



September 2020

St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church

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Running with Perseverance

Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:1b-2)

In our worship services, we have a stewardship moment during which I express thanks for your ongoing support. These stewardship reflections are not included in the weekly bulletins that you receive but they can be seen in the videotaped worship services. The following thoughts I shared in worship on August 9, the day when the Olympics in Tokyo would have ended.

As we know, the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo had to be cancelled, were postponed to next year due to the Covid19-virus. The Olympics have written many inspiring stories. Many athletes overcame severe obstacles and persevered. It did not always translate into winning a medal, but what they did conveyed the true spirit of the games that participating is more important than winning.

John Stephen Ahkwari from Tanzania is one such example. He competed in the marathon race at the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City. He came in last of all the runners who finished the race. He arrived more than an hour after the winner.

About halfway through the marathon, he fell - badly wounding his knee and dislocating his shoulder. Because it had already gotten late when he arrived in the stadium, there was only a small crowd left to cheer on the man who limped to the finish line with a blood-soaked bandage around his knee.

When Ahkwari was asked why he continued running, he answered, "My country did not send me 5,000 miles to start the race; they sent me 5,000 miles to finish the race."

When we are looking at our spiritual lives, shouldn't we ask ourselves: Do we have what it takes to finish?

In life, we get bruised or beaten. But there is also a hospital – a spiritual hospital – in place for us, that is church and worship, where we get treated and bandaged up; where we can get all the support so that we can finish well our journey of faith in this life.

I am grateful for your perseverance, for your good spirits, for your faithfulness. But let us not forget to give thanks to God that he is with us – every step that we take – to guide us through this life, to give us courage and hope. This assurance of God's presence is certainly something that we need in these uncertain times.

Yours in Christ,
Bjoern E. Meinhardt, Pastor



John Stephen Ahkwari

Mit Ausdauer laufen

Lasst uns laufen mit Geduld in dem Kampf, der uns bestimmt ist, und aufsehen zu Jesus, dem Anfänger und Vollender des Glaubens, der, obwohl er hätte Freude haben können, das Kreuz erduldet und die Schande gering achtete und sich gesetzt hat zur Rechten des Thrones Gottes. (Hebräer 12,1b-2)

In jedem Gottesdienst mache ich mir ein paar Gedanken darüber, was es heißt, Haushalter Gottes zu sein. Dabei bedanke ich mich auch für eure anhaltende Unterstützung. Diese Gedanken sind nicht in den wöchentlichen Briefsendungen enthalten, sind aber Teil der auf Video aufgenommenen Gottesdienste und können dort gesehen werden. Die folgende Reflektion habe ich am 9. August gehalten – dem Tag, an dem die Olympischen Spiele in Tokio zu Ende gegangen wären.

Wie wir wissen, mussten die Olympischen Spiele für 2020 in Tokio abgesagt werden und wurden wegen des Covid-19 Virus aufs nächste Jahr verlegt. Die Spiele haben immer wieder bewegende Geschichten geschrieben, bei denen einige Athleten schwere Hindernisse überwinden mussten und bis zum Schluss durchgehalten haben. Obwohl sie nicht unbedingt eine Medaille gewonnen haben, haben sie ganz im Sinne des olympischen Mottos weitergekämpft, dass dabei sein wichtiger ist als zu gewinnen.

Ein Beispiel ist John Stephen Ahkwari aus Tansania. 1968 nahm er am Marathonlauf teil, kam aber mit über einer Stunde Rückstand auf den Sieger im Ziel an.

Etwa zur Hälfte des Rennens war er böse gefallen, hatte sich dabei schwer am Knie verletzt und eine Schulter ausgekugelt. Trotzdem lief er weiter. Spät am Abend kam er an, als sich nur noch wenige Leute im Stadion aufhielten, die den Mann anfeuerten, der mit einer blutigen Bandage um sein Knie das Rennen zu Ende lief. Als er in einem Interview gefragt wurde, warum er weitergelaufen war, sagte Ahkwari: „Mein Land hat mich nicht 5.000 Meilen geschickt, um das Rennen anzufangen; es hat mich 5.000 Meilen geschickt, damit ich das Rennen zu Ende laufe.“

Wenn wir das auf unser geistliches Leben beziehen, sollten wir uns da nicht auch fragen: Haben wir, was es braucht, um unser Rennen zu beenden?

Gewiss, manchesmal erleiden wir Verletzungen und Schläge. Wir haben aber auch ein Krankenhaus, ein geistliches Krankenhaus (wenn ihr wollt) in der Form von Kirche und Gottesdienst, wo wir alles erhalten, um versorgt und gepflegt zu werden, damit wir dieses Rennen des Glaubens gut zu Ende bringen.

Ich bin für euer Durchhaltevermögen dankbar, für eure gute Laune, die ihr verbreitet, für eure Treue. Aber lasst uns nicht vergessen, Gott dafür zu danken, dass er bei uns ist – mit jedem Schritt, den wir tun –, um uns durch das Leben zu führen, um uns Mut und Hoffnung zu geben. Diese Zusage der Gegenwart Gottes ist etwas, das wir gerade in diesen ungewissen Zeiten brauchen.

In Christo, euer
Björn E. Meinhardt, Pfarrer

Update to the Congregation from Church Council

As summer is coming to a gentle close, we hope that you have had a fulfilling and safe summer despite the conditions and restrictions we are living with. It looks like we will have to continue to live as we are for quite some time. May our faith provide strength and comfort.

St. Peter's 90th Anniversary

At our recent meeting of church council, it was decided that we would hold off having the 90th celebration until such a time in the future when we can come together more fully for fellowship. Of course, we will still acknowledge and celebrate this milestone anniversary at our September 13th service. It will be special and meaningful and there will be a "keepsake" for you to take home. Please save this date on your calendar. The services will follow the regular schedule with the German service at 9:00 am and the English service at 11:00 am.

Thursday Evening Services

Our Thursday evening summer services will have come to an end as of August 27th. We thank Pastor Meinhardt for providing this additional service during the summer months to those of us who are away on weekends. Sunday services will continue as scheduled with the 9:00 am service in German and the 11:00 am service in English. Though we had been optimistic about our situation here in Manitoba, with Covid-19 cases on the rise, the protocols we established for our worship services will remain in place and we will continue to adhere to the provincial and national guidelines and recommendations. We've done everything we can to ensure your safety and we hope many of you will feel comfortable returning to worship services this fall. If you have any questions or concerns, we might be able to address and alleviate those - please call Barbara Schott at 204-257-3531 or e-mail: b.schott@shaw.ca

To those of you who regret not being able to visit with friends before and after service, we suggest that this not deter you from coming and that you reach out privately to one another. The washrooms are available and safe-use recommendations have been posted. Unfortunately we can't sing out loud, but we can hum along or quietly read the text of the hymn to ourselves in worshipful meditation. May the power of the message, of hearing God's Word in the solace of our beautiful sanctuary, our "mighty fortress," or on our on-line platform, sustain us through the months ahead.

A change to our on-line services schedule

The Sunday morning 11:00 am service in English will now be the service that is videotaped. It will be posted to the church website later that afternoon or by early evening on that same Sunday. We want to thank Michael Zacharias for his ongoing dedication, talent and hard work in providing us with this alternative way of participating in worship. We would also like to be there for Michael and to coordinate with him while he is operating the camera with the operation of the sound board and power-point. If you are able to help out on Sunday, please let him know in advance: phone: 204-582-1334 or e-mail: michaelzacharias@shaw.ca

Änderungen an unseren Gottesdiensten

Am 26. August fand der letzte Gottesdienst am Donnerstag Abend statt. Das hat Auswirkungen auf unsere Video-Aufnahmen, die ab dem 6. September im 11 Uhr Gottesdienst am Sonntag Morgen getätigt wird. Das heißt, dass die Aufnahmen auf unserem YouTube-Kanal erst am späten Sonntag-Nachmittag abrufbar sein werden. Wir bitten um Ihr Verständnis (nichts erscheint in diesen herausfordernden Zeiten normal) und hoffen, dass dies keine allzu große Unannehmlichkeit verursacht. Vielleicht überlegen Sie sich ja, persönlich am Sonntag Morgen zum Gottesdienst vorbeizukommen: 9 Uhr auf Deutsch, 11 Uhr Englisch.

Home Visits

Pastor has indicated that he is available for home visits and you can contact him to schedule one. If you are in an assisted living or nursing home, these visits would observe the regulations of your facility. Please contact by calling (204) 792-3346 or by e-mailing pastormeinhardt@mymts.net.

Besuche

Gerne macht Pastor Meinhardt einen Termin mit Ihnen zum Besuch aus, wenn es Ihnen (und dem Management, wo Sie wohnen) recht ist. Sie können Pastor Meinhardt unter (204) 792-3346 anrufen oder eine E-Mail schicken: pastormeinhardt@mymts.net.

Holidays

We wish Gudrun Neeth a relaxing holiday (August 24th - September 6th).

We wish Pastor Meinhardt a restorative holiday (September 14th – 27th)

Both have worked tirelessly and extra hard these last few months to work with and around Covid and we thank you.

Filling in for Pastor Meinhardt, with thanks from the Congregation:

Sunday, September 20: Pastor John Cobb

Sunday, September 27: Pastor Tom Lurvey

A big thank you

to Siegi Kitzmann, Helmut Kitzmann, Erwin Erhardt and Kevin Erhardt for undertaking the big job of stripping, waxing and polishing the basement floors stairways & landings; and to Elli Kitzmann for looking after the men with food and drinks as they worked.

Birthdays

We might have missed or been late in acknowledging your birthday with all the changes and disruptions to our routines here at church these past months. If that was the case, our apologies for the oversight. This is a collective Birthday wish/Geburtstagsgruss to all of you who had birthdays between March and August.





KUWALA
CHRISTIAN GIRLS SCHOOL
— SHINE GIRLS SHINE —

Submitted by Jerry Roehr

In Malawi, travel restrictions are still in place. At the time this article was written, there were 5,382 reported cases of Covid-19. 168 persons have died. It is also indicated that, among all the reported cases, 1,091 cases were imported.

A video recording of the Kuwala 2019 annual report is now available on our website. It can be found on the bottom right corner on our main website and on the page where all the You-tube services are listed.

We are currently collecting the \$ 1,200.00 sponsorship money for remittance to the school. If you would like to become a sponsor, please contact Jerry Roehr at 204-981-4239 or roehr@mymts.net. A \$ 10,000.00 progress payment was made for the St. Peter’s Hall. The balance to be remitted is \$ 24,000.00 when the hall is substantially completed. It is currently expected that school will start again in the middle of September.



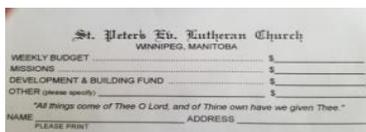
McSensio Raphae, the head-master of the school, is inspecting the tomato crop outside and the growing is also progressing well inside the greenhouse. The crops will be for sale at the local markets. The school will provide education in farming and marketing to provide non-academic employment opportunities after graduation.



Mission Budget

Our members continue to be faithfully supporting our Mission goals. Besides the contribution to the Kuwala School project, through funds received and also designated “Mission”, we were able to report to the Church Council that the following support was provided this year.

North American Lutheran Church	7,500.00
Canadian Mission District	1,500.00
NALC Seminary	1,000.00
Days for Girls	1,500.00
Free Press	500.00
Lutheran Bible Translators	500.00
Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR)	5,000.00
Winnipeg Harvest	1,000.00
CLWR Beirut Disaster Appeal	700.00



Last month, our June report started off with: *Every year, during the summer months, our monthly donations do not meet our monthly expenses.*

While that is still true, our financial statement for July has improved a little and stands at a deficit of \$ 7,920.59 compared to \$13,594.85 the month before. Of course, right now, we don’t know what the situation will be at the end of August but by the time you read this newsletter, we hope that everyone will contribute a “little extra” to bring us to a positive cash flow in September.



NALC Convocation Report to the Church Council, August 17, 2020

Submitted by Jerry Roehr

Appropriately dressed for the Covid-19 convention's new normal.

As you know the convocation was to be held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, but instead was by video conference lasting a total of 10 hours, August 7th and 8th, 2020 as well as advance information sessions. The title for the meeting was "2020 Vision". I attended as the lay delegate for our congregation. I was also asked by the NALC secretary Pastor Mark Chavez to sit on the Committee for Reference and Council.

During the convocation, a number of reports and video presentations, covering all aspects of NALC activities, were given. All of these are on the website (thenalc.org). The most important was Bishop Dan Selbo's presentation of the 10-point document which is a 10-point plan to support the four Core Values of the NALC. It presents the commitments of NALC members on what they wish to accomplish in the next four years. The full document with all the detailed information is available on the NALC website. The document was approved with 383 out of 432 votes.

The other major decision made was to approve certain constitutional changes to go to a bi-annual rather than annual convention. The discussions centered on the value of meeting face to face, to being able to meet members from different parts of the country, having more meaningful discussions on the floor, to see the displays and meet with representatives of supporting Mission societies and religious materials suppliers. In the end the constitutional amendments with one change were passed by a vote of 289 to 288. A majority approval 2/3 of all NALC congregations will now be required to pass the changes before ratification at the 2021 convocation.

As usual a number of elections took place for positions at the Executive Council, the Court of Adjudication and the Board of Regents.

Financial Statements for 2019 and the proposed budget for 2021 in the amount showed reduced income but also reduced spending. The NALC budget consists of an Operating Budget, the Seminary Budget, The Great Commission Budget and the Disaster Relief Budget. The 2021 Operating Budget shows a proposed deficit of \$ 800.00. One assistant to the bishop, Pastor Phil Gagnon (Edmonton) will resume a full-time position and will be responsible for "Life to Life Discipleship". Future discussions will need to address the work-load of the national bishop. 10 years ago, the NALC started with 10 congregations and hoped they could grow to 100, easily managed by one bishop. Adding 17 congregations this last year, the NALC has now grown to 440 congregations with over 140,000 members. The NALC has 500 pastors in various positions. Is there a need to reorganize the Mission Districts and is there a need for regional bishops to adequately serve the membership? The NALC has currently 11 full time positions and 2 part time positions.

Attendance at the convocation was 784, consisting of 300 pastors, 267 lay delegates and 217 visitors. Because the constitution provides for equal numbers of clergy and lay delegates, we can anticipate that St. Peters will continue to have 2 lay delegates.

Any submissions to the October 2020 edition of the St. Peter's Newsletter should be made 10 days prior to the first Sunday in October. So, submissions for the October Newsletter should be made by noon Thursday September 24, 2020. Submissions should be sent to Ortrud Oellermann at stpetersnewsl@gmail.com