



# Emmanuel Lutheran News

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## Pastor's Word for June 2023

So this year it's hot in May, like two years ago, and very much unlike last year, when it wasn't really summer until the 4th of July. No worries about that this year! In fact, there's an air quality alert RIGHT NOW because of a wildfire (in MAY!) up in British Columbia.

Now, I LOVE it hot. I served in the US Marine Corps. There's a line in the Marine's Hymn that goes: 'From the snows of far-off northern lands to sunny tropic scenes, you will find us always on the job, the United States Marine.' For sure you will, but ask any Jarhead, and they'll tell you they much prefer the sunny tropic scenes. I met Pastor Carol in Okinawa, the hottest place I'd ever been, until I made it down to the Philippines, and then on to Thailand.

I met my first North Carolina congregation in July of 2005 - they all apologized for the humidity and the three-digit heat. I told them, as I wiped my forehead, that it couldn't be too hot for me, coming from North Dakota and all. It DID get really hot down there, but I loved it all the same.

But these days the heat brings fear with it. Fear of wildfire, fear of drought, fear of global climate change, fear for the future. It's terrible. I hate that feeling. But it's a warning and a challenge that we, all of us, are children of Adam and Eve, who were given the responsibility: '

*And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth - Genesis 1.28.*

Long ago I thought that meant we get to do whatever we please, but experience has taught me that 'having dominion over' means 'take responsibility for'. And humans, no surprise, have done poorly in that regard. Now, we've done good things - I remember living in Spokane before 1974, and I never, EVER went down to the Spokane river. No one did, it was disgusting: raw sewage, garbage, mining effluence, who knows what was in that river. Today, because our people finally took responsibility for that beautiful water, everyone is able to enjoy the water, just like it says in Psalm 46: *There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells.*

That water, and the lakes and streams that bless our land, it makes MY heart glad, for certain. This is God's world, and I am God's child, and an agent of the Kingdom. This world is God's gift, and MY responsibility. OUR responsibility. I love this place too much to shirk my responsibility. I hope you feel the same. And I hope we all stay cool out there!

**Liturgy Changes for the Summer:** Yes, I know, everyone just LOVES it when we change things. I'm old enough to be skeptical of changes myself, I know how y'all feel. BUT our Lutheran liturgy is meant to move with the seasons, from Advent to Christmas, Epiphany to Lent, Easter to the long green Ordinary time until Advent rolls around again. Here are some of the things we regularly change:

**The Creed** - During festival seasons like Christmas and Easter, we use **the Nicene- Constantinople Creed**, which, like its name, is wordy and long. It is, however, the real deal - the summation of the faith approved at the ecumenical council at Nicea in 325 AD and affirmed later at Constantinople in 381 AD. That was a long time ago -so like ancient treasure, we honor it as our forebears did.

During the other seasons, we use **the Apostles' Creed**, which is actually OLDER than the other, but isn't actually 'official' - as it seems to come from a time before ecumenical councils! So that's why we do that. Both are ancient, both are vital, both are effective and worthy of our attention.

We also change **the music of the liturgy**, because while the words stay the same, mostly, the music can vary. Composers are writing new music for liturgy all the time, and we do take seriously the command to sing a new song (Psalm 40, 144, and other places). We'll adopt an older setting from Marty Haugen for Pentecost season this year because A it's really lovely, and B because it's shorter: Even the Preacher likes it short and lovely! Also, we'll continue using hymns that folks have suggested, and as always, if you'd like to make suggestion, just let us know. We do all this for God, but we do it for y'all as well. (\*Editor's note-and for Nancy too...) So God bless y'all through the summer season, and stay cool and safe out there!

In faith, hope and love,  
Pastor Greg

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*Bliss is in the journey, not the destination. Let the next Council meeting*