



Martin Luther
Evangelical
Lutheran
Church

Congregational Newsletter

February • March 2016

What Counts in the New Year

Have you adjusted and firmly planted your feet in the New Year or are you still in limbo? My year started with the "clean up" of my calendar, determined not to overlook any appointments and to keep tabs on everything: the children's time table, services and church groups, the family vacation, visits and much more. Sometimes it is all about decisions, namely when two dates overlap. More frequently, however it comes to finding the right balance between family, work, leisure and the many other things that fill our lives.

All those thoughts entered my mind when I recently read the verse from the Gospel of Paul:

Keep watch over yourselves and over all the flock, of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God that he obtained with the blood of his own Son. (Acts 20:28)

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Member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) and Partnered with the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD)

This word by Paul was also said during a time of adjustment. Not an adjustment into a new year, but a departure from Ephesus to Jerusalem. Paul is on his last journey from Greece to Asia Minor, saying farewell to "his" congregation and offering guidance for the future before departing. Firstly, "keep watch over yourselves and over all the flock". Today, Paul could start a booklet for a promising new lifestyle with this phrase: "Keep watch over yourselves," thus begins the good life. However, the apostle is not lead by self-centered individualism. On the contrary: He merged looking out for oneself with the care of one's flock.

During all the planning time in the month of January, I have felt this to be the crucial reference for the work in our congregation: Look after the herd, of which the Holy Spirit has made you a caring shepherd, a shepherd of the church of God. We are all shepherds and we can work towards a healthy community: helping each other to unfold the potentials of life, looking together for ways to walk in in the light of God, being careful not to lose even one. Let us be good shepherds for one another in this New Year!

In this respect, wishing you a sheltered year
Your Pastor

Presidents' Message

Dear congregation,

Just a few days ago I received a thank you letter for 2015 which spoke very highly about many events at the Martin Luther Church, notably the 60th anniversary.

Gratefully we remember a highlight in the life of the Martin Luther Church with an inspiring sermon by our Bishop. The organizing team did a wonderful job preparing, especially during the very busy Advent Season. We are very grateful for their time and effort in making the special event such a big success.

The celebration reminded us of our beginnings. In 1955, now 60 plus years ago, the time when the Martin Luther Church was founded, LUTHERANS from all over the city, and all walks of life found their way to the MLC. Six years later a move to a new location BY THE LAKE was necessary to provide enough space for CELEBRATING services as the congregation grew in numbers, programs and FAITH.

We've been SERVING children and families in the Mimico area for many decades and are driven to continue this effort in the future. It has been hard, dedicated and mostly INSPIRING work for many PEOPLE over the years.

All of the above provides a wonderful foundation for your church council to carry on tradition and develop new programs that meet the needs of today. Three consecutive years in a row, the council has met at a retreat centre to analyse information gathered and to reflect on priorities.

In the fall of 2015 the annual review showed that we are on track. We looked at mission and purpose of the MLC (a picture says more than a thousand words) and set priorities as followed. Encouraged by slowly rising attendance we have confirmed that "growing the English branch of our congregation" is our first priority (this does not exclude, by any means, continuing excellent care of the German part of the congregation). Secondly we will continue to spread the name, logo and work of



the Martin Luther Church that people can better identify with us and join the programs offered (i.e. refugee team). We will carry on the vital job of developing and growing leadership, focusing on worship and supporting the Daycare. Finally, with the help of our building committee we have a great report as starting point for future building designs and concepts.

2016 promises to be another busy year at the Martin Luther Church. Come on out and participate.

Your president — Iris Schweiger

As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace. (1 Peter, 4, 10)

Lenten Services, Starting with Ash Wednesday

Again during Lenten season, we will celebrate midweek services every week. Beginning on Ash Wednesday and each consecutive Wednesday until Easter, we will have a service in German at 6:00pm and a service in English at 7:00pm. The English services are in cooperation with the Protestant congregations in Mimico. This year we will reflect on paintings of the French artist Alfred Manessier.

Like last year, you will also see some changes in the sanctuary. The worship team has already started to create ideas. Let yourself be surprised!

Palm Sunday will Feature a Harfentöne Concert

As special guests, the singers of the Harfentöne choir will perform in the German Palm Sunday Service. This promises to be a musical highlight in our congregation this year. Don't miss it!

President Iris to Attend EKD Conference in Germany

Our President Iris Schweiger will attend a conference in Germany held by the EKD in Hanover on Feb. 4 – 7. Council members from German speaking congregations from all over the world will come together to exchange ideas and to get an update on church life in Germany. Please keep Iris and the whole conference in your prayers. We will hear about the results of the conference during our Annual General Meeting.

Pulpit Exchange on Jan 31st: Pastor Rasma Caune comes to MLC

Once a year the pastors of the Canadian-German Lutheran congregations in Toronto visit other congregations during a “pulpit exchange”. This year on Jan 31st Pastor Rasma Caune from Epiphany Lutheran Church in Scarborough will come to Martin Luther Church and preach at 9:45 in English and at 11:00 in German. Our Pastor Christian will visit St. George’s Lutheran Church on the same day.

Service Schedule for Holy Week and Easter

Palm Sunday, March 20:

9:45 am English Service
11:00 am German Service

Wednesday, March 23:

6:00 pm German Lenten Service
7:00 pm English Lenten Service

Maundy Thursday, March 24:

6:00 pm German Service with Holy Communion
7:00 pm English Service with Holy Communion

Good Friday, March 25:

9:45 am English Service with Holy Communion
11:00 am German Service with Holy Communion
Both services with the church choir

Easter Sunday, March 27:

6:30 am Easter Sunrise Service at Humber Bay Park West
Followed by Easter breakfast at church.
10:00 am Joint Easter Service in English and German with the church choir

Our Syrian Refugees have Arrived Healthy and Happy in Toronto!

The MLC is a co-sponsor of Syrian Refugees. We began participating in this program over a year ago and now the first step is complete. Our next step is to help the Resto family integrate into Canadian society.



From left to right: Ritta Resto and the Rosto family (Mary Rosto, Andreh Rosto, Salwa Hamik, Gems Rosto)

Annual General Meeting and Welcoming of New Members on Feb 21st

During the service on Feb 21st we will welcome new members and introduce them to the congregation. The service is followed by the annual general meeting. All confirmed members who participated in the life of our church during the past year have the right to vote. On the agenda are reports and budget as well as the election of new council members and the annual plan for 2016. The reports will be available the Sunday before and can be picked up at the church.

Summer Camp 2016— Early Registration Discount

The preparations for our Summer Camp 2016 have already begun. We hope everybody saved the date in their calendar. Just to remind you: it’s August 20th to 26th, 2016. Flyers and sign up forms are available in the foyer of our church and online on our website. Prices are the same as last year.

If you register before the end of February you will receive the early registration discount.

Contact: churchoffice@martinluther.ca,
Tel.:416-251-8293.

Volunteers who would like to help the Summer Camp Planning Team are always welcome.

Contact: Anna Lisa Wienecke,
campdirector@martinluther.ca, Tel: 416-939-7441.

Starting in February: Bible Study of the Old Testament

On February 2nd the English Bible Study starts for 2016. On the First and Third Tuesday of each month, right after Church Choir we will meet to explore the Old Testament. In the coming months there will be an introduction into selected books of the Old Testament, beginning with God's Creation. Come and join us for a fascinating journey!

Kira Comes Back

Do you remember Kira? She is the mascot bird of the German Sunday School website Kirche-entdecken.de. She came to Summercamp last year and our campers produced a video for Kira's website. This video was rated one of the 10 best birthday posts. So we won one of the 10 Kira puppets and Kira will come back to MLC to stay!

Theological Background

The Light of Easter and the Crown of Thorns

The first time I entered the sanctuary of the Martin Luther Church I was amazed by the sun shining through the windows and how the whole room was tinted in the colours of the rainbow. Every time I come into our church I am delighted by this display of colour. "At Martin Luther Church you experience the Life of Christ in the Light of God's Covenant with His people."

On the right side (if you look from the entrance), the composition of the windows follows the life of Christ from the announcement in the prophecies to the restoration of the trinity. The colours of the glass windows are arranged like the colours of the rainbow and remind us of God's covenant with Noah: "God said, 'This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth.'" (Genesis 9:12-13) On the left side, the symbols in the windows relate the life of Christ to the life of the church and the individual Christian.

Works of art mark the character of a church building and invite us to decipher them, as do the windows here at Martin Luther Church. Everyone with imagination and knowledge of the bible can interpret Christian art. Over the centuries, Christian art has been changing and developing by incorporating new impulses and working with new materials and techniques. This vitality of art reflects the vitality



of the Gospel, as both art and the gospel are not stagnant but challenge every generation in a different way. The Gospel encourages us to look at the world we are living in from a different perspective, the perspective of the kingdom of God.

As art changes over time it also shows different perspectives of seeing the world but also the gospel itself. Artists interpret the message of the kingdom of God in many different ways, often using symbols or colours with specific meanings. In the

coming Lenten Services, you are going to find paintings from Alfred Manessier (1911-1993), who uses colours and forms to express his understanding of the Passion of Christ and Easter.

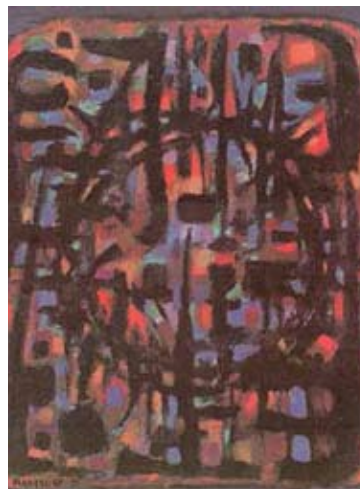
In the windows of our church, the passion is symbolized by a Crown of Thorns around a cross. The Crown of Thorns itself points to the suffering Christ had to endure, the physical pain as well as the humiliation by the captors. Manessier also paints the Crown of Thorns in his Passion and Easter cycle.

With the thick black lines in front of a red background, it is painful to look at the painting. In the painting, the Crown of Thorns is much more visibly an instrument of torture than in our church's windows. With the round form of the Crown, Manessier connects the Passion to Easter, where the bright light of Easter is seen as a circle in the midst of colour. Put next to each other, the black lines of the Crown of Thorns remind us of the bars in a prison window,

capturing the light of Christ which is then freed on Easter. Thereby, Manessier highlights the suffering Christ endured for us.

Would you agree with this interpretation? Or do you have a different reading of the paintings? Christian Ceconi and I are looking forward to your opinion and invite you to experience Passion and Easter through Manessier's paintings at the Lenten Services.

— Moritz Menacher



Remarks and Reports

Member Photo Book

If you want to help with the member photo book you are welcome to join the editing team. Please contact the church office.

Sunday School Kids Made a Generous Donation to Stonegate Ministry

After 3 weeks of hard work by the actors and readers, after countless hours put in for post production work, the Christmas play was ready for it's Premiere! With parents, family members and friends in the pews, the movie was shown. It was a success!! DVDs were sold at the end of the service. The DVD sales brought in \$400 dollars. Well done! After a stressful and very close vote, the children decided to donate the proceeds to Stonegate Ministry to support their store Great Finds, located not far from the Church. As the Pastor said: "We are proud of the children for giving back to the Community." Thank you also to everyone who made a donation and picked up a DVD to share with others.



How to Decorate a Christmas Tree

Humor is mankind's greatest blessing. Mark Twain

MLC Manual: How to Decorate Two Christmas Trees

- To have trees as large as the ones in our church, you must go to a forest and cut down two great pine trees. Make sure one is significantly shorter than the other.
- Next, place plastic and cloth tarps on the spots the trees will cover
- With the help of volunteers, put the two trees in place, making sure that they aren't too secure.
- After the trees are in place, have a festivity such as the Candlelight service. This is key, as you will need about seven young volunteers. What better way to obtain them than through a service?
- Set up a table with refreshments, like Diet Grapefruit Soda and chocolate covered cookies (this is essential in the process of tree decorating, as young people tend to steer toward sugar).
- Next, pull out tall metal ladders from somewhere, and ask volunteers to place two golden stars at the top of each tree. Please ignore the DO NOT STEP sign on the last step.
- Once the stars are at the top of the trees, take out boxes of decorations, like the tiny white intricate stars members of Martin Luther Church made over the years.

You must hook them onto the trees, making sure the left tree has many more stars than the right. To speed up the process, grab some weird poles with forks at the ends to reach the high branches of the trees.

- Now, you must place the white felt doves in memory of church members that have passed away.
- After you think you are done decorating, wait a few moments for one of the stars to fall off, so you can place it back again— securely this time!
- Next, wait a few days until after New Year’s Day. Then, proceed taking down the trees, with the help of the Confirmands. You must then pull them out of the church, and dispose of them.
- Finally, make the Confirmands clean all the pine needles on the floor. Then Iris will knight the volunteers with a paper roll.

— *Confirmand Ida Hjerpe*

German Embassy Puzzle Piece

The German Embassy Ottawa invited us to decorate a puzzle piece to make up the shape of Germany for the 25th Anniversary of German Unification. The Sunday School decorated it with hymns and a drawing of Martin Luther. The Embassy thanks us for supporting them. This German-Canadian Puzzle-Artwork became a strong symbolic part in the celebration of the 25 years of German Unification. The Puzzle was shown on the stage of the Canadian Museum of History during the whole celebration and was one central part in the festivities.



Image by The Food Tease — www.thefoodtease.com

Christmas Bazaar

The Christmas bazaar was a great success. About \$2000 were raised to support our Syrian Refugees. A big thank you to all helpers and organizers and especially to the Dimpflmeier Bakery and Piller’s Fine Foods for supporting our Christmas Bazaar generously.

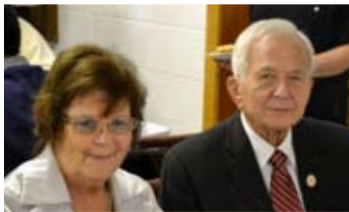


Council Work Retreat

In November the church council was on a work retreat at the monastery of the Anglican Sisterhood of Saint John the Divine. One of the results is the draft for a vision statement: **Lutherans by the Lake: Celebrating Faith, Serving and Inspiring People.**



Impressions from Our 60th Anniversary Celebration



We Congratulate...



On January 3, 2016, **Klara Elizabeth Schneeberger** was baptized. We welcome her as a new member of the congregation. God bless the whole family.

We Mourn...

At the age of 82 on November 28, 2015, **Peter Schmitt** passed away. We said goodbye to him at a funeral service on December 12th.

At the age of 87 on December 11, 2015, **Ursula Littek** passed away. We said goodbye to her at a service of remembrance on January 23rd.

So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. (1 John 4:16)

We Welcome New Members to Our Congregation...

We welcomed the following new members to our congregation during the service on January 17, 2016:

**Cameron Watson • Greg and Anneli Andre-Barrett • Deborah Henry
Mike Mollner • Tim Bressmann & Natasha Gill & Julia**

Groups and Contacts

Altar Flowers

Sign up on the list in the church entrance. Arrange to have flowers delivered or drop them off before the services on Sunday. You can also donate to the flower fund. Please notify the church office of your plans. You and the person(s) you are donating for will be included in the church announcements.

Contact: Church office, Tel: 416-251-8293, churchoffice@martinluther.ca

Bible Study About Texts from the Old Testament

Every 1st and 3rd Tuesday, starting on Feb 2nd at 7:30pm

Contact: Vicar Moritz Menacher, vicar@martinluther.ca

Choir

Practice every Tuesday at 6 pm for Easter

Choir Director: Linda Marcinkus, Tel: 416-255-2612

Welcome Team

Next meeting: Feb. 24 at 11 am

Contact: Iris Schweiger, Tel: 905-625-9174

Women's Group

2nd Wednesday of the month at 11 am at church.

Next meeting: Feb. 10 & Mar. 9

Contact: Daina Wienecke, Tel: 905-939-2601

Summer Camp Planning Team

Next meeting: TBD

Contact: Anna Lisa Wienecke, Tel: 905-939-7494

Sunday School Team

Sunday School every 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month.

Next meeting: Training Seminar: Jan. 31 & Feb. 28

Contact: Tanya Zielke, Tel: 416-622-7032, sundayschool@martinluther.ca

Website Team

Next meeting: TBD

Contact: Eike Schamburek, eike.schamburek@gmail.com

Worship Team Usually the fourth Tuesday of the month.

Next meeting: Jan. 26, Feb. 23, Mar. 22 at 7:30 pm

Contact: Pastor Christian Ceconi, Cell: 416-567-2487, pastor@martinluther.ca

Church Coffee Team**Contact:** Waltraud Laser, Tel: 416-766-9373**60th Anniversary Photo Book Team****Contact:** Church office, Tel: 416-251-8293, churchoffice@martinluther.ca**Youth Group****Next Meeting:** See MLC Youth Group page on Facebook**Contact:** Amy and Sonja Schweiger, Tel: 905-625-9174, youthgroup@martinluther.ca**Martin Luther Church Daycare Office****Contacts:** Margarete Kaufmann-Buehler (Administrator), Teresa Kurek (Supervisor), Tel: 416-259-2861, daycareoffice@martinluther.ca**Martin Luther Church Daycare Board****Contact:** Ulrich Karthaus, Tel: 519-942-6244**Confirmation Classes****Next classes:** February 6-7, Weekend Retreat: March 4-6**Contact:** Pastor Christian Ceconi, Cell: 416-567-2487, pastor@martinluther.ca**Support Team for Syrian Families****Next Meeting:** TBD**Contact:** Dieter Schill, schill@rogers.com**Translation Team****Contact:** Church office, Tel: 416-251-8293, churchoffice@martinluther.ca**Community Partners****Wesley Mimico United Church****Community lunch** 12-1 pm every Saturday and **Food Bank** 11-1 pm (except for the last Saturday of the month). Volunteers always welcome!**Contact:** Kim, Tel: 647-677-5628**Drum Circle** every Wednesday at 10 am**Contact:** Iris Schweiger, president@martinluther.ca**Stonegate Ministry & Great Finds**

Offering quality gently-used items.

Store hours: M-Th: 9:30 am-5:30 pm; Fri: 9:30 am-6 pm**Contact:** Carol-Anne, Tel: 416-255-6282, 2358 Lakeshore Blvd. West Toronto M8V 1C3**Delmanor Prince Edward Retirement Home**

Services by Pastor Ceconi with Holy Communion the third Wednesday of the month at 10:30 am at 4180 Dundas St W, Etobicoke

Next services: Feb. 17, Mar. 16**Lakeshore Lodge Long-Term Care** Services on Sunday every few months at 2 pm, 3197 Lake Shore Blvd West, Toronto **Next service:** March 20 at 2pm**Moll Berczy Haus Senior's Home** German services the second Tuesday of the month at 11 am, and the last Wednesday of the month at 10 am, 1020 McNicoll Ave, Scarborough **Next service:** March 8, 11am**We're Here For You****Pastor Christian Ceconi**

Cell: 416-567-2487, Email: pastor@martinluther.ca

Office Hours and Visits: by appointment. Please call or send a short email.**Vicar Moritz Menacher**

Cell: 905-717-5937, Email: vicar@martinluther.ca

German Radio Devotion**Sundays 9:30 am on AM 530****Church Office: Marlena Muller**

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Martin Luther Church, Pastor Christian Ceconi

Email Distribution: Mona Frantzke**Mailing:** Marlena Muller**Design:** Karen Hoffmann

Worship Service Plan

Jan. 31, 2016	4th Sunday after Epiphany Lectionary 4		9:45 am English Service 11:00 am German Service	Pulpit Exchange Pastor Caune
Feb. 7, 2016	Transfiguration of our Lord Last Sunday after Epiphany		9:45 am English Service 11:00 am German Service	Pastor Ceconi
Feb. 10, 2015	Ash Wednesday		6:00 pm German Lenten Service 7:00 pm English Lenten Service	Pastor Ceconi
Feb. 14, 2016	1st Sunday in Lent		9:45 am English Service 11:00 am German Service	Vicar Menacher
Feb. 17, 2015	Midweek Lenten Service		10:30 am Service at Delmanor Prince Edward Retirement Home with Holy Communion 6:00 pm German Lenten Service 7:00 pm English Lenten Service	Pastor Ceconi Vicar Menacher
Feb. 21, 2016	2nd Sunday in Lent		11:00 am Joint Service with Holy Communion Followed by Annual General Meeting	Pastor Ceconi
Feb. 24, 2016	Midweek Lenten Service		6:00 pm German Lenten Service 7:00 pm English Lenten Service	Pastor Ceconi
Feb. 28, 2016	3rd Sunday in Lent		9:45 am English Service 11:00 am German Service	Vikar Menacher
Mar. 2, 2015	Midweek Lenten Service		6:00 pm German Lenten Service 7:00 pm English Lenten Service	Vikar Menacher
Mar. 4, 2016	World Day of Prayer		12:00 pm at St. George's Church, followed by lunch	Pastorin Möller
Mar. 6, 2015	4th Sunday in Lent		11:00 am Joint Service With Installation of the new Church Council	Pastor Ceconi
Mar. 9, 2015	Midweek Lenten Service		6:00 pm German Lenten Service 7:00 pm English Lenten Service	Pastor Ceconi
Mar. 13, 2015	5th Sunday in Lent		9:45 am English Service 11:00 am German Service – Both with Holy Communion	Vicar Menacher
Mar. 16, 2015	Midweek Lenten Service		10:30am Service at Delmanor Prince Edward Retirement Home with Holy Communion 6:00 pm German Lenten Service 7:00 pm English Lenten Service	Pastor Ceconi Vicar Menacher
Mar. 20, 2015	Palm Sunday		9:45 am English Service 11:00 am German Service with Harfentöne Choir and Concert	Pastor Ceconi
Mar. 23, 2015	Midweek Lenten Service		6:00 pm German Lenten Service 7:00 pm English Lenten Service	Pastor Ceconi
Mar. 24, 2015	Maundy Thursday		6:00 pm German Service 7:00 pm English Service – Both with Holy Communion	Vicar Menacher
Mar. 25, 2015	Good Friday		9:45 am English Service 11:00 am German Service – Both with Holy Communion	Pastor Ceconi
Mar. 27, 2015	Easter Sunday		6:30 am Easter Sunrise Service 10:00 am Joint Service with Holy Communion	Pastor Ceconi Vicar Menacher
April 3, 2015	2nd Sunday of Easter		9:45 am English Service 11:00 am German Service	Pastor Ceconi



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.