule

Aug 6 - Pentecost 10 LSB Setting 3
 Aug 13 - Pentecost 11 Creative Worship Holy Communion
 Aug 20 - Pentecost 12 Scripture & Song Service
 Aug 27 - Pentecost 13/ Communion LSB Setting One

Last Sunday Attendance: June 25th, 2023 **Attn: 9 a.m. – 28** **11 a.m.: Picnic – 87**

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Weekly Need</u>	<u>Last Sunday</u>	<u>Year To Date</u>	<u>+ or – (--)</u>
Current	297,841.00	5,840.02	1,204.50	108,330.41	(40,590.09)
LCC Missions	17,000.00	333.33	225.00	7,679.00	(821.00)
Property Improvement:			50.00	3,094.00	

GREETERS: A sign-up sheet is posted on the bulletin board and we would ask that anyone who is interested in assisting for the coming year to please sign up. It is a wonderful opportunity to get to know everyone in the congregation.

PRAYER WARRIORS: Please keep in your prayers our VBS program and the children and families we will impact. We thank God in advance for bringing families to us that we can share the Good News of Jesus with them and help SHINE Jesus light of truth in their lives.

2023/2024 SUNDAY SCHOOL: The Christian education of our children is important to all of us. We are looking for people to help "team teach" our Sunday school children this year; September - December; January - June. If you are excited to share God's Word with inquisitive minds we invite you to speak with our Parish Education Chairman, Brandon Kemp, or Louise.

POWER POINT VOLUNTEERS: – The Worship Committee is urgently seeking four (4) volunteers to assist with the preparation of the weekly PowerPoint projection. Frequency of PowerPoint preparation would be on a rotating basis and dependent upon the number of helpers. PLEASE give prayerful consideration to serving our Lord in this capacity. For more information, please speak to Kathy Kuhl, Judy Slingerland or Pastor Todd.



Granny Squares needed: Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! The response has been overwhelming and extremely heartwarming that there have been so many Granny squares contributed. We have already completed 3. However, since this is an ongoing project we will gratefully accept more completed 6 inch knitted or crocheted Granny Squares in any pattern or colour. We would also appreciate any yarn that you may have, leftover yarn or full balls of yarn. In the narthex there is a white cube with yarn and hooks that you are welcome to take (or donate). There is another basket for completed squares. Once there are enough, we will make a Caring Squares blanket for whoever may be in need of a hug. On behalf of the Caring Squares, if you have any questions,

call Lorraine at 905 964 5837)

LUTHERAN SERVICE OF THE WORD

5TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST & CANADA DAY Observance

July 2, 2023 + 10 AM Worship

OPENING HYMN:

"Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise"

© 1867 Public Domain

**Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
Most blessed, most glorious, the ancient of days,
Almighty, victorious, Your great name we praise.**

**Unresting, unchanging, and silent as light,
Not wanting nor wasting, You rule in Your might,
Your justice like mountains, high soaring above,
Your clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.**

**Great Father of glory, pure Father of light,
Your angels adore you, all veiling their sight.
Our praises we render; oh, lead us to see
The light of your splendor, your love's majesty!**

Words: Walter Chalmers Smith (1824–1908), pastor, Glasgow; Free Church of Scotland. Music: St. Denio, Welsh

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS:

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Those who come and worship the Lord,
worship Him in spirit and in truth.

This is the day that the Lord has made!

Let us rejoice and be glad in it!

From the rising of the morning sun until its setting,

The name of the Lord is to be praised!

Let us then confess our sins to God our Father: *[brief prayerful silence]*

Merciful Father, we have sinned and strayed from Your ways like lost sheep. We have followed the desires of our own hearts. We have offended against Your Word. We have left undone those things which we should have done; we have done those things which we should not have done; there is no health in us. O Lord, have mercy on us. Help all who confess their faults. Restore those who are sorry, according to the promises You proclaimed to all the world in Christ Jesus, our Lord. And help us, for His sake, live a godly, righteous and faithful life, to the glory of You holy Name. Amen.

As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you of all your sins, in the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

LORD HAVE MERCY

O Lord, **have mercy on us;**

O Christ, **have mercy on us;**

O Lord, have mercy on us and give us Your peace. Amen.

PRAISE HYMN:

“Glory Be To God The Father”

Tune: LSB # 506

1 Glo - ry be to God the Fa - ther, glo - ry be to
2 Glo - ry be to him who loved us, washed us from each
God the Son, glo - ry be to God the Spir - it:
spot and stain; glo - ry be to him who bought us,
great Je - ho - vah, Three in One! Glo - ry,
made us kings with him to reign! Glo - ry,
glo - ry while e - ter - nal a - ges run!
glo - ry to the Lamb that once was slain!

Glory, blessing, praise eternal! thus the choir of angels sings;
'Honour, riches, power, dominion!' thus its praise creation brings;
Glory, glory, glory to the King of kings!

Text: Horatius Bonar, 1808-1889
Tune: Walter G. Whitfield, 1865-1919; setting: The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941
Text and music: public domain

WORCESTER
87 8747
Rev 5/9/14; 1 Ch 16/2/19; Rev 1/16/14 7/15/14

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

We pray: Eternal God, Whose reign extends from sea to sea and whose care endures throughout the ages, hear our prayers for our country: give wisdom to those who govern Canada and respect for human life and dignity to every citizen, so that justice may flourish and all peoples live in unity and peace. We ask this through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

THE SCRIPTURES

Old Testament:

Jeremiah 20:7-13

Lord, you tricked me, and I was fooled. You are stronger than I am. So you won. I have become a joke. Everyone makes fun of me all day long. Every time I speak, I shout. I am always shouting about violence and destruction. I tell the people about the message I received from the Lord. But this only brings me insults. The people make fun of me all day long. Sometimes I say to myself, "I will forget about the Lord. I will not speak anymore in his name." But then the Lord's message becomes like a burning fire inside me. It feels like it burns deep within my bones. I get tired of trying to hold the Lord's message inside of me. And finally, I cannot hold it in. I hear many people whispering about me: "Terror on every side! Let's tell the rulers about him." My friends are all just waiting for me to make some mistake. They are saying, "Maybe we can trick Jeremiah. Then we can defeat him. Then we can pay him back." But the Lord is with me like a

strong warrior. So those who are chasing me will trip and fall. They will not defeat me. They will be very disappointed and ashamed. Their shame will never be forgotten. Lord of heaven's armies, you test good people. You look deeply into the heart and mind of a person. I have told you my arguments against these people. So let me see you give them the punishment they deserve. Sing to the Lord! Praise the Lord. He saves the life of the poor. He saves them from the power of wicked people. This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

The Epistle: *Romans 6:12-23*

[St. Paul writes]: Therefore, do not let sin exercise dominion in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions. No longer present your members to sin as instruments of wickedness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and present your members to God as instruments of righteousness. For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace. What then? Should we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God that you, having once been slaves of sin, have become obedient from the heart to the form of teaching to which you were entrusted, and that you, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. I am speaking in human terms because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness for sanctification. When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. So what advantage did you then get from the things of which you now are ashamed? The end of those things is death. But now that you have been freed from sin and enslaved to God, the advantage you get is sanctification. The end is eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

THE GOSPEL VERSE: *"This Is My Father's World"*

**This is my Father's world. O let me not forget
that though the wrong seems oft so strong, Christ is the Ruler yet.
This is my Father's world: why should my heart be sad?
The Lord is King; let the Heavens ring! He reigns; let the earth be glad!**

Public domain; Reprinted from: www.songandpraise.org/this-is-my-fathers-world-hymn.htm

The Holy Gospel: *St. Matthew 10:40-42*

The Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew, the 10th chapter:

Glory to You, O Lord.

'Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet's reward; and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous; and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward.' This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ.

THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty, from thence he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life + everlasting. Amen.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

GOSPEL HYMN:

"O Christ The Same"

Londonderry Air (Danny Boy)

**O Christ the same through all our story's pages,
our loves and hopes, our failures and our fears;
eternal Lord, the King of all the a-ges,
un-changing still, amid the passing years:
O living Word--, the Source of all cre-ation,
Who spread the skies--, and set the stars ablaze,
O Christ the sa--me, Who wrought our whole sal-vation,
we bring our thanks for all our ye—ster-days.**

**O Christ the same, the Friend of sinners, sharing
our inmost thoughts, the secrets none can hide,
still as of old upon Your Body bearing
the marks of love, in triumph glorified:
O Son of Man--, Who stooped for us from Heaven,
O Prince of life--, in all Your saving pow'r,
O Christ the sa--me, to Whom our hearts are given,
we bring our thanks for this the pre—s-ent hour.**

**O Christ the same, secure within whose keeping
our lives and loves, our days and years remain,
Our work and rest, our waking and our sleeping,
our calm and storm, our pleasure and our pain:
O Lord of love--, for all our joys and sorrows,
for all our hopes--, when earth shall fade and flee,
O Christ the sa--me, beyond our brief to-mor-rows,
we bring our thanks for all that is to be.**

Words: Timothy Dudley-Smith, from A HOUSE OF PRAISE: COLLECTED HYMNS, 1961-2001, © 2003 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188, ISBN 0-916642-74-7. Music: LONDONDERRY AIR All rights reserved. Used by permission. Hope Publishing Company, 380 S. Main Place, Carol Stream, IL 60188; www.hopepublishing.com

MESSAGE

OFFERINGS *are gathered.*

CANADA DAY ANTHEM:

"O Canada"

**O Canada! Our home and native land!
True patriot love in all of us command.
With glowing hearts we see thee rise,
The True North strong and free!
From far and wide, O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.
God keep our land glorious and free!
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.**

**Ruler Supreme, Who hears our humble prayer,
Hold our dominion within Your loving care;
Help us to find, O God in You a lasting rich reward
As waiting for the Better Day, we ever stand on guard.
God keep our land glorious and free!
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.**

Calixa Lavallée; Sir Adolphe-Basile Routhier; 1880.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/anthems-canada.html>

WE PRAY

Heavenly Father, thank you for your great love and tender care which gave Jesus to die for the sins of the world and which freely gives peace and salvation in his name. Send out workers into the harvest so that people everywhere will know this good news, repent of their sins, and turn to you in faith.

*Hear us, O God: **Your mercy is great.***

Equip all your people with the gospel of peace, and give us power to go where you send us, restoring our straying brothers and sisters in gentleness and love, and ourselves receiving the direction of others with patience and grace. Bring to faith those we know who have yet to have the Gospel take root with an open heart, and restore those straying away.

*Hear us, O God: **Your mercy is great.***

Have mercy on all who suffer want and poverty, and give them what they need for healthy life. Bless the earth with seasonable weather, abundant growth, honest commerce and productive industry. Protect us from fire, flood and every disaster. And give all Christians a clear sense of our calling to serve you by serving others.

*Hear us, O God: **Your mercy is great.***

We remember those who serve as missionaries in other places and those who witness to Your mission here at home. Inspire their work and protect all from any danger. Keep safe those who travel and enjoy vacation time for rest and refreshment.

*Hear us, O God: **Your mercy is great.***

Guide our life and work here and bless all who serve in leadership positions. Keep our nation, her people, both settlers and indigenous, immigrants and migrants, as the True North strong and free -- not only on Canada Day but every month of the year. Shower Your healing upon the sick, the needy, the hurt and elderly among us, enable healthcare agencies supported and compassionate. As it be Your will, meet the needs of all we know to be in want and whom we name [added now...]

Hear us, O God: **Your mercy is great.**

Gracious Lord God, as You welcome us fully into Your Kingdom, may we also welcome all others in Your name that together, we proclaim Jesus' death and resurrection until He returns in glory; we pray through Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER:

Our Father, Who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

BLESSING:

Go out into the world in peace; take good courage, hold fast to what is good; strengthen the weak, honour all, love and serve the Lord, rejoicing always.

Thanks be to God.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favour, + and give you peace.

Amen.

CLOSING HYMN:

"God Will Take Care Of You"

Nova Scotia author

1. Be not dis-mayed what-e'er be-tide, God will take care of you;
2. Thro' days of toil when heart doth fail, God will take care of you;
3. No mat-ter what may be the test, God will take care of you;

The image shows a musical score for the hymn "God Will Take Care Of You". It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The key signature has three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat), and the time signature is 6/8. The melody is written in the treble staff, and the bass line is in the bass staff. Below the staves, there are three numbered verses of lyrics. The first verse is "1. Be not dis-mayed what-e'er be-tide, God will take care of you;". The second verse is "2. Thro' days of toil when heart doth fail, God will take care of you;". The third verse is "3. No mat-ter what may be the test, God will take care of you;".

Be - neath His wings of love a - bide, God will take care of you.
 When dan - gers fierce your path as - sail, God will take care of you.
 Lean, wea - ry one, up - on His breast, God will take care of you.

Chorus

God will take care of you, Thro' ev-'ry day, o'er all the way;

He will take care of you, God will take care of you.

*Words: Civilla Durfee Martin, 1905.
 Music: 'Martin' Walter Stillman Martin, 1905. Setting: "Alexander's Gospel Songs", 1908.
 copyright: public domain. This score is a part of the Open Hymnal Project, 2012 Revision.*

REV. TODD HOEFFS

Pentecost 5 (series A)

Scripture: St. Matthew 10: 40-42

“What You See Is What You Get”

July 2, 2023

Welcome. A very common, quickly spoken word. It's stamped on doormats outside many entryways. Greeters at the door of Walmart offer a word of “welcome”. Disneyworld offers a huge welcome when the park opens with greetings by Mickey Mouse and rousing Disney music! When we begin our worship, I welcome you with: “The Lord be with you” and you respond back: “and also with you.” This is the Christian version of the Old Testament greeting of Shalom Alechum. Peace be with you. The LORD be with you gives us the Peacemaker Himself, Jesus. He unites us together as ONE BODY OF BELIEVERS. Our time is marked by His presence creating an inviting, spirit-rich welcome. Welcoming in St. Matthew's Gospel means receiving someone. In Biblical culture, this involved hands on -- hand-holding. Offering a stranger your hand leading them into a new situation or an unfamiliar home or into a strange city. [IMPORTANT in African American music and freedom! Or Russian Germans, Lord take my hand & lead me so nimm denn meine Hande] Originating in the heart of the old covenant promise. Where God took His people by the hand and led them through trial and tragedy to the beauty of the promised-land. As we who are the LIVING hands of feet of the Lord God, are sent out to make all strangers welcome Taking their hand and leading them. This way, we all get welcomed into the Lord's promise of freedom. Personal welcomes embrace the whole person. You receive their words, their fears, their feelings, their thoughts, their whole being--and lead them to a life of worshiping the ONE TRUE GOD. That had been the purpose of the Temple, and today, the church's manner of mission. Over time, Israel's religious leaders changed the meaning of God's grace Out of fear to exclude those of differing stature and calling, especially unclean sinners and Gentiles. But God in His love wishes all to come to the knowledge of His Son and salvation. By the time Jesus explains this hand-holding welcome to the disciples and to the other gathered believers, this is a new and confusing concept. Welcoming each other is tough enough to understand, but welcoming and receive the Father? GOD. YAHWEH! How? The most direct access to God's holiness for them is through a prophet. They understood the teaching of *shaliah*, which is a King's special ambassador or prophetic holy man representing the King Himself. They lead the way for the King by speaking to the people of a certain community. So if the community receives the ambassador's word, they will welcome the King's own word and follow his rule. Such is the role of prophets. Even though St. John the Baptizer had been called as the last prophet and lost his life, he made straight the crooked way when Christ, the King of all nations, entered the world. This is why Jesus says you receive the Father by receiving His Son. The Son is Himself, the living, breathing Word speaking. And further...receive the Son by receiving those who embody the Son. WOW! This is new! No more shaliah, no more prophets, just Jesus! And all who believe in Him. People feared even saying the name GOD too loud, for fear of harm, NOW --all we do is receive a person in Jesus' name and you not only do you get to have Jesus but the Father Who sent Him! That's a big change! The temple curtain of secrecy hiding God's power and glory is already being torn open here! God is coming down and making His Home with those He loves. THE TRINITY IS WALKING ON EARTH TO HELP HIS PEOPLE. This can be scary, even to Christians (even to Lutherans). We like to forget how well God knows us and that He actually resides in our hearts. Especially if it doesn't create a warm, easy, fun feeling. We'd all rather be unknown and illusive and only bring to light to what we're comfortable letting others see. It's even scarier feeling that other people can know us so well. Only 10 percent of communication is verbal. The rest is body language. We let people in so far. But eventually the masks must come down. God sees right in. No reason to hide. Churches as places of un-welcome is a very common complaint. It takes time, awareness, interest and time. If welcome means listening, leading, showing, reminding, embracing

the good, the bad and the ugly of every person, no thanks, right? We all have a full plate. We have jobs and homes and families and other activities and friends and various obligations. Welcome? I say hi, isn't that enough? No. It isn't. A Church cartoon by a retired Lutheran pastor depicts after service coffee time. At the corners of the cartoon are people in pairs and small groups happily chatting away while drinking coffee. In the middle of the cartoon is a vast circular space and in the direct center of that space is a singular, solitary person all alone looking scared shakingly drinking coffee....alone. That's the way many feel among congregations when it comes to fellowship and welcoming. Welcoming is assumed, rarely initiated. And it's not the job of just a pastor or staff or a committee, but best from everyone. I remember the times I visited my grandparents as a little child. Since they lived a few blocks away, I went there all the time. I can never remember a time when I wasn't supposed to get my own drinks out of the fridge or grab a knife and cut my own huge piece of cherry pie (as long as I brought grandma and grandpa a piece and they were diabetics and weren't supposed to have any but I had to keep that a secret, too). Hospitality to them meant getting your own stuff by yourself. Their home was yours. This is no doubt a concept embraced by all in North America, even without thinking of it. But what does welcome have in common with self-service, with household independence? What guest helps themselves in another's home? My other grandparents from my dad's side never allowed that kind of self-service. You were always treated as guest whether you visited them once every few years or every week. You visited and they served. They set the table, they served the food, they got whatever you needed. The church as a cross Canada structure has totally lost sight of welcome and have very little if any ministry of hospitality. Welcoming and receiving another person, as we receive Christ and the Father, is not a one-time deal. I say "the Lord be with you" every week. We begin in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit every Sunday. Not one worship hour has gone by without the Lord's Prayer. Welcome and receiving and serving isn't one time per new comer but the happy habit of the whole church. Because Jesus' welcome remains until the end of the age. He never stops embracing us. He rolls out the red carpet, regardless of where we've been, what we've done, no matter how many sins we've committed. His arms outstretched in suffering on the cross gathers every person into a close relationship with Him. And when that happens, all sins are washed away in His Blood. Over and over this grace miracles happens. His Blood not only cleanses you but protects you as you travel the byways and begin welcoming others in His name. That's why you are called to welcome others for Jesus has welcomed you. As the disciples are sent-ones, the Church is an entire body of sent-ones, pastors and people. By expecting people to come in, help themselves, find their own way, connect with people somehow, somehow, is not receiving people into the Body of Christ.

It's just easier. [It wasn't that long ago I stepped into a Lutheran church and among a group of 30 or so people, 2 said hello after I approached them. That's sad.] Welcoming takes time, patience and prayerful thought. It means caring enough of others to check in on them and simply to listen. But worshippers won't remain as guests, either. We are all instantly included as members of Jesus' Body. Each one is given talents and gifts worthy to share. All members contribute and share the joyful responsibility of caring for the Lord's church and ministry. All of this costs, for sure. It's a part of cross-bearing, which all of us carry as baptized believers in Jesus. We love and care and help and serve. It takes up our time, our energy, our resources, our prayers, our emotional and spiritual welfare. But if Christ and the Father live in us through the gift of the Holy Spirit, then it's His strength being used up. And that's OK. We lose ourselves into these ways of living. And find our real lives Jesus keeps refreshing and blessing. That's as it should be. We can't run on our own energy for long.

As branches of the Vine, apart from Jesus you can do nothing. This is why when we feel spiritually or even physically burned out, it's time for a shot of support. A word of encouragement. A visit over coffee. One voice to say "I care. I'm here to help." And we all need that. No matter the age. [This is why we have young people involved too.] When we include, we lift up, and we share the load and won't always feel so tired. Faith will deepen and the Lord's help will be poured into our tired bodies. Like a cup of cool water given to the parched lips of a little one It is worthy of a righteous reward! And "little ones" (*mikros*) could mean children, but usually means anyone who is vulnerable, least,

undesirable, needy and insignificant in the eyes of the world. Little ones covers everyone you encounter in your life. Even our own selves. And no matter how large or small the help you can offer, it is viewed by the Lord as wonderful and worthy of praise. This is to ensure we believe that Heaven is our unearned, undeserved priceless, never-ending gift. It's a promise we trust in by faith. I asked my colleague Lutheran pastors at our last circuit meeting. "Since people aren't just coming in droves into your church doors, How are you reaching them to make sure they sit through your divine service?" They aren't. "It takes 21st century post-pandemic street credibility" to help encourage people in. Like a restaurant. The online menu, the pictures, the reviews help; but there's a reason why our family keeps going back to Paesano's Pizza on Carlton. They know me. They remember my order by my voice on the phone. They have consistently good pizza and wings. It's a family run business, mama still stirs the homemade sauces. They treat me as a long lost relative. "Todd buddy." Now, if a little family run pizza place can do that, It will be God-pleasingly easy pouring a cup of cool water from our huge global BODY OF CHRIST! A wide wonderful welcome. Amen.



SOUL at Christ Lutheran is at Burgoyne Woods Park.

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Thanks to everyone who donated! And thank you to Todd Hoeffs for being such a great sport. We raised \$170 for SOUL!!!



Canada Day Word Search (Hard)

S F O Z S N E W B R U N S W I C K V T F L B N K
 M O T T A W A J G B X I P O B M X B B E A V E R
 C W D N A L S I D R A W D E E C N I R P N O W B
 E V Q U G N O R T H E R N L I G H T S A O X I J
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 R U K D W L C S B H X X T Q D E O U U R T Z R W
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| Alberta | Beaver | Bilingual | British Columbia |
| Butter Tart | Canada | Celebration | Confederation |
| Diversity | Dominion | Fireworks | Goose |
| Great White North | Hockey | Lacrosse | Loonie |
| Manitoba | Maple Leaf | Maple Syrup | Mounties |
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