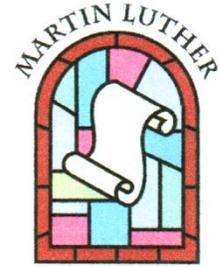


Congregational newsletter



LUTHERAN CHURCH
— Founded 1955 Gegründet —

February – March 2014

Devotion

“Holiness is contagious!”

*Dear parishioners and friends of
the Martin Luther Church!*

Have you already gotten your flu shot? During these cold months of the year, you have to protect yourself from cold and flu viruses. Where possible, do not even come into contact with them because they are contagious.

Holiness is also contagious. At least this is true for holiness as Jesus understands it.

This is how one of my theology professors captured the point and the sentence has stuck with me.

What is meant by this? It's simple: Jesus has a whole new understanding of how people and places are and remain holy. Until the time of Jesus, the sacred was separated from the profane and every day, to protect what is holy. Jesus does exactly the opposite. He doesn't set limits on holiness, but instead removes them. He sits at the table with the unclean and goes to the lepers. He heals on the Sabbath in order to help people. He invites those who are usually turned away. You could say he follows the principle: holiness is contagious. For his holiness is so strong that it transfers to others, involves them. Those who come in contact with him are blessed. Those who sit at his table are blessed. Those who meet him

enter into a living relationship with God and are infected by his Spirit.

This point of view regarding Jesus' holiness is great and inspiring because it broadens my perspective and opens my heart.

What does this mean practically? I imagine the church and our community to be a hostel. A place where you can find refuge and security, a place where we are guests of Jesus Christ and together

we search to understand and follow his word. In his name we offer hospitality to all those who want to take a place at his table and trust that Christ will touch them, that he will make sure that they are blessed. We don't have to keep our church a holy place. We can just open it up, because Jesus and his Spirit make this place holy.

Jesus Christ says, "Come to me all who are weary and burdened. I will give you rest." This is the miracle of his power, and his Spirit, that touches and heals the heart.

Sometimes those who we least expect are blessed. Even ourselves. His holiness is contagious. And with this I would gladly be infected.

A healthy start to this new year and God's healing blessings wishes you,

Your Christian Ceconi



News and Information

Invitation to the annual general meeting

The new year has begun, therefore the annual general meeting is just around the corner. We will begin right after the **joint service on the 23rd of February**. Please bring a lunch so you have lots of energy and enthusiasm for the discussions. New projects like construction at 5 Superior, welcome, website redesign, as well as the annual budget will be introduced. Children will find entertainment in the children's film provided.

New Model for Confirmation Classes

As of January, confirmation classes are being held in a new way. Instead of meeting every two weeks like in the past, the confirmands will meet once a month. Our meetings begin on Saturday afternoon and last until Sunday at noon. We stay together overnight in the church so that there is not only time for serious work but also for shared meals, games and worship on Sunday morning. The dates for our weekends are: Jan. 25-26, Feb. 15-16, Mar. 8-9, May 3-4. On Apr. 4-6, we will drive to the Weekend Confirmation Retreat at Camp Edgewood.

Youth Group reloaded- Come to our Youth Saturday!

Do you like Italian food? Are you interested in meeting new people? Do you want to experience something new at church? If you answered yes to any of these questions, you will be in the right place at the first youth group meeting at Martin Luther Church. We warmly invite you for dinner on Feb. 15 at 7 pm at our church, followed by a surprise program. If you would like, bring a sleeping bag and you can spend a night at church for the first time.

Curious? Questions?

Then give us a call!

Liesbeth Delbrück, Tel. (416) 854-1907 Amy Schweiger, Tel. (905) 625-9174

A spot in our Summer Camp has been given away!

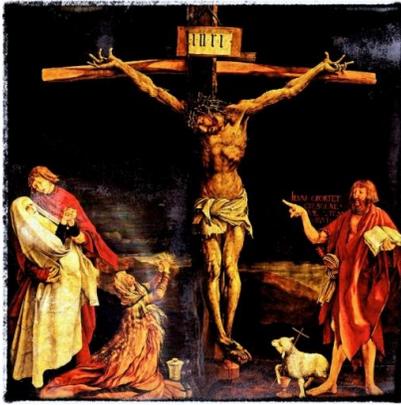
During the service on Christmas Eve, a complementary spot in our church summer camp was raffled off. The lucky winner is Basti Drygas!

For the rest of us, it's time to register. Registration forms are in the church office or can be downloaded from our website.

Contact: Anna Lisa Wienecke, Phone (905) 939-7494, annalisawienecke@hotmail.com

God for Every Man - Lenten devotions in 2014 bridging back to the Middle Ages

In the Middle Ages, diseases plagued the everyday life of people and wiped out entire areas. People asked for help from the saints - they implored God's help. That is the background of the Isenheim altarpiece (1512-16), that Anthony had commissioned for his hospice in Isenheim. For this Matthias Grünewald, the artist, designed a harrowing Jesus, a Christ who suffers. He painted a cross and under it the people who are also suffering - in different ways.



Five hundred years later, people are still moved by this image. The traditional “Way of the Cross for Youth” in Germany will contemplate images of the Isenheim altar this year and in the Martin Luther Church, we will look at the images during the course of our Lenten worship services. The images are a bridge to our everyday lives, to our suffering today. This image has not lost its relevance.

The German Lenten Services will begin with Ash Wednesday (March 5) and continue each Wednesday at 6 pm at Martin Luther Church.

New! This year we will also celebrate English Lenten Services every Wednesday (as of Ash Wednesday March 5) at 7:30 pm at our church and we will host other Protestant congregations in the Mimico area.

Swim Party @ Norseman Pool on March 22nd



On March 22, there will be the Sunday School Swim Party. As always, big fun for kids, adults and families. We will be meeting at 4:00 p.m. on March 22 at Norseman Community Pool, 105 Norseman Street, Etobicoke. After the swimming, delicious pizza will be provided.

Bible Study off to a good start

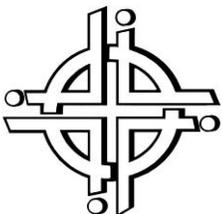
A group of us met for the first time on January 9 to study the bible together. Fifteen members of the congregation have responded to the invitation, so far. We are focusing on texts from Book of Matthew, which are to be the subject of Sunday sermons in the coming months.

The group is still open and welcoming new participants. It is also possible to participate in meetings on a drop-in basis.

The following dates are planned up to the summer:

- Feb 13th, 2014: The Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5-7); Mt 5:38-48 (to be preached on Feb 23rd)
March 6th, 2014: Mt 4,1-11 (temptation of Christ) (to be preached on March 9th)
April 10th, 2014: The Passion of Christ, Mt 26-27 (to be partly preached on Palm Sunday, April 13th)
(At Easter and in the time after Easter the lectionary focuses on the Gospel of John. So we take the opportunity to talk in May about the parables in Mt 13 which will be preached in July.)
May 8th, 2014: Mt 13:1-53 (so-called Parabolic Discourse) (to be preached during July)
June 5th, 2014: Mt 28:16-20 (The Great Commission) (to be preached on June 15th, Holy Trinity)

Invitation to World Day of Prayer 2014: Theme Egypt



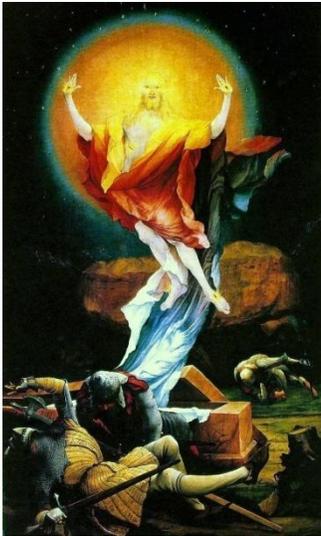
The joint German World Day of Prayer by Lutheran congregations will be held this year in the First Lutheran Church, 116 Bond St, Toronto. The Service starts at 11:00 am. There will be refreshments after the service.

There will be an introduction to the World Day of Prayer and the current situation in Egypt during the February meeting of the Ladies Group.

Pulpit Exchange on March 16th: Pastor Christian Schweter as Guest at Martin Luther Church

The traditional "pulpit exchange" takes place this year on March 16. All pastors of bilingual Lutheran congregations in Toronto will be involved in the pulpit exchange on this Sunday. Pastor Christian Schweter from the First Lutheran Church will come to Martin Luther Church (Joint Service at 11:00 am). Pastor Christian Ceconi will preach at St. George's Church.

Preview: Easter Holidays 2014



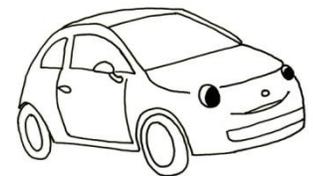
We will celebrate Holy Week and the Easter holidays as the high point of the liturgical year. Here follow all service dates, so that you can plan your time accordingly:

Palm Sunday, April 13	9:45 English Service with Holy Communion 11:00 German Service with Holy Communion
Wednesday April 16	6 pm German Lenten Service 7:30 pm English Lenten Service
Maundy Thursday, April 17	7 pm German Service with Holy Communion
Good Friday, April 18	9:45 English Service with Holy Communion 11:00 German Service with Holy Communion
Easter Sunday, April 20	6:00 Easter Sunrise Service 10:00 Easter Service in English and German with Holy Communion
Sunday April 27	11:00 Family Service with Renewal of Baptism

Ride Program

In the winter season, some of us might hesitate to drive. Others may have no opportunity to come to services. For this reason, we are once again organizing our ride program.

If you want to be picked up for services, then please call our church office by Thursday of each week. We will then coordinate to organize a ride for you.



Contact: Church Office, Anita Ratz, Tel. (416) 251-8293

Choir restarts

After a winter break, the Choir resumes weekly practices on February 18. Practices begin at 6 pm. The plan is to start rehearsing for Easter services.

Contact: Choir Leader Linda Marcinkus, Tel. (416) 255-2612

Theological Insights: The Gospel according to Matthew

On the first of Advent, a new church year began and with it a new order for readings during the church services. Currently we are in the so-called reading year A which focuses more on the evangelist Matthew.

Therefore, you will probably meet many “old acquaintances” again, since the gospel of Matthew includes many texts which are known even beyond church borders. Most notable are the Sermon on the Mount, the understanding that Christians are the Salt and Light of the earth, as well as the double commandment to love God and one another. The story of the wise men from the Orient who worship Jesus is also “typical” for Matthew and found only in this gospel. Finally, at the end of the gospel there is the so called Great Commission, on which foundation we baptize and which is part of the lessons for confirmands.



“And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” (Mt 28, 18-20)

We assume that the gospel according to Matthew was recorded during the time of early Christianity, where on the one hand, the knowledge of Jewish tradition was relevant, yet on the other hand, the vision to be in mission for all nations had been well established.

Probably an unknown Christian in the region of today’s Syria put the gospel on paper. Even so, around 125AD, Papias from Hierapolis, an early bishop in Hierapolis (near Pamukkale, Turkey), mentioned Matthew in one of his letters as the author of this gospel. It is more probable that this identification goes back to Mt.9,9 where a tax collector with the same name is cited (by the way, in Mt. 2,2 he is called Levi). Scientists today believe that this gospel text was written between 80-90 AC.

The great speech compositions appear influential. More than once the author joined thematically extensive collections of speeches and parables of Jesus in the gospel of Matthew. Thus one finds altogether five speech segments in Mt: Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5-7), Mission Discourse (or: Little Commission) (Mt 10), Parabolic Discourse (Mt 13), Congregational rules (Mt 18), discourse on judgment day (Mt 23-25). These discourses are emphasized especially by the fact that after every speech the evangelist continues with almost the same idiom (7:28; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1). Through these vast speeches in his gospel, Matthew classifies Jesus most of all as a teacher.

Again and again Matthew demands to carry Belief consistently over into everyday life. He is adamant about doing the divine will. The sermon on the mount, with the request to love thy enemy (Mt 5,43-48) and to give donations (Mt 6:1-4), is just as much an example as the discourse about the judgment day (Mt 25), in which Jesus says: „Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.“ There is definitely no lack of challenges for the bible studies (see report) and sermons with regards to the gospel by Matthew.

Christian Ceconi

Remarks and Reports

Disaster Relief Typhoon Haiyan: Heartfelt thanks for the \$2500 raised

As part of the fundraising campaign of the Lutheran World Relief for the flood victims in the Philippines, a total of \$ 2,500 was donated. Since the Canadian government doubled all donations, a total of \$ 5,000 went to benefit people who were affected by typhoon Haiyan. A video on the website of the Lutheran World Relief shows how your money has helped: www.lwr.org.



Thank you to all Christmas helpers

The fact that our church could again shine in Christmas glory is thanks to many helping hands. Here you can see a photo of the Christmas Tree Decorating Team. Thanks also to the diligent helpers who built the manger, set up the Advent wreath and decorated the window sills.

Christmas Play with Consul

Three wise men in bathrobes, a plush toy camel and Consular General as King Herod: The children of the Martin Luther Lutheran Church on Lakeshore Boulevard West in Etobicoke performed a clever Christmas Play on the third of Advent.

The church on Lakeshore Boulevard was well attended. The audience wanted to see the play that approximately forty children and adults from the congregation had practiced for a number of weeks. After Pastor Christian Ceconi had opened the church service, some children climbed up the steps to the altar area to start a discussion. Irritated, the Pastor inquired, what was happening. “We are waiting for a special star”, replied the children.



Then a girl carried a Christmas Star into the church and the children began dancing and singing along the pews. Pastor Ceconi made no attempt to leave the altar until his own daughters pulled at his robe and demanded: “Excuse me Papa. You have to leave now. We have a show to perform.”

At the centre of the Christmas play were the three wise men and their search for the Christ child. The three kings inquired with Herod where they could find Christ, the king of the Jews. Herod, official ruler of the Jews, reacted indignantly. He asked the wise men to search for the infant Jesus with the intention to kill him. The three kings set out and found Jesus in a cradle. At night they dreamed of Herod’s bad intentions and decided not to betray the infant Jesus.

The Christmas play evoked much laughter from the audience. Herod's conscience delivered an entertaining exchange as to whether the infant Jesus is a danger to the kingdom. The consul, in his role as Herod, got lots of laughs from the congregation when he requested authoritatively: "Sing for me!" In addition, the audience had to smile about the roguish three kings and their plush camel that they pulled on a string behind them.

"We aim to add humor to our Christmas Play, which helps people to better remember the performance," said Iris Schweiger, one of the organizers of the play. "Also a fun play motivates the actors."

The piece was written by the organizers and adjusted to the needs and abilities of the children during rehearsals. "For us, it is important that everybody who would like to can participate", said Schweiger. "We just added more roles so that everybody could find their place in the play."

The performance was well received by the congregation of Martin Luther Church and their guests. "Very inspiring," said a mother after the performance. "This was the liveliest Christmas play I've seen in years."

Eike Schamburek



Worship at Lakeshore Lodge Nursing Home

On December 29th, we visited a group of worshippers at the Lakeshore Lodge nursing home in our neighborhood. Accompanied on the piano by Linda, about ten members of our congregation celebrated a Christmas church service with almost twice as many residents and volunteers.

The Chaplain of the home, Rev. Lynn Hieminga, invited us to come back on Sunday Feb. 16th at 2 pm!

EKD Conference for Church Leaders in Hanover



As international traveler one hopes to bring home more than just luggage but also many stories. As participant at the EKD (Evangelical Church Germany) church council member seminar in Hannover, from the 12th – 15th of January, I got many opportunities to gather stories from German speaking delegates from all over the world. 46 German or German speaking people from 20 Nations and 38 different German speaking congregation had the opportunity to exchange congregational experiences in the idyllic Stefanstift (seminar centre). I was able to participate in three small or large workshop groups, working on the following topics: „Internal communication as leadership tool“, „The reformation Anniversary“ and „Continuing education for volunteers“. Time allowed a personal meeting with Frau Bruns, our contact at the EKD office, to discuss relevant topics specific to our congregation. At the end of the seminar, I was bestowed the honour to speak for the group during a farewell service at a Lutheran church in Hannover Limmer. The interactive speech showed how our small Martin Luther Church is closely linked in word and deed to the world wide net of EKD congregations. The new experiences inspire to continue the excellent efforts at the MLC as we share the blessings and work with hundreds of volunteers around the world.

Iris Schweiger

From our Congregation we lost ...

Thomas Edward Frantzke

Born on November 24, 1960, died on November 27, 2013.

Emil Mazalewski

Born on April 15, 1924; died on December 30, 2013.

And so we know and rely on the love God has for us.

God is love.

Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them.

(1 Joh 4:16)



We congratulate ...



... the Wilmers for adding to their family.

On December 15th Dexter Kenneth Cooper Wilmer was born (8 lbs 13 ozs).

God bless the whole family!

Regular Groups and Contacts

Choir

Every Tuesday at 6 pm starting again Feb. 18 at our church

Choir Director: Linda Marcinkus, Tel. (416) 255-2612

Women's Group

Once a month on Wednesday at 11 am at church. The next meeting is on: Wed. Feb. 12 2014

Contact: Daina Wienecke, Tel. (905) 939-2601

Confirmation Class

Once a month on Saturday/Sunday. Next classes: Feb 15-16, Mar 8-9, 2014

Contact: Pastor Christian Ceconi, Tel. (416) 567-2487, pastor@martinluther.ca

Youth Group

Next meeting: Feb. 15, 7 pm at our church. (See also p.2)

Contact: Amy and Sonja Schweiger, Tel. (905) 625-9174

Bible Study

Every second Thursday of the month, 7-9 pm at church. Next meetings: Feb. 13 and Mar. 6, 2014 (See also p. 3) If possible bring your own bible.

Contact: Pastor Christian Ceconi, Tel. (416) 567-2487, pastor@martinluther.ca

Summer Camp Planning Group

Meeting to be determined.

Contact: Anna Lisa Wienecke, Tel. (905) 939-7494

Sunday School Team

Sunday School every 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month. Next meeting: Feb 2 after church.

Contact: Tanya Zielke, Tel. (416) 622-7032, tanya.a.zielke@gmail.com

Working Group „Welcome“

Contact: Iris Schweiger, Tel. (905) 625-9174

Working Group „Worship Services“

Contact: Pastor Christian Ceconi, Tel. (416) 567-2487, pastor@martinluther.ca

We're here for you:

Office

Anita Ratz, Tel. (416) 251-8293,
mlchurch@bellnet.ca

Office Hours:

Tuesday, 9:30-12

Wednesday, 9:30-12

Friday, 9:30-12

Parish

Pastor Christian Ceconi

Cell. (416) 567-2487

e-Mail: pastor@martinluther.ca

Office Hours and visits by appointment. Please give us a call or send a short e-mail.

Martin Luther Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCIC & EKD)
2379 Lake Shore Blvd. West, Toronto, ON M8V 1B7, Phone: (416) 251-8293, Fax: (416) 259-2889
Pastor Christian Ceconi, Email: pastor@martinluther.ca
Cell Phone (416) 567-2487

German Radio Devotion, Sundays 9:30 am on AM 530

Church Newsletter Publisher: Martin Luther Church, Pastor Christian Ceconi
Website and Email Distribution: Mona Frantzke; Mailing: Anita Ratz

Service Plan

Feb. 2, 2014	Fourth Sunday after Epiphany		9:45 am English Service 11:00 am German Service	Pastor Ceconi
Feb. 9, 2014	Fifth Sunday after Epiphany		9:45 am English Service 11:00 am German Service Both with Holy Communion	Pastor Ceconi
Feb. 16, 2014	Sixth Sunday after Epiphany		9:45 am English Service 11:00 am German Service 2:00 pm Service at Lakeshore Lodge	Pastor Ceconi
Feb. 23, 2014	Seventh Sunday after Epiphany		11:00 am Joint Service Followed by Annual General Meeting	Pastor Ceconi
Mar. 2, 2014	Last Sunday after Epiphany		9:45 am English Service 11:00 am German Service	Pastor Ceconi
Mar. 5, 2014	Ash Wednesday		6 pm German Lenten Service 7:30 English Lenten Service	Pastor Ceconi
Mar. 9, 2014	First Sunday in Lent		9:45 am English Service 11:00 am German Service Both with Holy Communion	Pastor Ceconi
Mar. 12, 2014			6 pm German Lenten Service 7:30 English Lenten Service	Pastor Ceconi
Mar. 16, 2014	Second Sunday in Lent		11:00 am Joint Service with Pulpit Exchange	
Mar. 19, 2014			6 pm German Lenten Service 7:30 English Lenten Service	Pastor Ceconi
Mar. 23, 2014	Third Sunday in Lent		9:45 am English Service 11:00 am German Service	Pastor Ceconi
Mar. 26, 2014			6 pm German Lenten Service 7:30 English Lenten Service	Pastor Ceconi
Mar. 30, 2014	Fourth Sunday in Lent		9:45 am English Service 11:00 am German Service	Pastor Ceconi
Apr. 2, 2014			6 pm German Lenten Service 7:30 English Lenten Service	Pastor Ceconi
Apr. 6, 2014	Fifth Sunday in Lent		9:45 am English Service 11:00 am German Service	



Sundays with the Sunday School symbol have Sunday School take place at the same time as the worship. The children meet in the Church and have their own program after Children's Time.