



ALL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF BRUSSELS

ALCB

In Touch

July/August 2020

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Series 13, No. 6

Summer - Holidays - Free time - Distance

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The first half year has ended, finally. A mad and for many people difficult time. The Corona virus and its impact on society, on economy, on politics, yes on the whole world will still accompany us for a longer time. We cannot evaluate yet which damage it has brought, for the economy but more for the society with all the social distancing: for the old people, for the children, especially the children with special needs and/or from unprivi-

Psalm 139

1 To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David. O Lord, you have searched me and known me!
2 You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar.
3 You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways.
4 Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O Lord, you know it altogether.
5 You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me.
6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it.
7 Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence?
8 If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there!
9 If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
10 even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me.
11 If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light about me be night,"
12 even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light with you.
13 For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb.
14 I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.
15 My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth.
16 Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.
17 How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them!
18 If I would count them, they are more than the sand. I awake, and I am still with you.
19 Oh that you would slay the wicked, O God! O men of blood, depart from me!
20 They speak against you with malicious intent; your enemies take your name in vain.
21 Do I not hate those who hate you, O Lord? And do I not loathe those who rise up against you?
22 I hate them with complete hatred; I count them my enemies.
23 Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts!
24 And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!

leged families, for the people in very poor or conflict-ridden coun-

tries. Many people are so scared and understandably unconfident and don't dare to join group meetings because they belong to so-called "vulnerable" groups. The security measures with social distancing have been important and also have been successful, I would say. But we must take care of a "re-start" of a social togetherness as soon as possible as well! A philosopher said recently with view on the social distancing: "A society without touching is a dead society." - It may be especially our duty as Christians to strengthen efforts to re-start social societies, because we know that on the one hand this world was always and will be always threatened by destruction and death - but on the other hand we are in God's hands and God is greater. King David sings about it in Psalm 139, a masterpiece of human self-evaluation. Wherever we may be, scared and threatened or happy and free from sorrows, alone or accompanied, in lockdown or on holiday, God is with us. He knows us, even better than we know ourselves. He knows our path of life and accompanies and leads us. God is even stronger than death and will lead us into life, as it is said in one of the last verses of the Bible (Revelations 21, 4): "He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." - Summertime, time to take a breath, to stop, and at least to try to get new strength for the next stretch of way which lays before us. There is no better way than to turn to God in meditation and prayer. Many years ago I visited the Saint Romuald Cathedral in Mechelen. At the entrance there was a sign in different languages which asked for being quiet and which encouraged prayer. The a bit bumpy, amusing German translation of the Flemish said: "It would also be appropriate to pray a bit." - Surely, the intention of the sign was a bit different, but this call is truly right. Right now in the summer time and especially with Covid19 with its difficulties, changes, re-starts, and new starts is the right time to meditate on my relationship to God, to confide in Him, and to take refuge in His arms. - I wish you a peaceful and blessed summertime with the rest you need, many nice impressions, and good new starts under God's safe conduct. I hope to see you soon in a couple of weeks. Godspeed!



+ Yours Pastor Johannes

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Dear friends,

It's this month exactly three years that we moved from Brussels to Germany. Already three years! Time really flies as they say. We are doing well – and we have been busy. That's why the time passed so quickly. How have you been? We miss Belgium! From this summer on the only one of us in elementary school will be Michelle – as a lateral recruit for teaching English as the first foreign language. The kids are doing well in school and sport. We confirmed Lilly last year. That was also when we had to say farewell to our dog Trixie. Just a few weeks ago we adopted our new four-legged friend called Dickens. – Our ministry is a challenge – and that's all right with us! I'm pastor for two congregations, in Plauen and Greiz. Both are small in numbers, similar to you, but each with their own building. One of them is in a sorry state which we work on changing. But more importantly we are building up the church, that is the people. Outreach is again my mandate. We have been going out with the coffee cart that we invented in Brussels. We are just starting a team-based outreach movement with fellow Christians. But it is not so easy as we deal with a quite atheistic mindset in East Germany, the former communist territory. So, we work and pray for God to act. We think of our time in Belgium and thank God for the friends we made during our decade among you. May God the Father of our Lord Jesus bless you abundantly! Peace, friends and boatloads of Grace!



Please pray for...

- ...everyone who is infected with Corona and all other severely sick people for their soon and full recovery.
- ...all doctors, nurses, scientists, and all who work against the pandemic that they will have enough power for their work and good ideas to fight the virus.
- ...all who are travelling for protection and fulfilling times during their holidays and all who stay at home for enough time for recreation.
- ...for the Ellingstad family and all who move during the summer to new destinations and/or starting into new periods of life.
- ...for all who are looking for a purpose of life and/or have lost their faith that they may turn to God as their guide and only Saviour.
- ...for ourselves that we always keep the faith and stay in the presence of God, wherever we may be and that we may have the courage to tell others the Good News of life in Jesus Christ.

Reading and topics of the following Sundays to read and meditate on at home

Date	Sunday / Day of Commemoration	Readings: Old Testament, Epistle, Gospel	Topic and Passage for the sermon
19.7.	6 th Sunday after Trinity	Is 43, 1-7; Rom 6, 3-8(9-11); Mt 28, 16-20	Baptism: Dtn 7, 6-12
22.7.	Day of Mary Magdalene	Song 3, 1-5; 2Cor 5, 14-18; John 20, 11-18	Mary Magdalene: John 20, 11-18
25.7.	Day of St. James the Elder (Apostle)	Is 45, 4-7; Acts 11, 27- 12, 5; Mt 20, 20-23	St. James the Elder: Isaiah 45, 4-7
26.7.	7 th Sunday after Trinity	Ex 16, 2-3+11-18; Acts 2, 41-47; John 6, 1-15	Holy Communion: Hebr 13, 1-3
02.8.	8 th Sunday after Trinity	Is 2, 1-5; Eph 5, 8b-14; Mt 5, 13-16	Consequences of faith: John 9, 1-7
09.8.	9 th Sunday after Trinity	Jer 1, 4-10; Phil 3, (4b-6)7-14; Mt 13, 44-46	Use your faith: Jer 1, 4-10

Review and next plans

We have met again in June in Woluwe and Vossem and celebrated nice “services of the Word” (without Holy Communion). We are glad to see each other again in person and to sing and pray together and with Raymond at the organ. Additionally we broadcasted the services via the proven “Zoom” video chat and so a few more people could follow the service who needed to keep more distance or were far away. The church board decided to keep the possibility of the Zoom broadcast for a while to give more people the chance to join our services. We will evaluate this in autumn if it is worth to keep (and pay for it). We also hope to re-start with Holy Communion after the summer break. The next service is planned on 16 August as a “summer devotion”, probably again in the Sint-Paulus Church in Vossem. Our first “full” service as usual is planned for 30 August at 15:00 in the church in Woluwe. Covid19 circumstances permitting, we could also envisage to meet for our traditional “End-of-Summer-Picnic” later in September. – Since April we have had almost every week an Evening Prayer on Wednesday. After a good start with several people participation has decreased lately. We will see if the new academic year and autumn could also bring a new start for the Evening Prayers. The same applies to the Bible Study Group. If you are interested in a Bible Study Group in form of a “traditional” Bible study or rather a kind of “faith talk/formation”, please let the Pastor know! – Last but not least, we must say goodbye to the Ellingstad family now in summer. They have been with us several years as very faithful members and we thank God for their company and all the blessings brought to us through them! On the other hand, we extend a warm “Welcome!” to Anne and Renaud who joined us during the lockdown, first “digitally” and then also “in person”. | For your offerings during the summer: **IBAN: BE71 9530 6054 7769, BIC: CTBK BEBX, Evangelisch-Lutherse Kerk. Address: Tabakvest 59, 2000 Antwerp**



Our church members with birthday in July and August:

- ☞ 12.7. Zahra
- ☞ 1.8. Marc El.