

Mt. Zion Lutheran Church

January 1st, 2021 | Volume 38, Number 1



TIDINGS

A WORD OF FOND FAREWELL

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ to all the saints that make up Mt. Zion Lutheran Church-

This column is my word of fond farewell to all of you. I write it with thanksgiving for you.

Many years ago Carollyne and I were backpacking through Europe. One day we found ourselves in Toledo, Spain. As we stepped off the bus into the heat of the day I was overcome with the feeling that I was finally home. Please know that there is no Spanish connection or heritage in my family. While this was my first time visiting there nevertheless it did feel like home. That feeling of homecoming was not ever repeated until about six years ago. I don't remember if I had even been installed as pastor yet but Ed Jobs and I had been out for lunch. After that we came by Mt. Zion. While in the sanctuary, sitting in a pew near the back, that feeling of homecoming overwhelmed me once again. I don't know why this happened but this experience laid a strong foundation for my time serving as your pastor.

For me there have been many highlights and to share a few. Our Christmas Eve candlelight services are singularly beautiful, particularly the raising of our candles as Silent Night is sung. Serving as Mike's mentor and later celebrating his ordination here was not just a privilege but something meaningful. We made changes that enhanced our place of worship—updating our sign; new floors in our hall and library, and new doors in our hall and narthex storage places; and monitors were added into our sanctuary and library. Another highlight is the ability we have to share our worship online. The working relationship I enjoyed with our council is another highlight. Our practice of hospitality shines (Covid notwithstanding).

Why did I elect to retire at this time? Perhaps you know that several years before coming to Mt. Zion I had retired. I did this because I was tired and needed my own time. This time I am ready. How do I know, two reasons. First, I would hear of good workable ideas for ministry and didn't have the energy to act on them. Second, it was answer to prayer. I stayed here longer than I thought I would because I believed that I was "the glue holding us together" but after a prayer I was hit with the reminder that it's not me but it is the Holy Spirit. This prayerful insight allowed me to make the move. Please know though that this wasn't an easy decision.

So begins a New Year with new opportunities for you and for me. You, as you enter into the call process and make decisions about Mt. Zion's ministry directions and me as I explore ways a retired pastor can serve. God guide us in our travels.

Carollyne and I wish you well and thank-you for your care, support, and just for being who you are. Farewell dear friends.

God's richest blessings,

Pastor Tim and Carollyne



The Newsletter

Mt. Zion Lutheran Church

11533 135th Street NW

Edmonton, Alberta

Pastor Rev. Tim Posyluzny

timposyluzny@gmail.com

Phone: (780)455-3638





BRIGHT HOPE FOR TOMORROW

Dear Congregation & Friends of Mount Zion Lutheran Church in Edmonton,

“Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide,
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!”

Thomas Chisholm (1866-1960) / Hope Publishing Co., (c) 1923, 1951

It is customary at this time of year, nearing Christmas celebrations, approaching the end of the calendar year and the beginning of a new year, to reflect on what has been and what might possibly be, both for us personally and for our congregation. With the effects of the coronavirus swirling around us for most of the year: greater social isolation, shutdowns, health precautions, etc., it is so easy not to notice the many blessings that have come our way: the increased number and length of phone calls between relatives and friends (in my case also skyping), the availability of on-line church services to view and to sing along with, and the development in record time of new vaccines.

We had our flat roof inspected and found out that after 65 years it was in need of replacement. We did obtain a small business loan of \$125,000.00, but our contractor had to deal with import restrictions at the border along with Covid issues and the work has not yet begun. After a string of warm days the snow melts and the roof sheds tears – right onto the floor of the Fellowship Hall. We hope the tears will in the near future change to smiles.

Pastor Tim (and on the third Sunday of the month our pulpit supply, Pastor Laird Borst) and our technician-extraordinaire Stephen Borst have faithfully recorded and uploaded the church service. Two counters have been present each Sunday from 10:00 to 11:00 AM to receive, count, record and deposit in the bank each week's offerings. Your support for Mount Zion's mission, including the roof fund, has been outstanding. We thank our Lord for the faithful people that make up our congregation. We may be small but we've got big hearts!

We have lost our renters, except for one congregation, during the Covid epidemic. Once we are in the New Year, our accountant will apply for government funds, for which we are eligible, to mitigate these losses. We will keep you informed when the time comes.

On December 3, 2020, Pastor Prema Samuel, Assistant to the Bishop, the Council Chair of Ascension Lutheran Church at Bonnie Doon in Edmonton, and I, representing Mount Zion, had an exploratory meeting via Zoom, a video and audio communications platform, to establish contact between the two congregations, get to know a little more about each other, and explore possibilities of sharing in activities such as Bible studies, confirmation classes, etc. Once the Covid situation improves, consider dropping in at Ascension for one of their worship services and get to know some fine people. They are currently served by a half-time interim pastor and have been in the call process for some time.

On December 16, 2020, our monthly Church Council meeting took place via Zoom. Pastor Prema Samuel, Pastor Tim and our Council Secretary, Cindy Madigin, took the first 30 minutes to complete the Parochial Records Report Check. All records were found to be complete and up-to-date. At our regular meeting time of 7:00 PM, Council joined the meeting to deal with a number of business items, chief among them the approval of the 2021 Budget, which will be presented the last Sunday of February to the Annual General Meeting of the congregation. Following the business portion of the meeting, Pastor Prema led the Exit Interview with Pastor Tim and the Council. Following that, Pastor Tim was excused from the gathering with a blessing. The meeting considered Mount Zion's ministry needs and reviewed the Call Process. It concluded at 9:30 PM with the Lord's Prayer. This was our first Council meeting by Zoom and it proved to be efficient and productive. We thank Pastor Prema for setting it up and guiding us through it. You will get more information about this meeting in the Council Meeting Highlights article.

At this time I'm looking forward to the 20th of December, the 4th Sunday in Advent, when we usually enjoy our Sunday school presentation. This year, we will present a play by Stephen Borst, which presents the story of Jesus' birth through the eyes of the wise men. Players include the whole range of ages from the very young to the very old.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service can be seen on YouTube starting at 2:00 PM. It will include virtual communion. May this Candlelight Service shed a little more light into all our hearts and lives! Counters will be at the church from 3:00 to 4:00 PM.

The 27th of December, the Sunday after Christmas Day, is traditionally our Christmas Carol Sunday. Requests for favourite carols have no doubt poured into the office, selections made, and all there is left is to give our lungs some good exercise as we sing along with gusto. (If neighbours should complain, invite them to sing along!)

The 10th of January will no doubt be an emotional day as we bid Godspeed and farewell to Pastor Tim and Carollyne. He has blessed us with six years of faithful, unstinting love of ministry. We thank God that he lent them both to us for these many years.

Pastor Laird Borst will fill in as pulpit supply the 3rd and 4th Sundays in January and the 5th Sunday will be a layperson Sunday with plenty of singing. Also, in the new year, Seminarian Kathy Goertz Thompson will be our guest preacher at three services.

Hopefully, our interim pastor will take over on February 1st. We have let our Bishop's office know what our needs are and they will do their best to provide us with a suitable person as we go forward with the formation of a call committee, their installation, and embark on the process to discern the right person to be our next pastor.

The work of Church Council was made so much easier by the guidance, willingness to help, and cheerful attitude (humour?) of Pastor Tim. He was more than a team-player. He was a friend. And so we don't ever really say goodbye because love never ends. It is eternal. As I was reflecting on this, a poem by Flavia Weedn came to mind. Flavia (1929 – 2015) was a California artist, writer and poet and she had a way of saying in a few words what we feel but can't find the right words to express it. I want to share one of her poems with you, for I think it says what many of us feel about Pastor Tim.

“Some people come into our lives and quickly go.

Some stay for a while, leave footprints on our hearts,

and we are never, ever the same.”

Blessings,

Ed Jobs, Council Chairperson

CREATIVE AND GENEROUS GIFTS DELIVERED

On Tuesday, December 8th Donna Foerster and Pastor Tim were able to deliver your creative and generous gifts that will make many lives a little easier as we journey into winter.

The gifts included:

266 toques (most hand made by the crafting group at the church),

63 scarves (many handmade),

1 pair of men's long underwear,

22 pairs of men's socks,

6 neck warmers (all handmade),

1 bag of mixed toiletries (shampoos, conditioners, and toothpaste),

15 prayer books,

Gift cards for McDonald's (\$15),

And gift cards for Walmart (\$225).



Because the Bissell Centre is mostly closed, these items were dropped off at the home of the new Inner City Pastoral Ministry's chaplain, the Reverend Quinn Strikwerda. His wife, also a pastor, received the gifts. Thanks to all of you who contributed to a better time for our city's most vulnerable.

Wine Basket Raffle Winner!
Joan Lubin



Thanks to this raffle
We were able to raise \$1,400!

Special thanks to Council members who
donated the Wine Basket.

Offering Envelopes 2021:

Offering envelopes for 2021 are in mailboxes since mid-December 2020. If you are unable to pick up your new envelopes, please continue to use the 2020 envelopes by changing the date. Thank you Irma Trottier for her steadfast service as Financial Secretary.

Good Samaritan Representative

We are looking for a volunteer to be Mount Zion's Good Samaritan Society representative.

The Representative does not have to be a Church Council member. The duties are minimal: receive correspondence from the Society, post or distribute the information to the appropriate recipients, whether by mailboxes or Tidings. If you are interested, please contact the church office.

Sincerely,
Ed Jobs, Council President

Tidings Editor Needed

The position involves being a contact person when there's news to be shared with the parish along with receiving information from the pastor and council as well as reporting on parish events (as you see being of interest).

Should you feel called to serve in this way please contact Sabine or Ed Jobs, who will be ready to help.

Thank-you!

Serving Lunch at Bissell Center in January

Mount Zion, along with McClure United Church and B'Nai Chayim Children of Life Fellowship congregation, will be providing the lunch for the Inner City Pastoral Ministry, at the Bissell Centre, on January 17, 2021. The lunch packs will be prepared at the church. It is likely that the format will be the same as it was in July, with the packs being delivered to the Bissell Centre but distributed by the staff there. Further information will be provided as it becomes available.

Anyone who would like to help in preparing the lunch bag please inform Jackie Evenson at (780)454-0578.



January

Ed Jobs

Alexander Madigin

Peggy Nichols

Margaret Olson

Theresa Patenaude

Tracy Polanski

Christopher Shukuda

Paul Stenzel

If we missed your Birthday, please let us know!