



Martin Luther
Evangelical
Lutheran
Church

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Holy Week

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

Happy Easter!

April 2021

Finish this sentence; Lent is....

Try finishing that sentence, then ask everyone around your dinner table, ask a friend on the phone, or better yet text it to someone late at night so it is the first thing their groggy eyes see in the morning (that's a great way to get an honest answer). I am sure everyone of us would end that sentence differently; lent is profound, lent is somber, lent is dark and long, lent is anticipation, lent is what we talk about

until the Easter Bunny gets here. However we end that sentence, a few follow-up questions from and friend, especially if they aren't from the same denomination or faith, would likely have us question our answer pretty quickly.

To me, Lent feels like the first part of our Sunday worship. First is our Gathering, which prepares us to truly receive the Word, our story told and brought to new life in our context. Both profound elements are steps, like those up to the Altar, each one drawing us closer, preparing

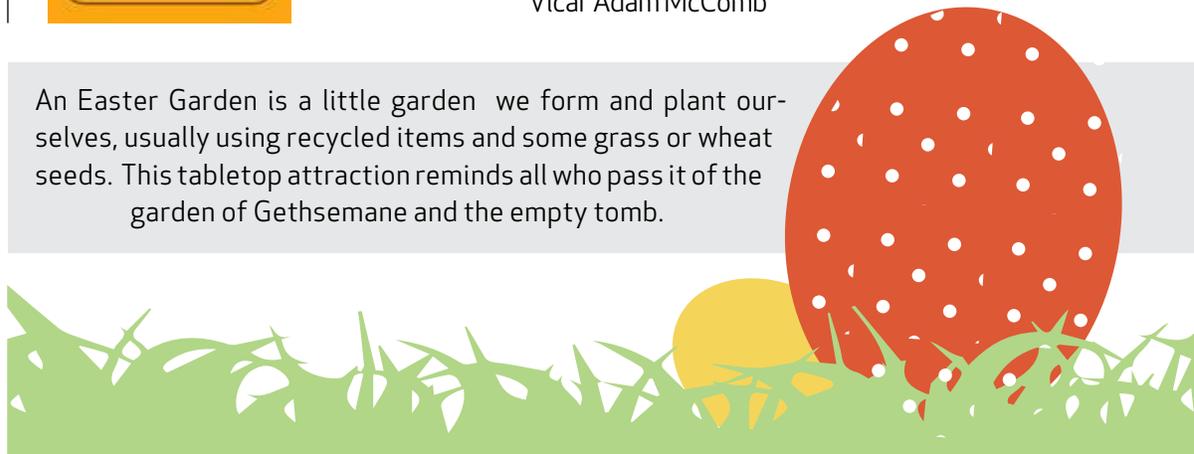
our heads, our hearts, our very souls, for the Meal. The Meal is our communion with the Risen Christ and a celebration of God's love shown on the Cross and in the Empty Tomb. Our participation says we humbly and thankfully receive this love and we will joyfully participate in God's divine plan of reconciliation: His heart's desire to see all of creation living and loving together. Lent is a sequential movement; it is preparing us for the joy that is to come and it is done together. Lent is a Journey; the walk with Jesus toward Jerusalem, each knowing the fait that awaited him and the promise that awaits us. Each year this intentional journey takes us on a path we think we know, yet it looks different every time.

In short, Lent is a detour.

Vicar Adam McComb



An Easter Garden is a little garden we form and plant ourselves, usually using recycled items and some grass or wheat seeds. This tabletop attraction reminds all who pass it of the garden of Gethsemane and the empty tomb.



You can count on the Martin Luther Church...

A look back at an unconventional year

It has been a little more than 365 days since the WHO declared a global Pandemic in March of 2020, and despite the many adjustments we have made as a church, our ministry has grown and we have found new ways to worship, serve, and be in community with one another! Here is a look at some of the numbers:

1 **Canada Summer Jobs student** Ida Hjerpe joined the team in the summer of 2020 and helped to coordinate outreach and Corona Care Calls.

Intern Arianne Oelkrug spent her summer internship with MLC in 2020 lending a hand with our face mask project and setting up the reopening task force.

Virtual summer camp with YouTube videos and Instagram and Facebook posts by our camp counsellors.

Online Spring Bazaar, organized by Leanne Grammenz and featuring handmade contributions by many members and friends of the congregation, was live between March 15th and March 24th. Shoppers were able to pick up their items safely at the church during an individual curbside pick-up time.

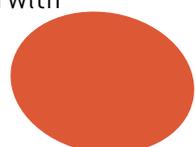


The Spring Bazaar raised over 2000 dollars! Great work everyone!



2 **Refugee families welcomed to Canada**
Exciting **Interview weekends** held with pastoral candidates on Zoom!

Adult Confirmands started their journey.



An update by our Confirmands

Confirmation class led by Vicar Adam has been a wonderful journey. We have learned about God's Grace, Advent, Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit, Spiritual Gifts, Fruits of the Spirit, Apostle and Nicene Creeds, The Sacraments and how these subjects play a role in the Lutheran Church. We are now partaking in Lent and daily prayer. Not only have we learned these subjects but, we are able to ask questions and discuss them in detail during our lesson time. We are blessed to chat about our backgrounds, our journeys in a safe and educational environment without judgement. We have gained friendship and a stronger connection with God. As we continue to grow in our expedition, we continually build ourselves in the way of God's path to becoming better people.

- Kristine and Michelle

Vicars Adam McComb, Jordan Smith, and Silke Fahl

3 **Interim Pastors** Vicar Fahl, Pastor Hoffard, and Pastor Hille tided us over during our search for a new Pastor .

Lay Preachers Katja Brittain, Tanya Zielke, and Iris Schweiger were consistently in supporting roles.

New mission projects:

Masks for Good (our mask distribution project), Give Peas a Chance (an urban gardening initiative), and Bowls and Blessings (an outdoor soup kitchen run in collaboration with the Eastern Synod, the Mimico Presbyterian, Mimico Baptist and Wesley Mimico United Church, Stonegate Ministries and Paris Bakery.





8 New Tech Team members: Alex and Andy Boettcher, Peter and Sonja Schweiger, Greg Andre-Barrett, Ida Hjerpe, Michelle Brennen, Shirjil Khan helped to put together our online services.

21 Special Mailings were created and sent out to members without internet to read updates and devotions.

German radio devotions available Sunday mornings at 9:30am on Radio CHLO AM530

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66 YouTube services and reflections, live and pre-recorded; in English and in German; at MLC, Redeemer and from people's homes; with Holy Communion, Baptism and Confirmation. Visit our website or our Youtube Channel "Martin Luther Church Toronto" to find uploads and join us for services!

10 In-person worship services at MLC with COVID-19 protocols in place between September 13 and November 15, 2020.

11 Sunday Funday lessons prepared for the families of our congregation by Vicar Adam McComb, Jocelyn Sommerfeld, Solveig Voss, and Marlena Muller ran from April to June 2020 and were always a lot of fun! Check it out this spring at @oursundayfundaycyfm!



Dinner Church Services on Zoom are back!

You can once again participate in these monthly services where we gather to sing, pray, bless and share bread and a beverage, as well as listen and respond to a guest speaker or reflection. **Next date:** April 28 with Barbara Sheffield, who will be speaking about interfaith and refugee work.



... and we are counting on you!

Pastoral Search
Thank you for participating!

Dear members of the congregation, we are grateful for your lively participation in the online introductory weekends and the effort you put into providing us with your feedback. Many thanks also go to the search committee. Despite the difficult circumstances in COVID times, you prepared over many months and kept us in the loop with information. We are very glad about the successful virtual introduction of the candidates on the weekends in February.

- The church council

Call to Action

The Martin Luther Church can only exist through your thoughtful prayers and gifts of support, time and talent. Every contribution is appreciated and makes a difference to keep our staff working, the facility maintained and the many missional projects running. To express your thanks and appreciation or support our ongoing efforts, consider making a direct donation via our website using the Red Donate button, sign up for Pre-Authorized Remittance (PAR), mail or drop off a check at church, E-transfer to our Treasurer treasurer@martinluther.ca or on our website through Canada Helps. We are also extremely grateful to all members and friends who are leaving a lasting legacy with a planned gift to support the Martin Luther Church and its ministry for future generations. Planned gifts include bequests, gifts of life insurance, donations of securities, and RRSP/RRIF gifts.

Not sure how to contribute or get involved? Check out our website for programs or speak to Marlena in the church office. By contributing or getting involved as you are able, you help positively impact the lives of individuals and the greater community.

Count all the eggs and tell us the number at one of our Easter services for a surprise!



Holy Week Calendar

A word from Pastor Hille

Like all of us, I prefer to share good news, and I am particularly reluctant to disappoint people. Today, I am afraid I will have to be the bearer of bad news. I know how much we were all looking forward to celebrating Easter worship in our church again, but unfortunately we will not be able to gather in our building this Holy Week. Due to the dire Coronavirus situation, those of us who are responsible for making decisions at our Church are not ready to open our doors again and potentially expose congregants to the risk of infection, nor put the risk of holding in person services on the shoulders of our many volunteers. Etobicoke is still in the "gray zone" and the number of new infections is increasing. In addition, the virus variants in our region are more infectious and so the risk has escalated rapidly. Therefore, I understand that we are well advised to continue to hold our services online as before. Rest assured that God will continue to reach us on this path in His plan to reach out and speak to us. I remind you that "worship" means first of all that God wants to serve us. With this understanding we want to open up and turn to him. Of course, opening up to him is also possible in an online service, even though there may be certain restrictions and it is difficult to let go of expectations and traditions which have always been important to us. This is a special situation, and we are called to make sacrifices for the love of our neighbour, as Bishop Michael Pryse wrote to us in his update on this subject. In spite of everything, I wish you a blessed Easter season in which we celebrate the victory of life, because it is true: "HE lives!"

Palm Sunday

March 28, 2021

*11:00am Service with
Pastor Hille on Youtube*

Find a shared English and German Palm Sunday Service on YouTube or our website, and join the watch party on Zoom. A zoom link can be found in your member e-mail, or by contacting the office.

Stations of the Cross and Maundy Thursday

March 25-April 1, 2021
*with Vicar McComb on
Youtube*

Come and join Vicar McComb on this multi-sensory journey. On Maundy Thursday, a Youtube Playlist of a guided walk through 6 stations of the cross will be shared online.

Good Friday

April 2, 2021

*11:00am Service with
Pastor Hille on Youtube*

Find a shared English and German Good Friday Service on YouTube or our website, and join the watch party on Zoom. A zoom link can be found in your member e-mail, or by contacting the office.

Easter Sunday

April 4, 2021

*6:30am Easter Sunrise
Celebration and 7:30
Easter Celebration
followed by an Easter Egg
hunt with Vicar McComb.*

Two outdoor Easter celebrations will be held by the lake at Etobicoke Point, Humber Bay Park West. Please register with the church office or on Eventbrite at tiny.cc/MartinLutherRegister.

*11:00am Service with
Pastor Hille on Youtube*

Find our German Easter Service on Youtube or on our website and join the watch party on Zoom!

*9:30am German Radio
Devotion on AM530*

*Self-guided reflection for
Easter at Home*

