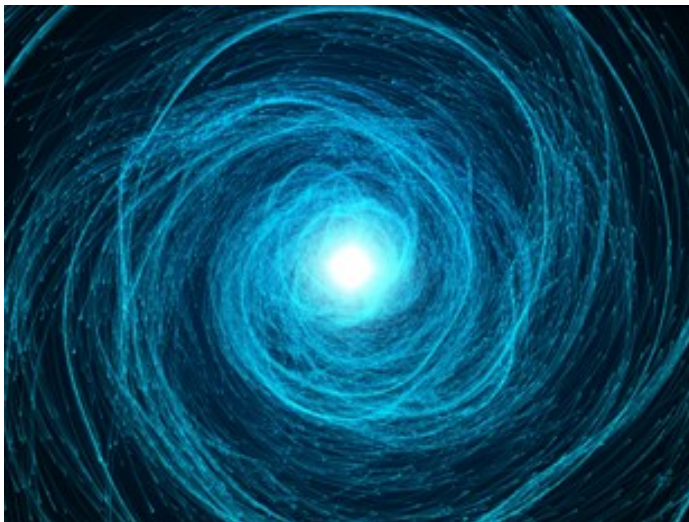




A Time of Disruption

As we head into a new Church Year with Advent and Christmas, we do so still in the midst of a pandemic. I believe it is an understatement to say that the pandemic has been a disruption to our normal life over the last 18 months. People's health (both physical and mental), habits, employment, finances and relationships have all been disrupted. Most of the "disruptive" effects that come to mind tend to occur as negative. There can be, however, a positive aspect to disruptions. Disruptions have a way of clarifying what is "normal" and present the opportunity to examine and reevaluate the way things have been, are, and how we might wish them to be. Many people have utilized this pandemic time to choose new careers, pursue buried passions and interests, and shift lifestyles to promote stronger relationships or better health.



This idea of "disruption" is an appropriate lens to bring with us as we begin or journey this coming year through the Gospel of Luke and its partner, the book of Acts. In his gospel, Luke describes the work and teachings of Jesus after he is filled with the Holy Spirit. The gospel writer continues the story of the work of the Spirit in Acts as he tells of how the Holy Spirit animated the apostles and the early church to spread and be the good news throughout the Mediterranean. Luke describes the Holy Spirit as a disruptive and dynamic force that can turn lives around, create new possibilities, and work toward justice and peace. In doing so, it takes us back and calls us back to our

roots and purpose as a church. The story begins with the disruptions in the lives of Zechariah, Elizabeth, Mary and Joseph.

Another disrupted Christmas...

As we were planning Advent and Christmas last year and deciding to have Christmas services online only, I could not envision that we would still be in the midst of COVID restrictions a year later.

On Christmas Eve, we will be providing in-person worship at 4pm and 6pm. In anticipation of still having the capacity restrictions in place, we are having people register for the service they choose to attend. This will ensure those that are attending that they will be able to worship. We will have a waiting list so that we can make adjustments if need be. Please refer to the website or Thursday Thoughts for information regarding registering.

In addition to the in-person worship, we will be livestreaming the 4pm Christmas Eve service for those who cannot or choose not to attend in person. An edited version of this service will be available for viewing the rest of Christmas Eve and on Christmas Day. Though we are not offering in-person worship on Christmas Day, you are invited to join us for Sunday Worship on Boxing Day (Dec. 26th).

In the midst of another disrupted Christmas, get curious about how the Holy Spirit might bring life and love to you and your family this season.

Peace,

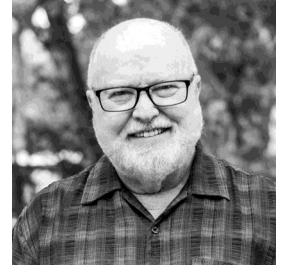
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LEAD ... love God with all your heart

Where Justice and Charity Meet

The following is the daily devotion from Father Richard Rohr for Sunday, October 31, 2021, from the Center for Action and Contemplation. It is part of that week's theme, "Rediscovering the Common Good." As we begin a year focused on the gospel of Luke and the book of Acts, it seems particularly appropriate.
cac.org/category/daily-meditations/



"We need to make the kind of society where it is easier for people to be good," said Peter Maurin (1877–1949). [1] That is our difficulty today. We are surrounded by good, well-meaning folks who are swept along in a stream of shallow options. Not only is the good made increasingly difficult to do, it is even difficult to recognize. It seems that affluence takes away the clear awareness of what is life and what is death. I don't think the rich are any more or less sinful than the poor; they just have many more ways to call their sin virtue. There is a definite deadening of the awareness of true good and true evil.

I have found one fuzzy area that often needs clarification: We have confused justice and charity. Charity was traditionally considered the highest virtue, popularly thought of as a kind of magnanimous, voluntary giving of ourselves, preferably for selfless motives. As long as we rose to this level occasionally by donating food, gifts, or money at the holidays or in times of crisis, we could think of ourselves as charitable people operating at the highest level of virtue.

What has been lacking is the virtue of justice. Justice and charity are complementary but clearly inseparable in teachings of Doctors of the Church, as well as the social encyclical letters of almost all popes over the last century. The giving and caring spirit of charity both motivates and completes our sense of justice, but *the virtue of charity cannot legitimately substitute for justice*. Persons capable of doing justice are not justified in preferring to "do charity." Although this has clearly been taught on paper, I would say it is the great missing link in the practical preaching and lifestyle of the church. We have ignored the foundational obligation of justice in our works of charity! For centuries we have been content to patch up holes temporarily (making ourselves feel benevolent) while in fact maintaining the institutional structures that created the holes (disempowering people on the margins). Now it has caught up with us in unremitting poverty, massive income disparity, cultural alienation, and human and environmental abuse.

Jesus preaches a social order in which true charity is possible, a way of relating by which cooperation and community make sense. Jesus offers a world where all share the Spirit's power "each according to their gift." And that "Spirit is given to each person *for the sake of the common good*" (1 Corinthians 12:7). That is the key to Christian community and Christian social justice. It is not a vision of totalitarian equality, nor is it capitalist competition ("domination of the fittest"). It is a world in which cooperation, community, compassion, and the charity of Christ are paramount—and to which *all* other things are subservient. The "common good" is the first principle of Catholic social doctrine—although few Catholics know it.

[1] Peter Maurin, quoted in *The Long Loneliness: The Autobiography of Dorothy Day* (Harper and Brothers: 1952), 280.

Adapted from Richard Rohr and Others, *Grace in Action*, ed. Teddy Carney and Christina Spahn (Crossroad: 1994), 3–5.

LEAD ... love God with all your mind

Wednesday
Morning
Study

Luke and Acts by Pastor Phil

Luke's story of Jesus and the Early Church

9:30-11:30am, Wednesday mornings

In-person: North Meeting

Online: Zoom Prayer Room

Each year, the gospel texts that are assigned from the Revised Common Lectionary focus on a different gospel. The first Sunday of Advent (Nov. 28) begins our year of Luke. The gospel of Luke is the first of two volumes that the gospel writer wrote. The second volume is *Acts*. On Wednesday mornings, we will journey through Luke's account of Jesus and how his actions are mirrored in *Acts*. Each week's focus will be guided by the passages which will be read in the following Sunday's worship:

Nov. 26 -- Parallels in Luke and Acts

Dec. 1 — Luke 1:1-25, 57-80 Beginning of Luke, Zechariah's vision & birth of John the Baptist

Dec. 8 — Luke 1:26-56 Visitation to Mary and Magnificat

Dec. 15 — Luke 2:1-20 Birth of Jesus

Dec. 22, 29 — No Class

This will be our first attempt to do a *hybrid* study: in-person and online at the same time. To join us online, go to the website and click on the Zoom Prayer Room.



GRACE
MORE THAN WE DESERVE
GREATER THAN WE IMAGINE
ALL THAT WE NEED

Men's Breakfast Study
8-9:30 am, Saturday, Nov. 27 & Dec. 11
Church of the Cross—North Meeting Room
RSVP to Helmut Hofer

LEAD ... love God with all your soul

COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

It's been a busy fall, and I'd like to express my deep gratitude to all the people have stepped up to contribute their time and talents.

The Treasurer (Archie Wells), the Church Administrator (Stacey Kotlar), the Co-administrator (Gates Fortier) and Pastor Phil have all been working hard on the 2022 Budget, the Annual Report and plans for the Annual General Meeting.

Progress is going well with the Mutual Ministry Team. We expect to have the team set up shortly and a kick-off meeting in December.

The Constitution and Bylaws Team (Archie Wells, and Laverne Rude), under the leadership of Hilary Gray, has made excellent progress on a new version of the Constitution. Some enhancements are still under way, regarding the Endowment Committee.

The Mission Endowment Committee under the leadership of Hanna Janzen have reached a major milestone. The minimum balance in the Fund has been reached, and disbursements can now be made. The Committee has done excellent work on defining a Disbursement Approval Process, and that has now been ratified by Council.

Helmut Hofer will be leading a Financial Review Committee (Carolyn Lewis and Brian Anderson), who will start their work in January after the books have been closed for 2021.

Klas Ohman has made a complete success of the Faith and Legacy Mini-Forest.

A big thank you to Stacey, for organizing photo shoots for a new church directory and to all the Council members who volunteered to help organize the sessions.

Another thank you to Paddy Colfer and the Listening Response Team for hitting the ground running. I think we can look for great results from the LRT going forward.

Thanks also to Catherine Glaser-Climie for re-starting the choir in time for the Christmas season.

The outlook for 2022 is reasonably positive. Sunday attendance is picking up, and were hoping to see a return to normal function this coming year. We've booked the FCJ Centre for a Council Retreat on March 4th and 5th, where we plan are to renew the Annual Roadmap. What we still need is: a second Co-Administrator to work with Gates: more technical people for the Audio Visual team on Sundays; and volunteers for the 2022 Council.

Thanks you everyone for your help and support this year. Have a safe and happy Christmas, and renewed growth in the New Year.

Bill Ogilvie
Chair of Council

Short Term Disability Claim Approved – Pastor Laura

Through ELCIC Group Services Inc., ELCIC congregations provide their staff with both a short term and a long term disability plan that provides income replacement for eligible employees. Pastor Laura's recent claim under the short term disability plan has been approved by the plan administrator.

MONTHLY FINANCIALS

Church of the Cross Financials through October 31, 2021			
	2021 Budget	Budget YTD	Actual YTD
Income*	\$350,000.00	\$291,666.70	\$264,365.10
Expenses**	\$354,667.00	\$295,555.70	\$285,239.43
Balance	(\$4,667.00)	(\$3,889.00)	(\$20,874.33)
General Fund Balance	\$14,001.58		
Designated/Pass Fund Balance	\$122,095.82		

*Includes \$19,935.50 of CEWS benefit and \$12,600.00 of Canada Summer Jobs grant

**Includes \$12,600.00 reimbursed by Canada Summer Jobs grant

The office continues to observe
the "Work from Home" Order.

You can reach Stacey in her remote office

Monday—Wednesday 9:00–2:00

Church and Office are open Thursday 9:00–4:00

The Office will be closed the week after Christmas

(Dec. 26–31)

LEAD  ... love God with all your **soul**

Cause of the Month

December



During December we encourage members to donate funds to enable us to supply food or gift cards for families who struggle to meet their needs during the winter and holiday season. Your continued support is much appreciated.



Thank you to all who have heeded the call and sent your prayers and support to those in BC that have been affected by the flooding.

LEAD

EVENTS

Christmas is fast approaching.

We will be scheduling two Christmas Eve Services:

4pm & 6pm.

As our capacity is set at 75 people we are asking that everyone register for the worship service as soon as possible.

To Register:

Go to the website. On the main page banner there is a link to register.

2021

Christmas Schedule

A visual of how the Advent and Christmas Season will unfold at Lutheran Church of the Cross

First Sunday of Advent
Lovers of God

28



5

Second Sunday of Advent

Saying yes

Third Sunday of Advent
Happy disruption

12



19

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Hope - filled future

Christmas Eve

4pm Service
6pm Service

(both services require registration to attend)

24



25

Christmas Day

Online Edited Christmas Eve
Worship available

Boxing Day

Sunday Worship - 10am
Holy Innocents

26



2

Lessons & Carols Service

Sunday Worship - 10am

EVENTS

Advent is the season of darkness, of waiting and anticipation, of preparing for the celebration of Christ's first coming, and of readying our hearts for Christ's coming again.

The Worship and the Arts Ministry Team invites you to participate in a paint night where you will be guided in the creation of a painting of the Nativity. Join with others across the Synod to wait, anticipate, and prepare by creating a Nativity painting for your own home, or as a gift. All skill levels are welcome.

This free event will take place [Sunday, December 5, 2021](#), from 3:00-4:30 pm.

For more information and to register, click [here](#).

Hosted by
Lisa Rude



WE SUPPORT

Warm Feet for the Street



Annual drive for
toiletries!
Find the collection
box in the narthex
and details in
Thursday Thoughts

The Social Ministry Team

As our [Christmas](#) project we will again do the 'stuff a pair of socks' (also known as "Warm Feet for the Street") for the Mustard Seed. A box will be placed in the narthex for the collection of socks and all donated items.

List of items needed to stuff socks:

Personal hygiene (i.e. soap, toothpaste and brushes, deodorant, lip balm, skin cream, shampoo, comb, tissues) chocolate bars, candy treats, pen and writing paper, bus tickets, gift card, scarf, mitts.

December 12th is the final day for collection.

LEAD  ... love God with all your **heart**

WE SUPPORT



Your gifts have the power to change lives this Christmas! Share God's love with the world and make a meaningful difference in the lives of others with **Gifts from the Heart!**

Here's how it works:

1. You choose just the right gift for that person on your list, like a pair of goats or a flock of chickens!
2. We'll send you a beautiful card you can share with your loved one to tell them about the special gift made in their honour.

Your gift changes lives – thank you!

To explore “Gifts from the Heart” options, please visit the CLWR website:

www.clwr.org/gfth2021

WE SUPPORT

Assisting Afghani Refugees

SouthWest Area Refugee Ministry (SWARM)

A few years ago, Lutheran churches together started working together to sponsor and support refugees. With the current events in Afghanistan, there is a critical need to support Afghani refugees that have arrived in Calgary. If you would like to assist families that are arriving from Afghanistan to make a new and safe home in our country you might want to consider the following groups who are coordinating assistance. Our email is calgaryswarm@gmail.com

1. Check any of these websites for ways to help: CCIS (Calgary Catholic Immigration Society), Centre for Newcomers, or Immigrant Services Calgary
2. Clothing and household Item donation
Donate new or like-new household items and clothing for any age or gender: donations to WINS (Women in Need Society), SWARM can assist. If you have a truck or are able to help move furniture or deliver clothing let us know.
3. Volunteer as part of a welcoming environment for newcomers to Canada by contributing your time and sharing your skills, connecting with a new family. Contact a SWARM member for ways to get involved.
4. Non-perishable food donations
Donate culturally comforting food to help our newcomers feel at home. The Culturally Comforting Food Hampers are customized food hampers based on an individual/ family's dietary needs. They are customized depending on the number of individuals and their ethnicity. To make a donation contact colleencory@immigrant-education.ca
5. Monetary donations
If you'd prefer, tax receiptable donations can be made to Centre for Newcomers, Immigrant Services Calgary, or The Immigrant Education Society online or via cheque. SWARM can also accept donations designated to Afghan resettlement.

LEAD  ... love God with all your **strength**

PARTNERS

The Calgary Alliance for the Common Good (CACG) is offering the following training to support organizations and individuals during this challenging time...



Mental Health First Aid (Basic) Training:

Mental Health First Aid (Basic) is intended for adults interacting with adults. This course focuses on the four most common mental health disorders including substance-related, mood-related, anxiety and trauma-related, and psychotic disorders. Participants who take this course are well prepared to interact confidently about mental health with their family, friends, communities, and workplaces.

WHEN:

Friday, December 3rd, 2021 - 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM
Saturday, December 4th, 2021 - 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM
Sunday, December 5th, 2021 - 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM

WHERE:

St. Andrews Anglican
(1611 St. Andrews Pl NW)

Learn more and register at www.calgarycommongood.org/events