

THE PRINTS OF PEACE

November 2023



IN THIS ISSUE

- Pastor David's Message
- Choir Corner
- Call Committee
- Exit Interview
- Church responses to violence in Israel
- SOGIE training
- From the Peace Community

*A periodical newspaper for and by the people of Peace Lutheran Congregation,
Vernon, BC*

www.peacelutheran.ca

plchurch@shaw.ca



Evangelical Lutheran
Church in Canada



British Columbia Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

We gather on the traditional ancestral and unceded territory of the Syilx people of the Okanagan Indian Nation

A Message from Pastor David

Grace and Peace

Transitions in life are always challenging times of hope and uncertainty. The process may resemble some past change in life, but each situation brings its own circumstances and conditions. The whole world literally goes through this very regularly. The pandemic brought new realities to every corner of society. The current conflict in the Middle East has set back peace talks in the region and tragically altered the trajectory of people's lives who struggle under immeasurably harsh conditions. You can read responses to the violence in Gaza and Israel below, including a letter from the bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land. It continues to be true that change is the only constant in life.

More personally, I am at the moment of my life transition from a 35-year career in professional ministry with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada to a new experience of retired life. There are many new possibilities opening up for me. Yet, I will miss this life of serving the people of Peace and being an active part of a wide network of God's people in this country. These years of serving in the church have brought many blessings. Thank you so much for the kind hospitality you have shown us and the rewarding partnership in the gospel we have shared. I am still learning so much about being the church and bearing God's good news of love for the world. (That will continue into retired life.)

And thank you for the amazing sendoff dinner, deliciously prepared by Robert and Irene Hadley and orchestrated by the hard work of many loving hands. Many have asked about our plans for retirement. On the one hand, I am not sure what it will be like without the weekly rhythms and regular responsibilities of Pastoral ministry. On the other hand, there are so many ways to participate in the broader community, explore personal interests, connect with family and friends, develop skills and share gifts. We are excited to be staying in Vernon and having more discretionary time. Maybe we will have regular visits to the Davison Orchard's Café and take an exciting trip. (all thanks to the generous people of Peace and the gift cards we received.)

I am grateful to have been part of the Peace Lutheran Congregation story in Vernon. This welcoming community embraces change with faithful hope. I have benefitted from the progressive, warm, accepting, supportive culture that you have all nurtured in this place. My eight-year tenure as your pastor has been a season of joy.

Not only within the congregation but also beyond, you continue to be a blessing by sharing your resources with generosity. 1204 30th Avenue is a gathering place for many people outside of the congregation because the people of Peace have been such good stewards of their resources by opening the doors to others who need a place to gather.

Endings are bitter sweet. There are regrets for things not accomplished. There is sadness when relationship roles change. At the same time there is great joy for the ways we have journeyed together through so many challenges. I am better for it and thank you all for calling and welcoming me.

Endings also yield new beginnings. I am embarking on a very different season of life which many of you have assured me has its own rewards. The congregation will move into a new period of growing in the gospel and sharing in ministry. Excitement for the future will carry you forward into a new way of being the church in this place. May God grant us grace and peace to be messengers who embody God's love in our words and actions. In doing so, we are being transformed while God's presence among us is revealed in new ways. May you be surprised by joy as was Jacob to discover God has gone before you and is present in the spaces you occupy.

'Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.' Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, *'Surely the LORD is in this place—and I did not know it!'* And he was afraid, and said, *'How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.'* Genesis 20:15-17

Grace and Peace to you. And thank you for everything. Pastor David

Choir Corner

Thanks so much to all who sang at Thanksgiving and Reformation! Those were very special services.

I am grateful to all of you who have joined in song in the past eight years. It has been a joy to sing together! We have had a lot of fun times together, and I will miss making music with you. May God bless you in spirit and in song.

Shalom! Margaret Hundebly Hunter

Call Committee Communication:

A call committee consisting of five members, and appointed by the Council, had its initial meeting in October. The first step in this important process is to compile a Congregational Missional Profile; input from as many people as possible will result in a more comprehensive and informative report. Please look forward to receiving and completing a survey on your hopes and dreams for this congregation, and for the person we call to work with us in this community. (The option exists to make it an anonymous response.)

Your comments, suggestions, and questions are always welcome, and openly encouraged.

Further, we invite your prayers – for the work of the committee, for the leadership within our church, for the clergy of our church, and for our own congregation.

Committee Members: Blaine Olson, George Wood, Heather Skerritt, Rollen Lee, and Karen Lee

Reflections on the Exit Interview with Pastor David – October 24, 2023

It wasn't what I expected, because I really had no idea what to expect. I think "exit" initially felt like a negative, but instead this felt more like a bridge, a transition, a turning of perspective from an ending to more of a "next step" concept.

This congregation has been my home for most of my life, and it was refreshing, illuminating, helpful to get a glimpse from the experience of Pastor David, who eight years ago quickly became a much-loved part of our community. His observations reminded me of the wealth we have in the people in our congregation, and of our sense of community and family.

His very wise comments brought to mind the Mission and Call of this congregation. We are all challenged to reflect on who we are, who we are called to be, and how best to serve.

Will we miss Pastor David? Of course! It was still an "exit". We are thankful to God for the gifts and love of this faithful leader and friend.

But it was most definitely a time to reflect on who we are, and to wonder where God will next lead us.

Karen Lee

Statement on War in the Holy Land

October 8, 2023

On Saturday the world watched in horror as Hamas launched a rapid, devastating barrage of violence against Israel. Rockets, drone attacks, the killing of civilians and the taking of hostages have ignited long simmering tensions between Israel and Palestine. Israel has responded with ongoing rocket attacks and the death toll on all sides rises daily.

Our hearts grieve at the resurgence of violence that bereaves both Palestinian and Israeli families. We long for peace and security for the people of Israel who seek a safe place to live free from discrimination, anti-semitism and repeated pogroms. We long for peace and security for the Palestinian people who also long to live in safety, to thrive free from occupation and discrimination. Neither have found that peace in repeated patterns of hatred and conflict.

We stand with Archbishop Hosam Naoum (Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem) and Bishop Sani Azar (Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land) and their people, praying for safety for all who are caught in the middle of this conflict—including visitors and pilgrims. We pray for the Al-Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza and the Augusta Victoria Hospital in Jerusalem seeking to provide medical care to any and all in need amidst the chaos.

We urge Prime Minister Trudeau and all international leaders to offer whatever they can toward a cessation of hostilities and a lasting, just peace for Israel and Palestine.

In the face of grief and violence we offer this prayer...

God of peace and justice,
Our hearts weep as the rockets fall in Israel and Gaza,
As families are bereaved
As men, women and children are taken hostage,
As anger and hatred are fuelled again.

In the land you chose for your people and your Son we pray
for those bereaved by the violence,
For the wounded and injured,
For the hostages
That your love will surround and comfort them.

We pray for strength and compassion
for all offering medical care, especially our partners, the Al-Ahli Arab
Hospital and Augusta Victoria Hospital.

We pray for Bishop Sani Azar and Archbishop Hosam Naoum and all
Christians in the Holy Land for their safety and their leadership in this time
of crisis.

We pray for all leaders in Israel and Palestine that a just and lasting peace
will be found.

In the midst of our grief and sorrow we trust in your unfailing love for all
people, and for your Land, and ask that your wisdom would prevail, for we
ask in the name of

Jesus Christ, who brings the world eternal peace.

AMEN.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susan Johnson", with a small cross symbol to the left.

Bishop Susan Johnson
National Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Linda Nicholls", with a small cross symbol to the left.

The Most Rev. Linda Nicholls
Primate, Anglican Church of Canada

*The Evangelical Lutheran Church
in Jordan and the Holy Land*



الكنيسة الإنجيلية اللوثرية
في الأردن والأراضي المقدسة

Statement on the Escalating Situation in The Holy Land

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land is shocked and distressed by the escalating violence in the Gaza Strip and its surrounding areas; and we are particularly concerned by the potential for today's events to trigger even greater violence throughout all of Palestine and Israel. We lift in prayer the families of innocent civilians whose lives were lost today as they mourn their loved ones. We also pray for healing for all the injured and traumatized.

As the language of "war" is now being used to characterize this violence, it is important to remember that the warfare of today is not isolated. It is connected to a larger context and a longer history. As a church, we continue to advocate for non-violence; but we also believe it is crucial to understand the circumstances from which violence emerges. In this case, it is a symptom of a people deeply wounded by extended and systematic violence and oppression. The Holy Land has also seen unprecedented attacks on religious sites in recent years, which makes our situation even more personal and emotional.

The ELCJHL will take part in joint efforts to promote the rights of the Palestinian people and assist in providing critical and timely assistance to those affected by this war. Psychological assistance, especially, will be prioritized as an important response to those living through these conditions. We appeal to the international community to stand with us in these efforts to address the crisis in Gaza and to urge all involved to uphold the principles of international humanitarian law.

As always, we pray for a peaceful resolution that extends human rights to all. We remember that the peace Jesus offers, that which is based in justice and solidarity with the suffering and oppressed, is at the root of true peace.

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid"
(John 14:27) NRSV.

Bishop Dr. Sani-Ibrahim Azar

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land

Tel.: +972-2-6266800

Fax: +972-2-6285764

P.O. Box 14076 – Muristan Road – Jerusalem 91140

E-Mail: administration@elcjh.org

هاتف رقم: +972-2-6266800

فكس رقم: +972-2- 6285764

ص.ب 14076 - شارع المارستان - القدس 91140

Website:



October 10, 2023

For Immediate Release:

Multi-Faith Summit Council of BC Offers Condolences

The members of the Multi-faith Summit Council of BC believe in equality and love for all members of the human family.

In the wake of some recent disturbing events in the Middle East that have negatively impacted so many lives, we wish to extend our heartfelt and sincerest condolences to all who have been affected by the violence.

We are aware that relatives and friends of some of our Jewish council members have been killed or have been taken hostage or are missing, and we cannot imagine the sorrow, grief and anxiety being experienced at this time. We offer our love and prayers for healing and for the restoration of peace.

As a Council, we respect the sanctity of human life and denounce all hatred and violence. We call on Government Agencies around the world to act responsibly and cohesively to bring a cessation of hostilities and to commit to work on issues that continue to unsettle the affected area of the world.

Multi-faith Summit Council of British Columbia

Sherry Marcell - Chair

Chohre Rassekh - Secretary

ELCIC, CLWR Launch Emergency Appeal for the Crisis in Gaza

[The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada has joined with Canadian Lutheran World Relief in responding to the ongoing crisis in Gaza](#), where a massive humanitarian emergency is unfolding.

As a response to the ongoing crisis in Gaza, CLWR is working with other Canadian aid agencies to provide critical life-saving aid in Gaza, where estimates indicate more than one million people have been forced to leave their homes and over 4,300 have been killed.

The ELCIC invites members to pray for those suffering and to give generously in support of the needs of all those in need. Please give today: clwr.org/gaza

Crisis in the Holy Land

The ELCIC has put together an ongoing list of updates, statements and resources regarding the current situation in the Holy Land, including information from our partners in the region. [That webpage can be found here.](#)



ELCIC National, Synod Bishops invite church to join in prayer and concern for all those impacted by war between Israel and Hamas:

ELCIC national, synod bishops write to members of the church “with heavy hearts, full of concern for the war between Israel and Hamas.” [Read that letter here.](#)

An ecumenical statement from KAIROS Canada and its member churches and agencies:

[KAIROS Canada](#) and its member churches and agencies, condemn the current violence, against Israel and Palestinian civilians, in Israel, Gaza, the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem, and call on Canada to do everything in its power to support an immediate ceasefire and a negotiated solution. To read the full statement, please [click here.](#)

World Council of Churches Urgently Appeals for Immediate Ceasefire

In Israel and Palestine

"The [World Council of Churches](#) (WCC) appeals urgently for an immediate cessation of this deadly violence, for Hamas to cease their attacks and ask both parties for de-escalation of the situation," said WCC general secretary Rev. Prof. Dr. Jerry Pillay. "We are deeply concerned about the imminent risks of spiraling conflict between Israel and Palestinian armed groups and of the inevitably tragic consequences for the people of the region - Israelis and Palestinians alike - following a period of escalating tensions and violence in the West Bank and Jerusalem." To read the full news article, please [click here.](#)

Canadian Lutheran World Relief Issues Statement on the Crisis in Palestine and Israel

"We are overwhelmed with grief at the recent acts of terror in Israel and Gaza, including the killing and abduction of civilians. We mourn the death of Israelis and Palestinians and joining our partners in the region in condemning the vicious cycle of bloodshed and hatred that has now been escalated. We call urgently for the preservation of humanitarian corridors so that life-saving aid can reach all those in distress...." To read the full statement, please [click here](#).

ELCIC, ACC: Statement on the War in the Holy Land

"Our hearts grieve at the resurgence of violence that bereaves both Palestinian and Israeli families," said ELCIC National Bishop Susan Johnson and Anglican Church of Canada Archbishop Linda Nicholls in a [joint statement issued on October 8](#).

"We stand with Archbishop Hosam Naoum (Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem) and Bishop Sani-Ibrahim Azar (Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land) and their people, praying for safety for all who are caught in the middle of this conflict—including visitors and pilgrims. We pray for the Al-Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza and the Augusta Victoria Hospital in Jerusalem seeking to provide medical care to any and all in need amidst the chaos," continued the leaders who called on Prime Minister Trudeau and all international leaders to offer whatever they can toward a cessation of hostilities and a lasting, just peace for Israel and Palestine.

Update from the ELCJHL

Bishop Dr. Sani-Ibrahim Azar from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL) shared the following [Statement on the Escalating Situation in the Holy Land](#) on October 7. "The [ELCJHL] is shocked and distressed by the escalating violence in the Gaza Strip and its surrounding areas; we are particularly concerned by the potential for today's events to trigger even greater violence throughout all of Palestine and Israel," he said. "We lift in prayer the families of innocent civilians whose lives were lost today... We also pray for healing for all the injured and traumatized."

Monthly Gathering for Parents and Grandparents of Trans/Nonbinary Kids

This online group is offered by and hosted by the Synod of Alberta and the Territories and the Affirming Diversity Ministry Team. It is facilitated by Rev. Dr. Kayko Driedger Hesslein, a professor of Queer Theologies.

Did you know that 68% of children who are transgender, nonbinary, or gender nonconforming engage in suicidal ideation before the age of 18. That number drops to 4% when they have at least one supportive family member. This group gathers monthly to provide support for parents and grandparents of transgender, nonbinary, and gender nonconforming children (adult children, too), from an informed, Lutheran perspective. We pray, learn, and share stories together.

Parents and Grandparents of Trans/Nonbinary Kids

find faith-based support in your journey
meet others like you
get resources

4th Monday of every month, 7-8pm Mountain Time
Zoom meeting ID: 374 313 0071

Facilitated by Rev. Dr. Kayko Driedger Hesslein

Sponsored by the Synod of Alberta and the Territories and the Affirming Diversity
Ministry Team

SOGIE Training Opportunity from Reconciling Works

As we seek to deepen and expand the holy work of welcome, inclusion, and celebration of LGBTQIA+ people in the church and society, we can find ourselves asking, “What does LGBTQIA+ mean?” Together we will co-create a safe space to learn helpful skills and tools to support you and your ministry.



The Let's Talk About SOGIE training and “Lutheran Introduction to Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, & Gender Expression” are complementary resources, to be used side by side in your learning of language, and ways to extend hospitality to our LGBTQIA+ siblings. The training is great for those who are hoping to support their faith community in ongoing education, or for individuals who have an open heart and mind on learning more about God's diversity of creation.

The training is 1.5 hours long and held online through Zoom in real-time; registration is \$35 per person. If you are hoping to join as a group to attend the training, all in attendance must be registered prior to the training date. Here is a link if you wish to register. <https://www.reconcilingworks.org/trainings/talksogie>

2023 ELCIC Special Convention Highlights

The 2023 ELCIC / ACC joined assembly and ELCIC's special convention was a great gathering of Anglicans, Lutherans, and Moravians from across the country. [You can view a video of convention highlights here.](#)



British Columbia Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

80 East 10th Avenue, New Westminster, BC V3L 4R5
Phone: (604) 524-1318 Fax: (604) 524-9255

TO: All members of BC Synod Council, All Rostered Ministers, All Congregations

FROM: The Secretary of the BC Synod

DATE: October 12th, 2023

OFFICIAL NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2023

As required by the Bylaws (please refer below to the quoted text), the Synod Council calls the Annual General Meeting of the BC Synod for 2023. It will be held Wednesday, November 29th, 2023 at 7:30 pm on the Zoom online platform.

Anyone who holds membership in a congregation of the BC Synod may vote.

Congregational leaders: Please post this notice prominently in your regular place of worship, and please announce publicly in all worship services between now and November 29th, 2023.

Agenda (first draft)

- Call to order, devotion, prayer
- Minutes of the 2022 AGM
- Business arising from the minutes
- Audited Financial Report for the fiscal year ending June 30th, 2023

On behalf of the BC Synod Council,

Tarynn McKenzie
Secretary

Excerpt from the Constitution and Bylaws of the British Columbia Synod

From the Peace Community

PASTORAL SERVICES

Pastor David has retired after 35 years of ordained service to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, the last eight of which have been with us here at Peace Lutheran. We are thankful for his time with us and his excellent leadership. But now it is time for him to enjoy all the benefits of retirement and the freedom to pursue projects and ideas that have been put on the shelf in search of more time. We know he will have a busy and productive retirement with his music, his sailing, curling, skiing, gardening and maybe some golf.

It will be difficult to get used to our church life without him as our Pastor, but just as he is moving on, we must as well. A Call Committee has been established and is working its way through the call process. Bishop Kathy is working with us to arrange interim pastoral services. All this will take time and we must be patient and understand that Pastor David is no longer our pastor. Interim arrangements will be announced as soon as possible. Until then, please contact the Council Chair for any urgent pastoral needs.

Your Church Council

BUTCHER BOYS AND BUY-LOW FOODS RECEIPTS

We are fortunate to have two great corporate citizens in Vernon that allow us to gather and turn in receipts on behalf of our congregation and we receive store credit in return. We use this credit to purchase kitchen supplies to support our Sunday coffee time, offset funeral serving costs and support the Soup Kitchen efforts. A few stipulations apply including that the receipts must be from the current year. You are asked to drop your receipts each month into the labeled box in the Narthex.

Peace Lutheran Prayer Chain

You may share your prayer concerns with this group of individuals who have made a commitment to pray for others in need. Those with a particular concern for themselves or others are invited to contact Rita Makasoff and explain the circumstances for which prayers are requested. Should you desire to become a member of the Prayer Chain please contact Rita Makasoff at 250-542-9686 or Pastor. Those on the prayer chain will treat prayer requests as private and confidential.



Donations to Peace Lutheran Congregation may be made:

- By e-transfer to plchurch@shaw.ca
- By signing up for Monthly Pre-Authorized Remittance
- By mailing or dropping off a cheque to:

**Peace Lutheran Congregation
1204 30 Ave, Vernon, BC V1T 1Z5**



- By Signing up for Pre-Authorized Remittance (PAR)

This service is available using the services of PAR (administered by the United Church of Canada). Once the giver grants permission, each month the funds are withdrawn from the member's bank account. PAR monthly submits the grand total to the bank account of Peace Lutheran. (We pay a small fee for this service. Using a Credit Card increases the cost to the congregation.) Changes/cancellations require 15-20 days' notice. It's reliable, automatic, and consistent. It also greatly simplifies the jobs of the Counters, the Banking Officers, the Treasurer, the Financial Secretary and the Office Administrator. Please consider using this service. Contact Karen Lee, or Tina in the office, for sign up information.

Website: www.peacelutheran.ca

CONTACT US

Office: Tina Lawlor

Telephone: 250-545-5787

Email: plchurch@shaw.ca

***SUBMISSION DEADLINE FOR
THE NEXT EDITION OF
"THE PRINTS OF PEACE"
NEWSLETTER IS NOVEMBER 27***