



Martin Luther
**Evangelical
Lutheran
Church**

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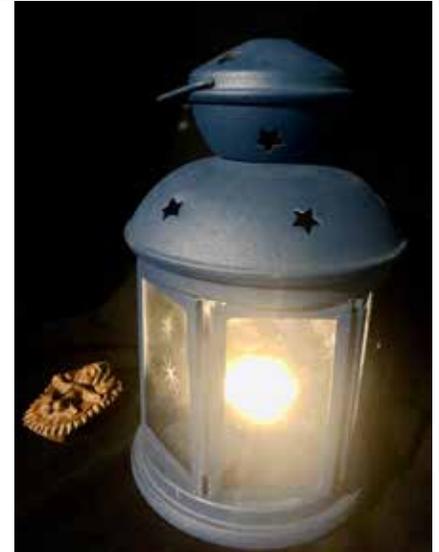
Member of the Evangelical Lutheran
Church in Canada (ELCIC) and Partnered with
the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD)

Congregational Newsletter

December 2019 • January 2020

Open for Advent

As the Christian church turns towards a new year at the beginning of Advent, I have been thinking about what it means to be open: open to new ideas, open to new people, and open to self-reflection. Over the past three months I have been working with the other Vicars on exploring the community around Martin Luther Church and listening to the people who are in the neighbourhood. In early November I happened to be in the front area of the church as three people came to the door, tried to open it, and then left when they found it was locked. I saw them but they left before I was able to greet them, which likely happens often as the pastoral team works in the back offices and most people choose not to ring the doorbell.



As we move into a time of year where we are challenged to be open to new things, I am challenging us to open the church doors more often during this Advent season. The doors will be open from 9:30 am-6 pm during the first week of Advent and the Vicars will work from the front of the church, allowing us to meet the people who are already trying to come through the doors. We will open ourselves up to listening to their needs and hearing what is on their minds. As well, there will be an opportunity for people to gather on every day of Advent for a short time of reflection, song and lighting of a candle to mark the passing of another day as we journey towards Christmas. Please join us Monday to Friday at 5:30 pm and Saturday to Sunday at 12:45 pm from December 1 to 23.

While we are opening the church doors during this season, I also hope that as a congregation we each open ourselves up to change during Advent. May we open ourselves to preparing for God to come into the world as an infant. May we open ourselves to preparing for a new year as we reflect on our journey of faith. May we open ourselves to learning something new: about ourselves, our congregation, and the community that surrounds us.

God Bless,
Vicar Jordan Smith

When the going gets tough, the tough get going!

Last year at this time, I wrote about us Lutherans taking to the streets in an effort to raise awareness for Creation – Human Beings – Salvation. All in honour of 500 years of Martin Luther.

The experimental phase: Dare to discern, test, fail, get up and try again

This year it is all about us, the Martin Luther Church: what we are doing to lean into those three big ticket items, and how we dare to discern God's calling for us and for our church. Our focus is definitely on people. In 2019, we gave and are giving eleven young people the chance to work with us and discover how to be church in this century. We provide opportunities for them to learn and do they ever! From a leadership perspective, sometimes it is tough to deal with the outcome once empowerment is triggered. Suddenly questions are raised, the status quo is challenged, and then we all have the opportunity to grow and bravely walk forward as God's people. We are grateful for:

- **Vicars:** Mirjam Steinebach, Silke Fahl, Jordan Smith, and Adam McComb
- **Student of Theology:** Hannah Johnston
- **Interns:** Ann-Christin Hohaus, Nils Timm, Anne-Marie Prueser, Rahel Roemer, Simon Matwisch (DC)
- **Summer Student:** Ida Hjerpe

We are experimenting with a new community group in partnership with Stonegate Ministry, the Ladies' Circle by the Lake. A video workshop sparked talent within the Toronto area which now highlights new ministries on-line. We expanded our courage to be missional, as group leaders attended area Lunch and Learn workshops. The pilot project that brought 5 councils from 5 churches together further encouraged leaders to be bold in setting goals for our congregational ministry. Keep your eyes peeled for the "Pantry" in this newsletter.

Living our **FAITH**
PRAY READ WORSHIP LOVE

Another goal, inspired by the ELCIC annual project READ 2020, was adopted by the church council for our community. We encourage you and your families to read the Bible more often. Come for Christmas and pick up your present. "Eternity for Today" is waiting just around the corner

In 2020, we would like to invest in the next group of people, parishioners and neighbours alike. In preparation, the church council invited you to a town hall meeting on the second Sunday of Advent, December 8, after the worship services, to learn more about the altar project and the renovations linked to it.



We also invite you to be especially generous with your gifts to the church to ensure all staff, programs, and building upkeep receive the attention they deserve.

May God bless you richly in this Season of Joy,

Iris Schweiger

Lakeshore Lodge

As part of our service to the wider community, Vicars Fahl and Smith have been leading midweek services at Lakeshore Lodge twice a month. The spiritual care leader for the Lodge approached Pastor Christian this past summer to see if the congregation would be able to help with these services as another congregation was no longer able to offer a weekly eucharist. The Vicars agreed to offer one service with Communion and one Service of the Word each month to help meet this need. We gather on the first and third Thursday of the month at 10:30am at 3197 Lake Shore Blvd W for prayer, reading of scripture, a short sermon, and hymn singing. Martin Luther Church members are welcome to attend but please check with the office in advance as services are occasionally cancelled due to the needs of the Lodge.

It has been a joy to offer these services to the residents of Lakeshore Lodge and we have heard several times how meaningful it is for them to be able to worship and receive communion on a more regular basis.

Bible Study

Every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month we will meet in the pastor's office to read the bible together. For the winter term we will read from the book of Deuteronomy. In this book Moses summarizes his legacy and everything he has learned about God's love for his people before they enter the promised land (without him). In Dtn 6:20 it says: "When your children ask you in time to come..." - what a timely question in the days of global climate strikes.

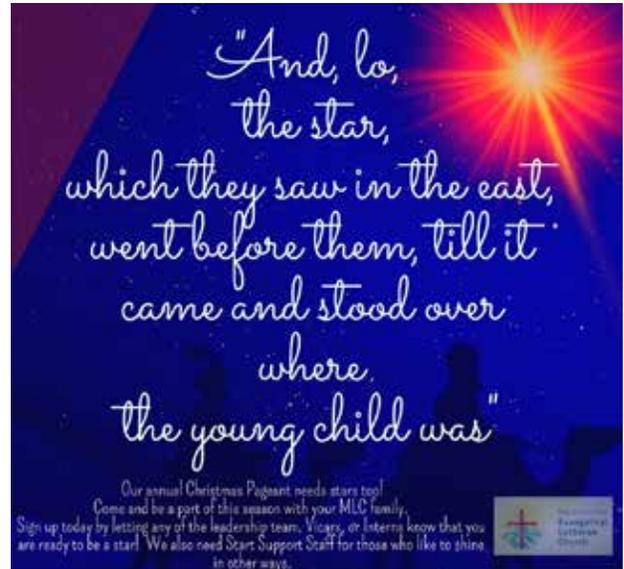
All sessions start at 7:30pm. Please bring your bible.

Contact: Pastor Christian Ceconi, pastor@martinluther.ca

Birthday Project

In 2020 we will continue to include members who celebrated a birthday in the prayers during worship on Sunday. Members 75 years of age and older will also continue to receive birthdays cards. Please share your date of birth with the office to be included.

Christmas Play on December 15



Our annual Christmas Play is an exciting tradition that shares the story of Christ's birth with members of the church and the community. We encourage all children and their parents to take part. The play allows the warmth of our church to be felt as God's love is shared. There are many ways to get involved and help with the Christmas Play.

Rehearsal Schedule:

- **Friday December 13**, 5:00 pm Dress Rehearsal
- **Sunday December 15**, 9:00 am before the play during the service at 11:00 am

Contact: Vicar Adam McComb,
vicarmccomb@martinluther.ca

News from the Call Committee

As Pastor Ceconi will be returning to Germany in Spring 2020, we have already set up a "Call Committee" of six volunteers. In the coming months, we will be submitting applications, both to the EKD and the ELCIC as we would like to be able to recruit our next pastor from Germany again — with grants from the EKD. So much is happening in our community and beyond, that we want to duly present it accordingly. This committee is not a closed group and we are still looking for additional members, especially teenagers or young adults. The next meeting is December 15, 12-1 pm in the back room of the church basement.

New Vicar Caroline Raddatz



Dear MLC Church, I am pleased to be able to work as a vicar in your congregation starting January 2020. After my theology studies in Hamburg and Vienna, I headed an exchange project enabling others to gain experience abroad. Now I am looking forward to the change of scene from the rural ambience of Berkenthin (near Lübeck) to the cosmopolitan metropolis of Toronto.

For the last two and a half years, as a vicar, I have grown into the practical work of a pastor with great enthusiasm and inquisitiveness. After completing the 2nd exam I am now looking for further new challenges. And for me, there is no better place to go to than Canada with my curiosity and excitement for all that such a change entails.

Becoming a pastor is —and remains— an exciting journey for me. It is a search for God together with other mortals. On the way there I experience a lot of openness and loving exchange — for that I am grateful! It is most appealing to be able to continue my quest in faith now in Toronto together with you. I am partial to hands-on faith, celebrated in an open community, and to good food. That's why I'm especially looking forward to the Dinner Church project. I am looking forward to an intense time of collaborating together; of joint conversations, prayers, moments of silence, worship services; and to simply celebrate life with you...

In anticipation of seeing you soon,
Caroline Raddatz

Vicar Raddatz is looking for a host starting January 2020. Please contact the office if you can help with accommodation.

Candlelight Service and Tree Decorating

For yet another year the English service on the Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 22, will be held in the evening at 7:00 pm and centre around the lighting of candles as we prepare for celebrating Jesus' coming into the world. This is always a wonderful service that provides an opportunity for friends old and new to gather in the evening and experience something special as the light slowly builds during our gathering.

If you are interested in helping organize this service or providing musical accompaniment, please contact Vicar Smith, vicarsmith@martinluther.ca.

Following the service, please stay to help decorate our Christmas tree with traditional white stars.

Contact the office to help!



Community Pantry Project

Have you noticed a Little Free Library outside some homes in your neighbourhood? Maybe you've exchanged some books! We'd like to offer something similar in front of our church, but instead of providing a space for books, it would be a pantry for food.

Since this pantry will be accessible to the public every day, we hope it will compliment the Wesley Mimico United Food Bank at our church by encouraging ongoing donations and engagement with the community.

Please contact Vicar Adam if you are interested in leading or helping with this project.

Dinner Church by the Lake: Upcoming Dates



January 8- 6:30 pm Dinner Church

February 5- 6:30 pm Dinner Church with Dr. Clarise Chan, Clarity Wellness Chiropractic

March 4- 6:30 pm Dinner Church with Vicar Silke Fahl on the topic "Confidence! 7 weeks without pessimism"



Contact Andrea Dannecker for more information at dinnerchurch@martinluther.ca.

Save the date:

Annual General Meeting, February 23, 2020

Farewell Service for Pastor Ceconi, March 22, 2020

***Sign up for the organizing committee!**

Summer Camp, August 15-21, 2020

Pastoral Coverage

Dr. Pastor Gerhard Hille- April-June 2020

Vicar Fahl- June-December 2020

Share your gifts!

Seeking Newsletter Layout Assistance and Web Team Leader

Please reach out to Marlena in the church office if you have any graphic design/layout experience and are interested in putting your skills to work on our bi-monthly newsletter editions! Also contact the office if you are familiar with HTML and website programming.

Martin Luther Mission Fund & ELFEC Seminar on January 19

The goal of the Mission Fund is to preserve and grow the fund's principal, and use the fund's investment income and dividends to support the Church's mandate of serving others in the community. This mission work must have a local focus, with a view towards sustainable long-term impacts in the community.

The Mission Fund Committee is pleased to be able to invest funds with Evangelical Lutheran Foundation of Eastern Canada (ELFEC) because of their commitment to investing money in socially responsible ways. Support to the Mission Fund means a long-lasting commitment towards worthwhile endeavours to enrich the community „in mission for others.“ The Mission Committee would like to thank all of those who have already donated towards the Mission Fund.

On January 19 we are hosting a seminar about donations of securities, both now or later in your will, with Kathryn Smith from ELFEC. If you are interested in attending, please contact Sylvia Kunde at skunde@rogers.com who will coordinate the session.



Should you have any questions about the Mission Fund in general or wish to discuss further details, please contact any of the Mission Fund Trustees- Martin, Trevor or Sylvia.

Our Congregation is a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) and the Eastern Synod. We are partnered with the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD) and member of the Deutsche Evangelisch-Lutherische Konferenz in Nordamerika (DELKINA).

Pilot project successful- Church Council Retreat, Oct 19-20, 2019 @ YMCA Geneva park

The first joint council retreat, run by the Toronto Area, was enjoyed by all participants from Redeemer, Agricola, St. Ansgar, First Lutheran and Martin Luther. We had a great opportunity to learn together and to discover how to be church in the 21st century and agreed that there was only one problem; 24 hours is too short for such an exceptional event

The keynote speaker Rev. Jeff Potter shared his insights around transformation of churches. He also worked with the church councils individually. The ripples from this inspiring event will be felt throughout the GTA. Thank you to the Mission Committee of the Eastern Synod for their financial support and Pastor Ceconi who lead the retreat as area Dean.

News from the Community

Ladies' Circle by the Lake

Since September 18, Jocelyn and I have been helping to host the Ladies' Circle by the Lake, a joint program between Stonegate Ministry and our church. We meet every 1st, 3rd, and 4th Wednesday of the month from 12:00 to 2:00 pm. This get-together is a wonderful opportunity for women of the Mimico neighbourhood to meet and connect in an informal and welcoming setting.

Eleanore Vincent, who leads the group, starts each gathering with a few minutes of light exercise, focusing on maintaining balance and mobility. This activity is followed by a nutritious lunch with tea and coffee. We enjoy conversations during shared meals, which have been interesting, supportive, and quite often mixed with laughter, offering glimpses into each other's lives. After lunch, a shared activity - like a short presentation by a guest speaker, a craft, or an introduction to salsa dance - make the time fly by.

We would love to have more women joining our group.

Let's draw the Ladies' Circle wide!
Larissa

Stonegate Ministry- New Program Director and Request for Volunteers

Greetings from Stonegate Ministry! My name is Samantha and I began my role as Program Ministry Director in October. I have been learning lots about the Stonegate and Mimico communities and have enjoyed partnering with Martin Luther in offering a weekly women's program on Wednesdays. In the new year, Stonegate Ministry will begin developing and implementing new programs and will be looking for volunteers to join us. In addition, we are hoping that a member of Martin Luther would join our Board of Directors, solidifying our partnership and bringing a new perspective. If you are interested in learning more about the ministry, volunteering with us, or joining our board, please contact me at samantha@stonegateministry.ca



Samantha Coelho

Stonegate Ministry is offering two ESL conversation classes in the new year. One during the daytime in partnership with Stonegate Health Centre, and one in the evening in partnership with Christ Church St. James. Both classes will be 10 weeks long.

Stonegate Health Centre:

Mondays from 1:30 – 3 pm, starting January 6, 2020

Christ Church St. James:

Thursdays from 6:30- 8 pm, starting January 9, 2020

We are looking for volunteers to help facilitate these programs. The program would require 2 hours per week of volunteer time every Thursday or Monday. If you would like to learn more please contact Samantha or call 416-474-9297.

Thank you for your contributions.

We received \$1,065 in donations for Loaves and Fishes, in support of the South Simcoe County Mission project which started 22 years ago as a Christian Response to Hunger.



Remarks and reports



Our vicars at the Global Climate Strike downtown in September.



Sharing Treats with Neighbours on Halloween at MLC.

Holocaust Education Week:



Picture Book Talk for students from John English School and the German International School



Reflection from our Intern Rahel



Dear congregation,

If I could, I would show you my notebook. I bought it in my first week here in Toronto and it was filled with impressions, experiences and lots of ideas. But above all, thanks. I would like to thank you for allowing me to be an intern and parishioner that I could broaden my horizons. In particular, this applies to ecumenical collaboration, practical ideas for teamwork and community in the neighborhood. Thank you for allowing me to tag along to all visits/events and for all explanations. Maybe there will be a dinner church in Mannheim soon. All important information can be found in my notebook. And I know that I could still contact you here anytime, if I need more information.

Now it's time for me to go back to Mannheim in southern Germany, I carry you, Martin Luther Church, in my heart, full of thanks. And conclude with a blessing: and until we see each other again God will hold his protective hand over you.

Your Rahel Anne Römer

Lay Preacher Training



This year, our congregation's three lay preachers participated in a training course in Germany. With 27 other budding lay preachers from all over the world, we dealt with selected theological topics as well as with the practical implementation on one long weekend. It also covered the so-called Kasualiens (liturgies f. special occasions incl. baptisms, weddings, funerals). We also had the opportunity to share our experiences from our respective congregations with other lay preachers. It is always amazing where similarities and also differences can be found when we hear from places so far away as Pretoria (S. Africa), Rome (Italy) or Moscow (Russia).

Confirmation Class

The confirmation class met for our first weekend on October 26-27. All of our weekends are centred around prayer and worship and this first class had a specific focus on different postures we can use as we communicate with God in prayer. Former confirmands provided inspiration for fun and games and also helped the new class build prayer benches which will be used throughout the year. We gathered again in late November for a retreat at the farm of Martina, Richard, Erika, and Sebastian. We thank our hosts and helpers!



We congratulate:

We welcome Kristine Stuef, Jannik Richter & Lisa Heckmann, Anja Gottschalk, Marlen & Johanna Endruweit sowie Bettina & Claus-Ulrich Kroll as new members.

Solveig Voss and Pedro Gallegos were blessed in their role on the Sunday School team.

We thank:

Siegfried & Margaret Eble donated a tree to decorate our altar for Christmas. Dan Sommerfeld delivered the tree from Coburg.

We mourn:

At the age of 79 on November 25, 2019, Edmund Scholz passed away. His funeral took place on November 28 at our church.

**Because I live,
you also will live.**

(John 14:19)



Groups and Contacts

Altar Flowers

If you have a green thumb and a couple hours a month to spare, please contact the office to step into the role of altar flower caretaker. The role is very rewarding since the effects are immediately visible.

If you would like to donate 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

Every 1st and 3rd Tuesday at 7:30 pm

Next meeting: December 10, January 14 & 28

Contact: Pastor Ceconi, pastor@martinluther.ca

Senior's Group

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

Next Meeting: January 8

Contact: Irene Zielke and Waltraut Laser, seniorsgroup@martinluther.ca

Sunday School Team

Sunday School every 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month (not in summer).

Next meeting: TBD

Contact: Jocelyn Sommerfeld, Marlena Muller, Pedro Gallegos and Solveig Voss, sundayschool@martinluther.ca

Instagram Team

Next meeting: TBD

Contact: Iris Schweiger, president@martinluther.ca

Choir Practice every Tuesday at 6 pm for Christmas Eve.

Choir Director: Linda Marcinkus, Tel: 416-255-2612, choir@martinluther.ca

Summer Camp Planning Team

Next meeting: TBD

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

Website-Team

Next meeting: TBD

Contact: Marlena Muller, churchoffice@martinluther.ca

Youth Group

Next Meeting: Confirmands' Weekends

Confirmation Classes

Classes: January 25-26

Contact: Vicar Jordan Smith, Tel: 416-356-3505, vicarsmith@martinluther.ca

Martin Luther Daycare Office

Contacts: Teresa Kurek (Supervisor), Tel: 416-259-2861, mlcdc@bellnet.ca

Martin Luther Daycare Board

Contact: Teresa Kurek, daycareboard@martinluther.ca

Visiting Ministry Team

Next meeting: TBD

Contact: Gisela Wilhelm, Tel: 416-763-3789

Dinner Church-Team

Next Meeting: December 18 at 6:30 pm

Contact: Andrea Dannecker, dinnerchurch@martinluther.ca

Refugee Support Team

Usually 3rd Thursday of each month at 7:30 pm

Next Meeting: January 16

Contact: Greg and Anneli Andre-Barrett,
refugeesupport@martinluther.ca

Church Coffee Team

coffeeduty@martinluther.ca

Altar Guild

Contact: Annette Rowles & Patricia Mills via the church office, Tel: 416-251-8293, churchoffice@martinluther.ca

Translation Team

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

Drum Circle

Wednesdays at 10 am

Contact: Iris Schweiger, iris.g.schweiger@gmail.com

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 and in the summer.)

Contact: Kim, Tel: 647-677-5628

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: Samantha, 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 Service: December 18 & January 15

Lakeshore Lodge Long-Term Care Services usually on the third Sunday every other month at 2 pm, the first (with Holy Communion) and third Thursday of the month at 10:30am
3197 Lake Shore Blvd West, Toronto

Next Service: January 16

Moll Berczy Haus Senior's Home German services the second Tuesday of the month, and the last Wednesday of the month at 10 am, 1020 McNicoll Ave, Scarborough

Next Service: February 11

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 Silke Fahl

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

Vicar Adam McComb

Cell: 226-923-0673, Email: vicarmccomb@martinluther.ca

Vicar Jordan Smith

Cell: 416-356-3505, Email: vicarsmith@martinluther.ca

Vicar Caroline Raddatz

Cell: 905-717-7024, Email: vicarraddatz@martinluther.ca

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Martin Luther Church, Pastor Christian Ceconi

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Translation: Andy Boettcher, Manya Brunzema,
Helmut Herrmann, Solveig Voss, Silke Fahl

German Radio Devotion Sundays 9:30 am on AM 530



I believe; help my unbelief!

(Mark 9:24)

Service Plan

December 1-23, 2019	Open for Advent		Daily Reading, Reflecting and Candle lighting for Advent 5:30 pm Monday-Friday 12:45 pm Saturday-Sunday	
December 15, 2019	Third Advent		11:00 am English-German Service with Christmas Play	Vicar McComb
December 17, 2019			6:30 pm Ecumenical Service with the German International School Toronto	Pastor Ceconi
December 18, 2019			10.30 Uhr Engl. Gottesdienst mit Hl. Abendmahl im Delmanor Prince Edward Retirement Home	Pastor Ceconi
December 22, 2019	Fourth Advent		11:00 am German Service with Holy Baptism of Vicky and Noah Niederhagen 7:00 pm English Candlelight Service followed by Christmas tree decorating	Pastor Ceconi Vicar Smith
December 24, 2019	Christmas Eve		4:30 pm German Service 6:00 pm English Service Both with Church Choir	Pastor Ceconi
December 25, 2019	Christmas Day		11:00 am English-German Service with Holy Communion	Vicar Smith & Vicar Fahl
December 29, 2019	First Sunday of Christmas		11:00 am English-German Service	Pastor Ceconi
December 31, 2019	New Year's Eve		5:00 pm English-German Service with Holy Communion	Pastor Ceconi
January 1, 2020	New Year's Day		5:30 pm Jazz Service	Vicar Smith
January 5, 2020	Second Sunday of Christmas		9:45 am English Service 11:00 am German Service With Installation of Vicar Caroline Raddatz	Pastor Ceconi
January 8, 2020			6:30 pm Dinner Church	Dinner Church Team
January 12, 2020	Baptism of our Lord		9:45 am English Service 11:00 am German Service	Vicar Fahl
January 15, 2020			10:00 am Service at Delmanor Prince Edward with Holy Communion	Pastor Ceconi & Vicar Fahl
January 16, 2020			10:30 am Service at Lakeshore Lodge	Vicar Smith
January 19, 2020	Second Sunday after Epiphany		11:00 am English-German Service	Pastor Ceconi
January 26, 2020	Third Sunday after Epiphany		9:45 am English Service 11:00 am German Service	Vicar Smith Pastor Ceconi
February 2, 2020	Fourth Sunday after Epiphany		9:45 am English Service 11:00 am German Service	Pulpit Exchange with German Contact Circle

A library of Pastor Ceconi's German Radio Devotions is also available online at martinluther.ca



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.