

# Congregational newsletter



April 2007

LUTHERAN CHURCH  
— Founded 1955 Gegründet —

## Devotion on the Verse of the Month for April

*Dear Members and Friends of Martin Luther Church!*

When I saw this picture, immediately I had to

think of the families, and how much of a shock it must have been when they were informed that their children had died in a car accident. They went to a discotheque and never came home afterwards. A tragic event! Everyone deals differently with those kinds of hardships.

But the one who had to deal with loss and death in his own family himself will understand that coping

with the grim reality of death is a lifelong task. If one is able to move on than probably through the help of faith. There are statements in the bible which very clearly address the issue and may be helpful. *If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's.*

The question which is posed between the lines is this: To whom do we belong? Are we our parents, our partner? Do we belong a political party, a company or our country?

**If we live, we live to the Lord,  
and if we die, we die to the Lord;  
so then, whether we live or  
whether we die,  
we are the Lord's.**

Letter to the Romans 14:8

From the perspective of our faith the answer is: We do not belong to another person, nor an organisation or a group of people. And we do not

own ourselves. In life and death we belong to God. He has created us. He is stronger than death; therefore we do also not belong to death, that's good news! Nevertheless we still want to be in total control of our lives. We do not want to let go. This is the challenge we face

that on one hand we do not want to accept losses on the other hand have to trust God that he will take care of us and others in life and in death.

Easter is the one celebration throughout the year in

which God shows that he breaks through this contradiction of control and trust, by giving his son to die for us and bringing him to life again, so that we have the hope when we let go, God takes the hand; when we mourn a loss, God gives us comfort nevertheless. Easter provides us with the message that we belong to God. Even if we struggle for the rest of our life to really comprehend it, it stands whatever will happen.

With best wishes for Easter and the month of April,  
Pastor *Stefan Wolf*



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## VERY IMPORTANT! RE: ELECTION OF A NEW PASTOR! OFFICIAL INVITATION TO A GENERAL MEETING!

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Dear Members of Martin Luther Church!

The church council would like to invite you to a General Meeting on Sunday, April 15, after the German Service. The Church Council will propose a candidate for election to fill the position of the Pastor of our congregation. Only people present in this meeting are entitled to vote. As per the Call Process Manual of the Synod no votes via proxy is allowed.

**Please take part!**

With kind regards,

*Edmund Scholz, President of Church Council*

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### *Special Collection begins!*

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Dear Members of Martin Luther Church!

At our Annual Meeting in February we have voted on the following projects for which we ask your contributions:

- The showcase in front of the church.
- Further renovations on the church organ.
- The compensation for our new choir director.
- The relocation of the Pastor's family.
- The partially replacement of windows in the parsonage.
- Mission Projects (Loafs and Fishes) and the financial support of the Eastern Synod (same amount as last year).



Our hope is that like in many previous years you will also this year support us financially again. It is proven of value to start early in the year with this Special Collection, also to cover the summer months as well. Since we know that most of our congregational members attend the church services at Easter, we ask you to either bring your donation using the enclosed envelope or to send it back to the address of the church in a post-paid envelope. Don't be surprised that the envelope looks different compared to previous years. The design was discontinued.

With our best thanks for your donation

And kind regards,

*Edmund Scholz, President of Church Council*

# EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE

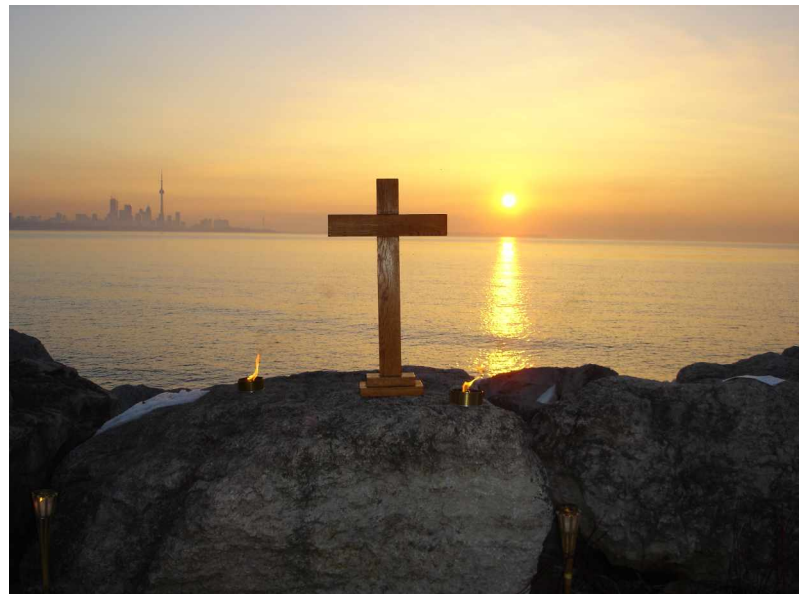
April 8, 6:00 a.m.

“The way back”

## HUMBER BAY PARK WEST

Come to the Easter Sunrise Service! We go to different Stations along the shore of the lake, accompanied by stories about Jesus. Our Service ends at sunrise.

- 6:00** Meeting on the last parking lot of “*Humber Bay Park West*” (this is about 1.5 km east of the church, south side of Lake Shore, directly behind the large apartment buildings complex “Marina del Ray”; near the Yacht-Club!), stay to the right and drive along the road to the last parking lot. That is the meeting place!
- 6:10** Beginning of the Service
- 6:47** Sunrise, a time to reflect on what was heard
- 6:50** Closing with a prayer
- 8:00** Breakfast of Pancakes and Toast
- 8:30** Easter Egg Hunt, games and crafts for children



All are cordially welcomed. Please do come! It is a unique experience!

Let us know if you need transportation. Please call the church (416-251-8293) or Pastor Wolf (416-567-2487).

## 10.00 am: Joint EASTER SERVICE

With participation of the Church Brass Band and the Sunday School

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## 400<sup>th</sup> Birthday of Paul Gerhardt – Part 2

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The relation with Paul Gerhardt's congregation in Berlin was continued. On February 11, 1655, he married Anna Maria (\* May 19, 1622), the daughter of Andreas Berthold. The couple was married in the house of the Berthold family through Provost Petrus Vehr. The following year their daughter Maria Elisabeth was born, who passed away just half a year later on January 28, 1657. She was buried in Mittenwalde. The couple had four more children of whom three, Anna Catharina, Andreas Christian and Andreas died shortly after their birth. The only surviving child was Paul Friedrich, who outlived his parents. In May 1657 Gerhardt was informed that he was elected into the position of the second deacon of the Nicolai Church in Berlin. He accepted the call on June 4, and performed his first Baptism on July 22. – The Brandenburg elector Johann Sigismund had converted before the 30 year war from Lutheranism to the Calvinistic-reformed faith and ordered all employees of his court and all civil servants to do the same. His subjects remained Lutheran. This created some religious tensions among his people. Also Paul Gerhardt took part in some protest and very strongly fought for his Lutheran faith. The rigid stance of the Lutherans was in the way of the elector's politics. He feared this to be a threat to peace and gave a special order, the 'Tolerance Edict', on September 16, 1644. The included enactments of the reformed faith were intolerable for the Lutherans. On January 31, 1666, Paul Gerhardt was asked to endorse it by signature. Like many others he refused and was laid off as a Pastor on February 13. Many people did not agree with his dismissal and demanded through interjections the reinstatement of his position and the release from demanding his signature under this document. The City Council passed this request on to the elector who first refused to accept it. But since Paul Gerhardt had owned a reputation through his spiritual songs beyond Berlin the elector finally reinstated him on January 12, 1667. But Gerhardt now refused to take his job back on the ground of reasons of conscience and faith. As a reaction the elector terminated the contract again and released him without pay on February 4, 1667. – On September 5, 1668, the Pastor of Luebben passed away. The Council of Luebben, which did not belong to Brandenburg but to the Province of Saxony, was searching for an appropriate candidate for this position. Gerhardt was invited as a guest preacher, which resulted in a call. Paul Gerhardt accepted and became Archdeacon of the Nikolai Church, as it was formerly called, and was employed by the mayor and the council on October 29, 1668. The installation was delayed because Gerhardt's son became sick; the mansion was also way too small for all the furniture the Gerhardts wanted to bring with them to Luebben. The house was redeveloped and Gerhardt moved in June of 1669 to Luebben, where an official installation followed by a celebration was held on June 16. Here in Luebben he lived modestly until his death. Nevertheless he diligently fulfilled his pastoral duties and took care of the organizational tasks of the church. Gerhardt passed away in his 70<sup>th</sup> year on May 27, 1676 in his apartment. He was buried in the sanctuary close to the altar of the church which in 1930 was named after him (s. picture). The burial was held on June 7. To his honour a commemorative painting was hanged inside the church on which it is written in Latin: *You see a living portrait of Paul Gerhard, who was wrapped in faith, love and hope. In powerful sounds, like played by Asaph's harp he magnified Christ with heavenly hymns. Sing his songs often, O Christ, in holy pleasure, through them the Holy Spirit enters into your body.*



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*Please, enroll your children  
for Confirmation Class*

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On **Friday, April 20**, the new confirmation class will begin. It starts at 7:00 pm and takes place at the church.

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*Event with  
Hogle's Funeral Home*

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The next presentation of a series of events called "Don't be caught unprepared" in regards to will and estate planning takes place on **April 22** after the German church service. Lunch will be provided. The third and last session will take place on May 6.

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*Wanted...*

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...the following books written by the German Pastor Eduard Kneifel:

- Geschichte der Ev. Augsburgischen Kirche in Polen.
- Die Pastoren der Ev. Augsburgischen Kirche in Polen.
- Die Ev. Augsburgischen Gemeinden in Polen.

The books were published by the author in the seventies. Please call Pastor Knaack (416-243-5469).

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*Swim of the Sunday School*

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66 people participated in the Sunday School event. It was a big success! We like to thank Monika Schmidt, Tanya Zielke and Marlene Mueller.

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*Change in Pastor Search  
Committee*

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You may have noticed following the visit of Pastor Mielke and his wife, that after much consideration and many discussions in church council, I have relinquished my mandate as spokesman for the Pastors search committee. Mrs. Iris Schweiger has my continuous support in our church council for this demanding position and responsibility. I wish her God's guidance to work for the future of all congregational members.

Your, Heinz Gutsch

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*Please, Donate for the  
Foodbank*

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Please continue to donate non-perishable items and bring them to church. Every little bit helps!

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*Passed away...*

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**Frau Inge Langenbach  
Frau Anneliese Maluschke**

**If we live, we live to the Lord,  
and if we die, we die to the Lord;  
so then, whether we live  
or whether we die,  
we are the Lord's.**

Letter to the Romans 14:8

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*The Last Word*

**Lord, my shepherd and  
My spring of joy,  
I am yours; no one can separate us,  
I am yours, because you have given  
Your life and your blood  
Into death for my sake.**

(Paul Gerhardt)