

OSL Weekly News

Sunday August 25, 2024 edition

THIS WEEK FOR OSL

24 August: Margaret Johnson funeral, 11AM & luncheon to follow.

25 August: Sunday Worship 10:30 AM. [Zoom Link: ID 3065860006, pw: 190](#)

1 September: Sunday Worship 10:30 AM. [Zoom Link: ID 3065860006, pw: 190](#)

NEWS & EVENTS

In Worship: At OSL we endeavor to be a radically welcoming and inclusive community. As such, during worship we invite you to position your body as best meets your needs. Please sit, stand, or kneel as works best for you, knowing that your worship is valid and cherished by God.

Thank you: Our time, talents and everything in our lives are all gifts from God. We thank God for these gifts and the opportunities to share them with others.

Trinity TLC Pantry Closing: With the dissolution of Trinity Lutheran, this life-giving outreach will also be discontinued. We've included the letter sent out by Trinity with this week's email. We prayerfully ask for God's guidance.

4 September: Confirmation Exploration Session: for families with youth in grades 6 to 8. 7PM.

8 September: we welcome Rev. Randy Faro, who'll be visiting Regina and will be our guest pastor this Sunday!

8 September: Blessing of the Backpacks. All students of all ages are invited to bring their backpacks to be blessed during Sunday worship as we prepare for a brand-new academic year.

8 September: (tentative) Fall Gathering Community Breakfast at OSL. Theme: Oatmeal & Cereals Breakfast. We're asking people to bring pots of oatmeal, their favourite hot or cold cereals & related items, as well as volunteers to assist with setup, service and cleanup.

There's a sign-up board in the narthex, or you can contact Tim directly in the office. In the event that we don't have enough participation we'll look forward to a future opportunity for fellowship.

13-15 September: Sask Synod Youth Retreat at Camp Kinasao. Info: office@oslregina.com.

SK Synod youth - come and gather at Kinasao for a weekend of connection and camp fun! This event is put on by the ELCIC SK Synod, hosted at Kinasao. Bus transportation is available from Regina, Saskatoon and Prince Albert!

Cost: \$115 + GST/person *cost increases \$25 on Aug 31. Ages: 12-17. Financial assistance information is available on the registration portal:

<http://www.kinasao.ca/camps-retreats/registration-info>

WANTED

Pastor Diane is looking for a small rectangular coffee table to use as part of the children's ministry. If you have one that is looking for a new home, please let her know.

SAVE THE DATE!

2-3 November: 65th Anniversary Celebration of Our Savior's Lutheran Church. We'll have a catered banquet in our Fellowship Hall on Saturday, Nov. 2, with tickets sold on a cost recovery basis. A Celebration Service will be held Sunday, Nov. 3. Watch for more details to come as plans are finalized!

FAMILY AND YOUTH MINISTRY:

Confirmation! Planning is underway for Confirmation in the Fall. If you have youth in grades 6 to 8 who would be interested, please email office@oslregina.com.

Exploration Zoom Session is planned for September 4 (see graphic below).

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Hello OSL Community,

If you were in worship this past Sunday, you may have noticed something different...I didn't stand in the pulpit to preach. Instead, I used a music stand to hold my binder and stood in front of the altar to preach. I don't believe in change simply for the sake of change. If I do something different, be it in language, or symbols, or in this case, the position of my body relative to all of those sitting in the pews, there is a reason, and usually it's a theological reason. In this case, it is a way for me to live out Jesus' command to love my neighbour and to contribute to making this world a better reflection of the desires and dreams God has for our world.

Every culture has its "norms" - what is considered acceptable and not acceptable. It is those who hold power (often the majority) who get to set what is "normal." In our "Canadian" society, it was those people who came to this land from Europe who set those standards, imposing their beliefs, worldview, and way of living on the Indigenous peoples who had already called this land home for millennia. When I was a student, I was taught that my ancestors were doing them a favour by "civilizing" them, and as someone who was on the "winning" side, if you will, I didn't see the problem. Surely a home with running water and central heating is preferable to a tipi and, woven wool blanket is better than a buffalo fur, right?

Of course, a lot has changed for me since that time and today I know colonization has had and continues to have horrible consequences. Indigenous peoples had an education system, a legal system, a food security system that worked very well for them as it had for many, many generations. That my ancestors thought it was acceptable to impose their Eurocentric way of being on the Indigenous people could only happen because they had deemed Indigenous people and their way of being as less-than, substandard, wrong, even evil. The dehumanization of Indigenous peoples was done systematically and intentionally by stripping away their language,

culture, family and societal structure and spiritual practices... to “take the Indian” out of them and make them “white.”

Today we (the descendants of the colonizers) are beginning to understand the devastating consequences of colonialism. Thanks be to the Creator for the resilience of the Indigenous people who in spite of all the odds, managed to hang on to their language, culture and spiritual practices and who are doing the hard work of reclaiming them.

A few weeks ago I attended the National Worship Convention and for three days Lutherans and Anglicans explored decolonization of worship in our denominations. Though Residential schools no longer exist, our society, including our churches, are still very Eurocentric. We may not say it aloud, and it might not even be particularly noticeable to those of us who are of European descent, but if you were to ask people who come from another cultural background, they could tell you all of the ways, both subtle and overt, that the European way of being is lifted up as being the “preferable” or the “norm” within our churches and thus reinforcing the message that anything else is “less-than” or “substandard.”

Now, of course, we would never intend for that to be the case but intentional or not, these kinds of messages are there. They hurt people who are not part of the “norm” and continue to perpetuate the marginalization of oppressed people.

At the convention, we had an opportunity to hear the voices of marginalized. As a child, one of the speakers was told by a white immigration officer that she needed to change her Chinese name to something that was easier to pronounce. This led to many questions such as, Easier for who? She and her family and people in her culture didn't have a problem pronouncing her name. Yet she was expected to change her name, a key part of her identity, to something white people could pronounce to make them more comfortable. The experiences of the various speakers bore witness to the very real harm done to people's spiritual, mental, emotional and even physical wellbeing when those who set “norms” do not allow space for people to fully be themselves and insist they conform to other's definitions of what is acceptable. They also shared how incredibly life-giving it is, not just for them, but for everyone in the community, when they are able to fully be who they know God created them to be and what spaces like that look like and how those of us who are part of the majority can support the de-centering of European thinking and ways of being. This is, in essence, what decolonization is about.

But in order to do that work, we must be willing to do the hard work of not only listening to marginalized voices, but taking the time to do an honest assessment of what we do and how we do it, to see where colonial ideals are still present. One of our most beloved hymns. “Onward Christian Soldiers” has a very different message, depending if you identify with the “conquerors” or if you identify with the people who were conquered. Do we continue to sing that song knowing now that the language it contains reflects harmful colonial thinking?

If we chose to make changes, they cannot simply be performative but must truly reflect and celebrate all cultures and all peoples with equal honor, respect and value. Making those changes

means letting go and possibly grieving what has been familiar and even beloved. The task can seem daunting, and I am grateful for all of the work the organizers of the conference did to craft liturgies for the worship services that have helped us begin to learn some new language and practices that will make worship more inclusive and life-giving for all.

So what does all of that have to do with why I stepped out of the pulpit? Well, in a Eurocentric society, being in an elevated position is one way that we establish dominance over other people. An elevated pulpit is very common in old churches in Europe, and undoubtedly had some practical uses in those buildings when it came to being able to be heard, but even so, not just anyone could step into the pulpit - to be allowed to be in there meant you had some authority or power within the community. If you, like me, come from a European ancestry, an elevated pulpit maybe doesn't send the same message to you as it does to someone who comes from a marginalized community, who knows all too well they are already considered by society as being lower-than those who make up the majority...they don't need a visual reminder of that.

So, I am choosing to step out of the pulpit as an act of decolonization. And let me tell you, it was uncomfortable for me. I felt very exposed. But on the other hand, it felt liberating. And based on some of the responses I received, it was meaningful for some people in the community who saw the message it conveyed as life-giving to them. And so, I am going to continue the practice. I am committed to working through my discomfort and I pray that it will continue to send a powerful message of inclusivity and the kind of relationship I desire to have with the people I serve. Yes, I am your pastor and yes, I have some areas over which you have entrusted authority to me. But I do not see myself as above any of you. I do not see myself as holy than any of you. I have been called by God to use my gifts in a particular way to proclaim Gospel and to serve God's people but that doesn't make me any better or more powerful than anyone else. We are all equal before God.

Some of my colleagues who have been wrestling with this stuff longer than me have chosen to stop wearing the clergy collar, another symbol of power and authority. At this time, I am still comfortable wearing the clergy collar, but I also take wearing it very seriously because I know that simple piece of plastic sends a message that enables me to not only potentially offer help, but also to inflict great harm on someone because of the authority that has traditionally been attached to it. So, I will continue to learn and discern and see where that journey takes me.

Whether as individuals or as an organization, decolonization is an ongoing process. We learn, we reflect, we discern, and we move forward towards new life and towards a world that better reflects God's love for all people. Martin Luther said that the church must always be reforming. I suspect if Luther were here today, he'd be right in the middle of doing the work of decolonization with us. Blessings on your journey,


Pastor Diane,

Interim Pastor

OUR CHURCH COUNCIL

- Nancy Hognestad (Welcoming the Newcomer / 65th Anniversary)
- Barbara Jones (Justice & Peace)
- Ann Marie Melvie (Chair / Worship / Call Committee)
- Daryl Nelson (Finance, Governance)
- Bert Ottenson (Property Management)
- Dave Solheim (Vice Chair / Technology)
- Bev Tastad (Secretary / Treasurer / Call Committee)

AT OSL



AA Serenity Now – Mondays & Wednesdays, Fellowship Hall, 8PM
 Other AA: Step programs throughout the year.
 Al-Anon – Mondays Classroom 1, 1:30PM
 NA Living in the Solution – Fridays, Fellowship Hall, 7PM
 NA Serenity Now – Sundays, Fellowship Hall, 7PM
 NA Serenity Sisters – Tuesdays, Classroom 1, 7:30PM

**Confirmation Exploration
Zoom Session**

For families with youth in grades 6 to 8

Wednesday, September 4th, 7 pm

Join Pastor Diane as she answers these questions and more!

What is confirmation all about?

Why should I even consider participating?

What's in it for me?

How much time is involved?

Are there tests? (NO!)

Are we going to have any fun? (YES!)



**Sept 13-15, 2024
SK Synod Youth Retreat
at Camp Kinasao**



**For more info email
office@oslregina.com**

**9 AM, Sunday Sept. 8
Fall Gathering Breakfast at OSL**

**Bring oatmeal or your
favourite cereal!
Sign up in narthex or
contact office.**





Dear friend of the TLC Pantry,

August 21st, 2024

As you may have heard, Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church in Regina has voted to close our congregation and bring our 118 years of ministry in the Heritage neighbourhood to an end. As we go through the process of closing our congregation, we are looking for ways that the legacy of our ministry can continue to benefit the community which has been our home.

One aspect of Trinity's ministry that we are hoping will be able to continue is the TLC Pantry. This program is funded entirely by grants and donations, and staffed mostly by volunteers. The TLC Pantry has donors and volunteers from many different organizations and congregations throughout the city, and a very close relationship with Indigenous Christian Fellowship, which arranges for the donation and delivery of nearly 500 sandwiches every week to help facilitate the work of serving our neighbours. Our teams prepare 120 lunches every weekday, and often serve even more than that number. Since we began this service program in the spring of 2020, over 101,000 lunches have been served from the TLC Pantry to hungry folks in our city. As food costs have been increasing, so has the need that we have seen coming to our door.

The work of the TLC Pantry is conducted as a ministry of Trinity, and its business is conducted under Trinity's registered charity number. When Trinity closes out its books, the TLC Pantry will not be able to continue to operate and be funded in the same way.

The best way for the ministry of the TLC Pantry to be able to keep serving our neighbours will be to create a new charitable entity whereby TLC Pantry has its own charitable number and board of directors for proper governance purposes. This new entity would then be able to do the same work that TLC Pantry has done for the past four years, no longer formally connected exclusively to Trinity.

We are hoping to form a board of directors for the new TLC Pantry distinct entity from a broad representation of our supporters. You are receiving this letter because you or someone in your congregation or organization has shown interest and support for the work of the TLC Pantry. If you or someone within your organization would be interested in serving on the board of the new TLC Pantry, please contact us at TLCpantryRegina@gmail.com. Once the new charity is set up and running, we anticipate that this will be a board that requires a fairly manageable level of participation. Board meetings will likely be quarterly, scheduled to coincide with grant application and reporting cycles.

Thank you so very much for your consideration of supporting this vital ministry in this way! The need of our neighbours is so great, we really do not want to have to end this service to the community.

Blessings,
Emmett Brown, TLC Pantry Coordinator
Rev. Dr. Sarah Dymund, Pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church
Michael Dymund, Trustee