

St. Luke's, Edmonton

'I was thinking' ...

27th edition, January 6th, 2019

Welcome to this, the 27th edition of 'I was thinking', and the first one of 2019. Happy New Year!

We had a very blessed 2018, didn't we? We experienced the Lord continuing to bring us many things that have helped us flourish and grow. We go into 2019 rejoicing in both our God's unchanging nature and also the knowledge that plenty more opportunities are coming our way! Our God has been leading us and will no doubt continue to unfold His purposes for us over the course of the next twelve months. There will be plenty of excitement and surprises. Such is the nature of being a church family of Jesus's missional disciples.

So what have I been thinking about?

Your part in God's story

From Advent 2016 to Advent 2017 I read the Bible through chronologically. I had never done it before. After I had finished it I regretted taking so long to getting round to it. I warmly encourage you to do the same. The Bible is a big book. It can look daunting. It is hard to make the various connections when, for example, all the books of history are lumped together as they are. Reading the Bible chronologically makes it easier to join the dots. The thrust of God's Story becomes easier to see and thus your part in it too.

So, I warmly commend this to you. May God bless you as you read His Word.

Starting today - The Monthly calendar

I wrote last time about communications and insights we are gaining. One of the comments that was made to me was how it would be useful to have a monthly calendar. It's easily done, so, for a first draft of what that calendar might look like and the information it could contain, please see the back page of the bulletin. Please take this home with you and, along with using it for information, please use it as a focus for prayer too. I'd be grateful for your comments as well.

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Starting next week – a new preaching series

It amazed me how Mark's Gospel took all of 2018 and even then there were sections I wish we had more time to cover. Thanks for the feedback on the series. One of the interesting points made to us was that, while good, it was a 'slog' at times to be spending so long on just one book. So that got us thinking!

A key element of being a healthy church family of missional disciples is that Jesus must be at the centre of all we do, individually and corporately. Many of the letters in the New Testament were written to help the Church in a shifting culture work out what it means to follow Jesus, which is very appropriate to us then. :)

So, next week, we begin a short eight-week series on the book of Colossians. If you want to read it in advance in your own Bibles at home in preparation, please do. :)

The office - a new pattern emerging

On Wednesday December 18th, Andreas and I were very sad to hear from David Walker, who has been coming to do administrative work for us in the church office for some years now, that he could no longer continue due to the commitments with his full-time job at Safeway. We were not surprised at this news as it has been costly to David in terms of time and energy to do so. We are most grateful to him for all he has given us over the years and we'll miss his company on Wednesday mornings. We'll still be in contact with him though. Indeed, he was with us on Christmas Day.

What does that mean for the St. Luke's office function? Interestingly, the very next day someone who was unaware of David's decision offered help! So Jesus knows our needs and clearly has everything well in hand. But it is good to first take the time to ask ourselves 'what do we need now?'

The administrative needs of St. Luke's have changed greatly even in the time since I arrived here in January 2016. The structure and needs we have as a church family, the way we put the building to use alongside our renters and other users, plus our building's cleaning and maintenance needs, means 'St. Luke's is a complex organisation to say the least.

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It's therefore the right time to be asking what we need in terms of admin support for all we do, what is the best way to fulfill those needs and how we facilitate those meeting them. So we'll spend some time pondering, praying and listening about the right and best way forward. In the meantime, Andreas, Sharon and I will continue with the office function and you can contact the office in the usual ways.

Small groups

I believe that a small group structure is a key component in the life of a church family and have a key role to play in our future. We currently have two small groups. Here is some information on both of them.

The Thursday evening small group

This is every Thursday evening at St Luke's, starting at 7pm. It is bible study with the occasional discussion on solving world problems. The group is currently studying the book of Acts. For further information, please have a chat with Gail.

The Wednesday evening small group

The Wednesday evening small group meets on occasional Wednesday evenings starting at 7.30pm, usually in one of several different homes around St. Luke's, although it does meet in St. Luke's from time to time. This group does not do bible study in the same sense as the Thursday evening group but, taking a different approach, takes a Bible passage and applies it personally and to things we might do together as a group. There is also an emphasis on prayer and support for and of each other. For further information, please have a chat with Richard.

There will be another IWT very soon, this time about the Vestry and our annual meeting. Perhaps you are being called to serve St. Luke's as part of the Vestry? Information is coming to help you discern.

Thanks for being part of such a great church family.
With love, prayers and gratitude for you all.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Richard". Below the signature is a short horizontal line.