



Martin Luther
Evangelical
Lutheran
Church

Congregational Newsletter

December 2017 • January 2018

Between the Years, at the Beginning of a New Time

On the Sunday after Christmas, during the period of transition from one year to the next, we will again hear the beginning of the Gospel according to John. John takes a unique approach. He does not tell of the manger, but, of how the birth of Jesus is as fundamental as the creation of the world itself.

He writes: **In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.**

This beginning of John's gospel is at the same time a literary masterpiece and a very concise summary of what the advent of Jesus means to the world. He is the incarnate Word of God. In him all the promises of God become tangible and visible. They become understandable. Jesus bears witness through his life and deeds. The inanimate becomes alive and light comes into the world.

In him is present the God of Life, who created all the world and breathed life into the first human being and all who came after. Jesus does the same thing. He imparts a new breath of life into a man and heals him. He says to Lazarus, "come out" [of the grave]. And Lazarus rose from his deathbed to new life.

As God brought forth light from Darkness on the first day of Creation, Christ is bringing new light into the world. He dispels the shadows of darkness. He calls people into the light so that they can find new life.

He works in this way to this day and we can feel it in the midst of our daily life, and, perhaps particularly in the transitional period between years, especially when we sit at the dinner table. The elements of dining together at the table have come to represent His presence: the bread becomes the bread of life, the glass of wine becomes the chalice of salvation. Every time we pass each other bread, every time we raise a glass, the fellowship of diners at the table can be enlightened by the light of His presence.

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And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

May your days of celebration and your fellowship with others be blessed and enlightened by His light!

Sincerely,
Your



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

Report from the Vice President

On the 29th of October, the Lutherans in the Toronto area took to the street in an effort to raise awareness for

Creation—Human Beings—Salvation not for sale.

We could get hung up about the sound system not having been perfect and the songs being hard to sing, petty things that we have gotten hung up about too many times before. Yet, when we look at the big picture, the event shook Lutherans awake. We are part of something bigger than just being **Lutherans by the lake**. We didn't just **celebrate faith** within our own little group. We got out of the comfort zone of our four walls called the Martin Luther Lutheran Church and set out to meet hundreds of Toronto Lutherans at the Anglican St. James Cathedral for a service of epic proportions. People were brought with busses hired by their congregations, others streamed in from far and wide taking public transit or car-pooling. All ended up filling the pews, watching the procession of young people carrying the cross and three huge signs proclaiming our marching orders for the years to come.

We are called to **serve** the earth, to watch over animals, plants and resources. We are called to **serve**, to help human beings reach their potential. We are called to **serve** God's great call, to spread salvation.

The first steps were taken that Sunday, walking from the Cathedral, up Church Street to First Lutheran Church. We got up, we moved, jointly we got behind our goals and proclaimed them openly in an effort to **inspire** people. And it did.

I met two young women who were seated in the pew in front of me. They had heard about the service, came and are now looking for a church to join. They had no intention of joining the march but ended up **inspired** and walked anyhow.

I noticed people taking pictures as we walked by and inquiring about our purpose, some of them joining in.

I saw Peter Fahrenholz, German Consul General, sending a message via Twitter as he marched beside the green Martin Luther ambassador.

Please share your **inspiring** encounters with congregation members, neighbors, friends and strangers. We are called to positively change the world around us. No



worrying, no complaining, just walking one step at a time into a kinder world.

Looking forward to walking with you into a blessed Christmas season and an exciting New Year

—Iris Schweiger
Church Council Vice President

What is Pastor Ceconi Doing at Thornhill Lutheran Church?

In November Pastor Sebastian Meadows-Helmer accepted a call at St. Matthews Lutheran Church in Kitchener. When the Synod Office asked me to support Thornhill Lutheran Church in the interim period I was happy to help. I am also happy that our church council supports this interim ministry in order to support our partners in bilingual English/German ministry. Since I am (fortunately) not running out of work at Martin Luther Church at all, my ministries in Thornhill will be very limited. Following the guidelines of our Eastern Synod, my "duties will include attendance at Congregational Council meetings, pastoral acts, and crisis response." I will preside at approximately one service in German language each month and I am grateful for the support and work of our Vicar Thara Klein which makes this possible. She will lead Christmas and Good Friday worship services in Thornhill. Please keep our friends in Thornhill in your prayers while they go through transitions and the call process for a new pastor.

—Christian Ceconi

Christmas Bazaar December 3

Have you ever dreamed about attending a real German Christmas market? Look no further! Indulge in delicious homemade cookies, freshly baked waffles and grilled sausages. Find delicate handmade crafts and gifts, and join delightful people for a glass of punch while listening to live Christmas music. All this awaits you at this year's Christmas Bazaar at the Martin Luther Church, supported by the Wesley Mimico United Church. Doors open at 12pm on December 3 following the bilingual family service at 11am, complemented by the choir. Don't miss a special visit from St. Nicholas at 2:30pm! Doors close at 4pm. Proceeds will go to Syrian refugee families for their immigration and integration into Canada.

Contact: Iris, Tel: 905-625-9174,
iris.g.schweiger@gmail.com

Christmas Play

It is almost that time again: our annual Christmas Play will take place as always during the joint service at 11:00 am on the third Sunday of Advent, Dec. 17, 2017. You might find out what Christmas is really about and why it is still important to spread the word.

We need you to make it another successful performance: as actors (with small roles without lines to a lead role with many lines, there's something for everyone!), as helpers at the rehearsals, as stage crew, as costume designers...



The 2017 Rehearsals will Take Place as Follows:

- Sunday, November 26, 11:00 am–12:30 pm
- Sunday, December 3, 11:00 am–12:30 pm
- Sunday, December 10, 11:00 am–12:30 pm
- Friday December 15, 5:00–8:30 pm
- Sunday, December 17, 9:30–10:30 am

We look forward to seeing you!
—Your Christmas Play Team

We're Bringing the Peace Light Back to the Lakeshore

Each year, a child from Upper Austria fetches the light from the grotto in Bethlehem where Jesus was born. The light is carried in two blast proof miners lamps on an Austrian Airlines jet from Tel Aviv Israel to Vienna (Austria) from where it is distributed at a Service of Dedication to delegations from across Europe who take it back, with a message of Peace, to their own countries. Austrian Airlines then flies the miner's lamps containing the Peace Light from Bethlehem to New York City from where it is distributed in North America.

On December 2 it will arrive at the Christmas Market in Toronto's Distillery District. It will be passed on at Martin Luther Church during the services on the 2nd Sunday of Advent. Bring a lantern to take it home and to bring the light of peace to all your friends.

Maybe you'd like to volunteer to bring the light to our church on December 2. If so, please contact the church office.



Wanted: Church Christmas Tree Decorators

We appreciate the donation of a large Christmas tree for our sanctuary from the Eble family. We also thank the helpers who transport the tree to our church and set it up.

We invite families to stay after the Christmas Play on Third Sunday of Advent, December 17 to help decorate.

Please contact the office asap
so we can plan.

Drum Circle Update

The drum circle is happy to report some recent developments. In the early spring of this year we applied for the ELCIC Women of Faith Fund to expand and to bring the healing power of drumming, from within the walls of the Martin Luther Church, into the neighbourhood. In May we received a grant of \$2500. Since then we have offered drumming at the Party in the Park, and drummed at our usual time on Wednesday outside the church building on Lake Shore until the middle of October to inspire passersby to enjoy the rhythm and participate. Jenny, our summer intern, developed a program for teenagers to drum and grow to be implemented in the spring of next year.

On November 22, we had a large group consisting of existing drum circle members as well as men and women from the neighborhood, learning together the art of drumming. Drum master Saikou provided us with a 90 minute lesson.

The group has set a goal to perform for the first time during the World Day of Prayer Service on the first Friday in March. In the meantime, we are looking for a name as well as working on developing better relationships with women in shelters and in circles provided by Stonegate Ministry.

Keep the beat.—The Drum Circle



program in our church. Five youth are on board and they will learn about spirituality, group dynamics, event and retreat planning, leadership styles and much more. At the end of this training they will get a certificate and will have also covered a fair amount of their volunteer hours for high school.

We hope that this program will continue next year. If you or your children and grandchildren are interested, please contact Pastor Christian.

Our Lay Preachers Have Successfully Completed Their Training



After a second training seminar in November, our lay preachers completed the almost one-year training. Their official assignment and installation will take place at the beginning of next year during a worship service. We congratulate them and look forward to them supporting the liturgical life in our congregation.

Save the Dates:

- Pulpit Exchange of German Lutheran Churches on February 4
- Annual General Meeting on February 25

You Lead! Youth Leadership Program Has Started

Our confirmands from the last two years have decided to keep being active in the church. In order to train them properly we have created a youth leadership program, called You lead! Parallel to all confirmation class weekends we run this

News from ELCIC, EKD and DELKINA

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)

Our Central Toronto Ministry Area will Join the CLAY Youth Gathering 2018

August 15-19, 2018 the biennial CLAY Youth gathering is taking place at Lakehead University, Thunder Bay, ON. The theme is "threads": Stories are the diverse threads that God weaves together to form the tapestry of our lives. They can be ancient, personal, intimate, and can help us find

meaning and purpose. We gather stories from each other and from our surroundings. Join youth from across Canada at threads, where we will learn how to discern our God-given stories.



Our Central Toronto Ministry Area has set the goal to bring 50 youth to CLAY. Contact Pastor Christian (pastor@martinluther.ca) to participate and join our delegation. Minimum age: 14 years.

More Information: <http://claygathering.ca/>

Let's Walk the Talk of Reconciliation with Bill C-262

"Let's Walk the Talk of Reconciliation with Bill C-262" is a postcard campaign done in collaboration between the Mennonite Church Canada and Canadian Mennonite University.

The campaign is in support of Bill C-262, a private member's bill that is "an Act to ensure that the laws of Canada are in harmony with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples" (please see the link

for more information on the bill—<http://www.parl.ca/DocumentViewer/en/42-1/bill/C-262/first-reading>).

The postcards are to be sent to your local Member of Parliament calling on their support for the bill. "Let's Walk the Talk" reasserts the Calls to Action of the TRC calling upon the federal government and other governments to fully adopt and implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework for reconciliation.

In March 2016, National Church Council issued the ELCIC Statement on Implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples whereby we recognized the UN Declaration as the framework for reconciliation and "as a standard for our own practice" <http://www.elcic.ca/Documents/StatementonCalltoAction48.pdf>

Thank you for the continued work of healing and reconciliation. Postcards are available in the church foyer.

News from the Community



Martin Luther Playmobil travelled with members of St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Milverton. His travels took him to Frankenmuth.



He was in Honolulu for Easter sunrise.

Remarks and Reports

MLC Fall Clean Up

It wasn't possible to return to Camp Lutherlyn to help with fall maintenance this year but a hardworking group got to work in the backyard of our church in October, paving the way for new projects next year. We will hopefully also return to Camp Lutherlyn for spring clean up. Thanks to all helpers!





Senior's Group at the Wienecke Farm in September



The confirmands and youth played a special role in the Reformation 500 service on October 29 at St. James Cathedral .



Church Council Retreat in November

Refugee Support Team

The government's bill for John and Janet Resto's flights of \$3,200 will be paid from the \$5,000 that Martin Luther Church has already deposited with the Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR).

We are helping Rita Nissan (sponsor) complete and submit refugee applications for her father Lahdo Barsoum, mother Nayl Dawi, and brother Fadi Barsoum, who fled from Syria to Lebanon in 2013.

Unfortunately new refugee applications, like the Baroum family's, won't be approved until probably spring 2020, due to the government restricting the number of allowed applications (CLWR won't get new refugee allocations until fall 2018) and government processing times (up to 19 months).

The United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees (UNHCR) does have approval from our government to bring to Canada 9,000 high risk refugees annually. They always have a list of refugees that are approved and are just waiting for a sponsor. Interested sponsors can use the Blended Visa Office-Referred Program where the government covers the cost of the first six months and the private sponsor the next six months.

We invite interested members including those in the larger community to join our Refugee Support Team. We meet monthly on the third Thursday, 7:30 pm at the church. Also, if you would like to make a tax deductible financial donation to our refugee support click on the donation link on the homepage or indicate a special offering on your donation envelope during the Sunday collection.



Holocaust Education Week at MLC on November 5



Daycare News

Susan Orwin-Tutko began working as the new manager of Martin Luther Daycare at the beginning of October. Since then, among other things, she's brought in a crafty desk organizer and stuffed toy to make the office more child-friendly. She also gave the daycare staff hand-written thank-you cards, donuts and roses on ECE appreciation day. Here's a brief introduction.

Q: What would you like the members of Martin Luther Church to know about you?

A: For more than 30 years I had a career in financial services both in the branch dealing with the public and in the corporate office leading large teams through projects and programs on a national and international scale. Since 2013, I have worked on my own as a contractor and enjoyed the freedom of running my own business. However I wanted more direct contact with the public and to rediscover my childhood dream of working with children. I have volunteered on the board of my daughter's daycare and as a Girl Guide leader. At this point in my career I am past the temptation of titles and large paycheques and prefer to focus on what gives me a sense of purpose and aligns with my values. I appreciate the flexibility in my schedule to be able to help my daughter start her own business, a children's bookstore on Jane Street south of Annette called Moonbeam Books opening mid-January. I will also continue training to maintain my Project Management Professional certification.

Q: What are your first impressions working at Martin Luther Daycare?

A: The daycare facilities are well equipped and welcoming. It's great to see the children playing outside and to hear the older children arrive from school- it structures the day in the office in a wonderful way. The teachers are warm and dedicated to the children. I truly feel the job of ECEs and

assistants is incredibly challenging and exhausting work and requires a unique skillset. Our teachers bring that to the table every day and I want to make things easier for them so that they can focus even more on the kids. Working with [the supervisor] Teresa is amazing as her knowledge of Childhood Education is broad and deep. The daycare board is also motivated, supportive and responsive.

Q: What are three skills from your prior world can you apply in your position?

A: First, Strategy facilitation. Second, Change Management, that is to say ensuring everyone has a voice in the implementation of new processes. Finally, I can apply my financial background to ensure sustainable and quality operations of the daycare.

Q: What are your goals for the daycare in the coming year?

A: My goal is to facilitate and execute the daycare board's 3-year strategy, as well as maintain high quality day to day operations at the daycare centre. We want to maintain 100% capacity.

Q: What role do you think Martin Luther Church plays in the future of the daycare?

A: While the Daycare is an independent and highly regulated operation, we share the values of the Church such as a strong commitment to the Mimico Lakeshore community and the provision of a safe and inspiring place for local children to enjoy and learn.



Susan Orwin-Tutko

We Congratulate...

On October 7, 2017, **Erika Knopp and Mark Plotkin** were married in Hamilton. We offer heartfelt congratulations and wish them God's blessing on their path together!



We Said Goodbye to...

Doreen Hein moved back to England after living in Canada for 40 years. We blessed her during the service on September 3.



We Mourn...

At the age of 84 on November 6, 2017, **Erwin Milewski** passed away.

At the age of 64 on November 21, 2017 **Susanne Watson** passed away. We said goodbye to her at a funeral at our church on November 28.

Because I live, you also will live. (John 14:19)

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

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

Next meeting: Resumes in February.

Contact: Pastor Ceconi, pastor@martinluther.ca

Choir Practice every Tuesday at 6 pm for the first Sunday of Advent and Christmas Eve.

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

Worship Team

Next meeting: TBD

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

Senior's Group

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

Next meetings: December 13 & January 10

Contact: Daina Wienecke, Tel: 905-939-2601, seniorsgroup@martinluther.ca

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 (not in summer).

Next meeting: TBD

Contact: Tanya Zielke, Tel: 416-876-7470, sundayschool@martinluther.ca

Website Team

Next meeting: February 1 at 7:00 pm

Contact: Marlena Muller, churchoffice@martinluther.ca

Youth Group

Next Meeting: Confirmands' Weekends

Confirmation Classes

Next Meetings at MLC: January 20–21

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

Martin Luther

Daycare Office

Contacts: Susan Orwin-Tutko (Manager),
Teresa Kurek (Supervisor),
Tel: 416-259-2861, office@martinlutherdaycare.ca

Martin Luther

Daycare Board

Contact: Pastor Ceconi, pastor@martinluther.ca

Visiting Ministry Team

Next Meeting: January 12 at 11:00 am

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

Support Team for Syrian Families

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

Next Meeting: TBD

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

Church Coffee Team

Contact: Waltraut Laser,
Tel: 416-766-9373,
coffeeduty@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@sympatico.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).

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: 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: December 20 & January 17

Lakeshore Lodge Long-Term Care Services usually on the third Sunday every other month at 2 pm,
3197 Lake Shore Blvd West, Toronto

Next Service: December 17

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: January 31

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.

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German Radio Devotion

Sundays 9:30 am on AM 530

Worship Service Plan

Dec. 3, 2017	First Sunday of Advent		11:00 am Joint Service with Church Choir and Welcome of New Members 11:00 am–12:30 pm Christmas Play Rehearsal 12:00–4:00 pm Christmas Bazaar	Pastor Ceconi
Dec. 10, 2017	Second Sunday of Advent		9:45 am English Service 11:00 am German Service Both with Holy Communion 11:00 am–12:30 pm Christmas Play Rehearsal	Pastor Ceconi
Dec. 17, 2017	Third Sunday of Advent		11:00 am Joint Service with Christmas Play 2:00 pm Service at Lakeshore Lodge Senior's Home	Vicar Klein Pastor Ceconi
Dec. 20, 2017			10:30 am Service with Holy Communion at Delmanor Prince Edward Senior's Home	Pastor Ceconi
Dec. 24, 2017	Fourth Sunday of Advent Christmas Eve		4:30 pm German Service 6:00 pm English Service Both with Church Choir	Pastor Ceconi
Dec. 25, 2017	Christmas Day		11:00 am German Service with Holy Communion	Pastor Ceconi
Dec. 31, 2017	First Sunday of Christmas/ New Year's Eve		11:00 am Joint Service 5:00 pm New Years Eve Joint Service	Pastor Ceconi
Jan. 1, 2018	New Year's Day		5:00 pm Jazz Service	Vicar Klein
Jan. 7, 2018	1st Sunday after Epiphany/ Baptism of our Lord		9:45 am English Service 11:00 am German Service	Doug Reble
Jan. 14, 2018	2nd Sunday after Epiphany		9:45 am English Service 11:00 am German Service Both with Holy Communion	Vicar Klein
Jan. 17, 2018			10:30 am Service with Holy Communion at Delmanor Prince Edward Senior's Home	Vicar Klein
Jan. 21, 2018	3rd Sunday after Epiphany		11:00 am Joint Service	Pastor Ceconi
Jan. 28, 2018	4th Sunday after Epiphany		9:45 am English Service 11:00 am German Service	Pastor Ceconi
Jan. 31, 2018			10:00 am German Service at Moll Berczy Haus Senior's Home in Scarborough	Pastor Ceconi
Feb. 4, 2018	5th Sunday after Epiphany Pulpit Exchange		9:45 am English Service 11:00 am German Service	

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.