



ALL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF BRUSSELS

ALCB

In Touch

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Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Change is in the air. Spring is almost over, temperatures are already like in the summer. The fresh light green is turning into strong, dark green or the yellow of the grain on the fields. After weeks of confinement we are waiting for change and normalisation. Many things are already possible again, more or less. And so we are looking forward to a “re-start” of our services now in June. – Strange months lay behind us. The world had to suddenly cope with this virus. Everything changed over night. And more than anything else, humanity had to learn that it was an error to think we have everything in our hands. Even such a small thing like a virus can do so much damage to our existence. And we talk a lot about the damages to our economy but we talk just rarely about the damage to our social relationships with “social distancing”, forbidden visits in hospitals and nursing homes, isolated children, and a society and community where touching, hugging, and being close to each other is banned. Some sociologists already warn about a division of the society. – Last Sunday, we celebrated Pentecost, the feast of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. This also means a change, a change of our total existence. More than any virus on this earth could ever do. With the Holy Spirit in our hearts we are able to believe in Jesus Christ. With the Holy Spirit the “social distancing” to God, caused by our sin, is healed and overcome. With the Holy Spirit our hearts were changed from stone to flesh (The Bible, Ezekiel, 36, 26-27a: God says: “And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart from stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you...”), from death to life (the Bible, John 3), from being a lost thing to a good creature in the image of God (the Bible, Genesis 1, verses 26-27 and chapter 2, 7: “Then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.”). And with the Holy Spirit, we are embedded in a community no virus can destroy. – Change is in the air, since Pentecost for the world, since our Baptism for us. Maybe the last months have also brought a change to your life which is not bad at all. More time with the family, for example more meals together. Or time to think about your life and a possible new start or “just” more time for your hobby and recreation. And also some good signs are visible in politics and society: the democracies seem to be strong in times of crisis against anti-democratic populists; deficits in different sectors, for example in the health and care systems, were revealed and at least the will is there to change something. Many people showed more solidarity towards each other. Yes, foremost the Holy Spirit works in the Church through Word and Sacrament to bring us the forgiveness of sins and presence of God. Jesus had promised that and thereon we shall trust. Nothing is as important than this. But we don't know how and where the Holy Spirit works apart from that to heal and preserve the world. Let us hoist our sails to use the fresh



Confinement ends –

Services back in the church building!

All the signs and information we already have are that we can meet again for services in the church building from Sunday 14 June onwards. Probably we must skip the coffee time after the service for a while. We don't know yet all the regulations but because of the size of the church and the usual numbers of our congregation we don't expect bigger problems. The only question until now is if the German congregation will let us use their church. They are going to take a decision on 9 June. In the case that we can “re-start” our services, the internet services on Sunday will stop.

breeze we experience for a change and new start, personally and for our communities! The Holy Spirit is working among us. Alleluia! – Let us pray with words of St. Augustine:

Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit, that my thoughts may all be holy. Act in me, O Holy Spirit, that my work, too, may be holy. Draw my heart, O Holy Spirit, that I love but what is holy. Strengthen me, O Holy Spirit, to defend all that is holy. Guard me, then, O Holy Spirit, that I always may be holy. Amen.



+ Yours Pastor Johannes

Evangelisch-Lutherse Kerk in België – All Lutheran Church of Brussels

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From the Church Board – Antependiums for our congregation

Again, due to the confinement with no greater expenses (no church rent, no organ fee, no travel costs) and thanks to your ongoing offerings to the church account, we stabilised our financial situation. Many thanks to all of you who care for our congregation with money and prayers! Please consider also in the future to offer for ALCB, maybe also still via a regular bank transfer. This guarantees your offer also if you miss a service. – The Church Board also decided to take over old antependiums from a small congregation of our German partner church SELK against a small donation. An antependium is the textile in front (Latin: “ante”) of the altar, the pulpit, and the ambo (lectern) in the particular liturgical colour (white, purple, green, red). The congregation of Nestau in the Luneburg Heath (by the way the home congregation of Dorina, who was with us last autumn during her internship) became so small that they decided to close down and sell their church building. They offered all their items to the church public that they may bring blessing somewhere else. We are happy we were chosen to receive them to decorate the church more solemnly. Now, we are waiting for the post to deliver them...

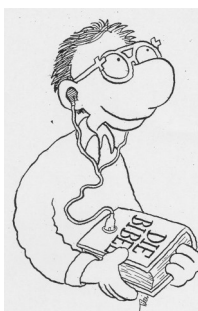
IBAN: BE71 9530 6054 7769, BIC: CTBK BEBX, Evangelisch-Lutherse Kerk. Address: Tabakvest 59, 2000 Antwerp

Our church members with birthday in June:
☞ 6.6. Pastor Matthias
☞ 10.6. Katie



Bible Study Group

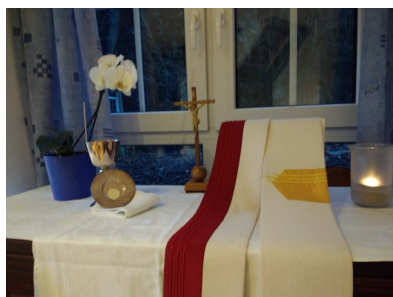
We had a good start of our new Bible Study Group via “Zoom”. In the first meeting we meditated on the passage for the next sermon with the help of Martin Luther’s way to read the Bible. But we are also open to talk about other topics of the faith. Suggestions and ideas are welcome! Everyone is



always welcome to join us! For the following weeks the invitation link will be sent out to everyone. After a while we will just invite the people who are interested to avoid annoying the rest with too many e-mails. Bible Study Group via Zoom – internet chat: **Thursdays, 19.30-21:00**

Evening Prayer

For a couple of weeks now we have been celebrating devotions on Wednesday evening via “Zoom” internet chat. A small circle of varying people meets to sing, to pray, and to listen to a Biblical reading for about 30 minutes. Everyone is welcome! The invitation link will always be distributed via the e-mail list of the church. Evening Prayer via Zoom – internet chat: **Wednesdays, 19:30-20:00**



Impressions of our „Zoom-Service-Altar“ at the Parsonage (from left to right: Maundy Thursday, Easter, Cantate, Pentecost)

Please pray for...

- ...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.
- ...the poor of the world who were hit even harder by the pandemic that they find new livelihoods and don't lose their courage.
- ...sufficient rain after weeks of drought, the growing of the crops, the farmers, and the nature under pressure.
- ...the people in the USA that they will keep the inner peace, stop all violence, and find ways out of the embittered situation with racism, disrespectful quarrels, and violence.
- ...the ongoing outpouring of the Holy Spirit to light all people, to lead them all to repentance, and to bring peace on earth.

Focus on liturgy: Church Year Circle – Trinity Time

With Pentecost Sunday we finally left the Easter circle and the first half of the Church Year. After Holy Trinity Sunday we will enter the time when the Sundays are just counted after Trinity. Some say it is the “fast-less” time, but of course every Sunday is a small Easter feast and the Sunday services in this time are not less worthy. Fact is that there are just few Sundays or feasts which have a topic of the “history of salvation” like Jesus’s birth or death and so they seem to be a bit less festive and a bit more “common”. Most of the Sundays in summer and autumn have ethical topics (“How should I live correctly?”) or deal with particular topics of the Church (Holy Communion, Baptism, the relationship between Christians and Jews, and others). Therefore, this time is also called “the semester of the Church” in contrast to “the semester of Christ” with Christmas, Easter and so on. Also now exciting passages lay before us and will ask us about us, our relationships, our lives and so on. Come and join us also in this time of the year!