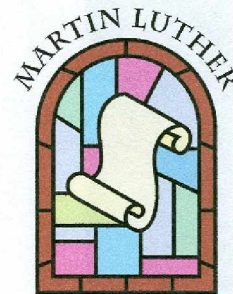


Congregational newsletter



March 2007

LUTHERAN CHURCH
— Founded 1955 *Geegründet* —

Devotion on the Verse of the Month for March

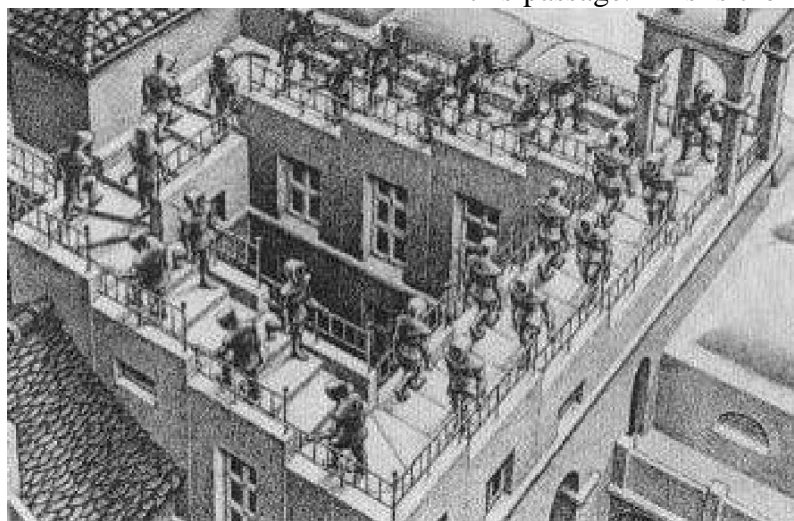
Dear Members and Friends of Martin Luther Church!

This picture of the Dutch artist Maurits Cornelius Escher (1898-1972) speaks to me. If you take a careful look you see that those people go upstairs on one side of the painting and downstairs on the other. But besides of this, nevertheless what they do, they do not really move forward. They run in circles. Some people say their life is similar to this: A

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us.

Letter to the Romans 8:18

constant up and down, but no progress, whatsoever. It is the same old, same old; the same problems and the same events seem to be happening over and over again. Life is like being stuck on a treadmill. What can one do about it? Paul's advice is to take a look at the



big picture. He is comparing his life with a much bigger framework. "I consider" – actually it says "I am convinced" – he writes "that all the problems and all suffering are not worth comparing in the end." – Wait a minute! "Paul, you have no idea, what just happens in my life", I hear some of you saying. – And Paul actually agrees with that. Life is not a bed of roses, no piece of cake. The world is caught in the constant process of decay, he

writes in the beginning of this chapter 8. There are truly things which may frighten us and which cause us to sigh over them. But God will set things right in the end. No one can take this hope away from us. "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation,

will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." This is how Paul finishes this passage. This is the framework with which he

compares his own problematic life. But when, Paul, will things get better? – We have to wait for this patiently, he writes. "We know that all things work together for good for those who love God." – To rephrase this: The piteousness of our lives is confronted by the glory of God. God

will break through all the negative things in our lives and will redeem us from the eternal repetition of those ups and downs. Are we willing to wait for this patiently? Maybe there is nothing else we can do about it.

With best wishes for the month of March,
Pastor *Stefan Wolf*

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

Dear Members of Martin Luther Church!

As president of Church Council I would like to invite you to **two extremely important dates**:

- This coming **Sunday, March 4**, we will show DVDs with introductions of the candidates after the Joint Service which starts at 11:00 am. You can see for yourself and get an impression of the applicants. We will give you also some background information in regards to their family and professional background.
- An election of one of the candidates will be taking place in a General Assembly of our congregation on **Sunday, March 18**, after the German church service (app. 12:30 p.m.).

Please take part and mark those two events in your calendar!

With kind regards,

Edmund Scholz, President of Church Council

Report on the Annual General Meeting

On February 25, the Annual General Meeting took place. This time 66 voting members of our congregation were present. After a short devotion on the watchword of this year, only the necessary items like the Financial Report of 2006, the Budget of 2007 as well as the further steps in regards to finding a new pastor were discussed. Mr. Scholz with his kind remarks at the beginning set the tone for the whole session. He thanked explicitly all congregational members for their faithful support, the retiring Church Council members Helen Schmidt, Ernst Carl and Stefan Grammenz for their hard work, and Pastor Wolf and his family for their engagement in the work of the congregation. Pastor Wolf echoed the appreciation of the support of the congregation and volunteers. He gave a report on the actual situation and the future of the congregation. A summary of this report was distributed during the meeting. As new members of the Church Council were elected: Robert Peter, Dan Sommerfeld and Dina Wancar. Edmund Scholz and Ernst-August Wienecke were re-elected as president and vice-president of the Council. The other positions stayed unchanged as well; Financial Secretary is Karl Kriese; Secretary of Council: Iris Schweiger; Treasurer is Hans-Joachim Arndt; Trustees are Else Weigeling and Inge Koo Tze Mew. As Auditors were elected: Horst Zimmer and Peggy Seifert-Rabey.

For the following projects money was allocated in the budget:

- The showcase in front of the church.
- Further renovations on the church organ.
- The compensation for our new choir director, Ali Giedraitis.
- 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).

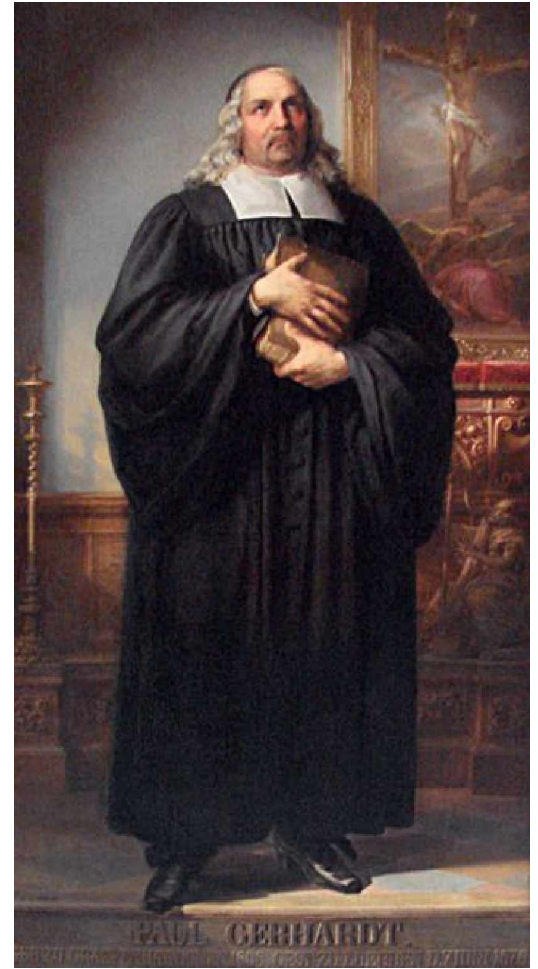
The question was prompted to begin the English church service 15 minutes earlier (at 9:30 a.m.) to have sufficient time between both services especially when the Holy Communion is celebrated. This will be further discussed with the English congregation.

The meeting was proceeded harmoniously and was over at app. 3.30 p.m.

400th Birthday of Paul Gerhardt – Part 1

On March 12, 1607 the famous German hymn writer Paul Gerhardt was born in Graefenhainichen in the province of Saxony. Here an overview of his work and life:

Gerhardt was born as the second child of four children of an Inn owners' family. He received his name in memory of his grandfather on his father's side, who had settled in Graefenhainichen. His father, Christian Gerhardt, was married on May 1605 in the Nicolai Church in Eilenburg to Dorothea Starcke, daughter of the church supervisor of the region of Eilenburg, who followed her husband and moved to Graefenhainichen. Here Christian, their first son was born in 1605, followed by Paul, Anna (*1612) and Agnes (*1619).- Paul was sent to the Duke's school, St. Augustin in the town of Grimma, like his brother who went there two years before him. This was an elite-school for the Pastor's and Civil Servants' children. Paul was hard-working and obedient. It was said that he had talent to master all academic challenges. Three days after his final exams he left the school well-prepared to study at the university. – He chose to study theology at the Lutheran Seminary in Wittenberg. Because he had no money to pay for the school, he took on the position as a private teacher in the house of the Archdeacon of the Wittenberg Inner-city Church, August Flesichhauer, and moved into his house at 7 Collegen Rd. Many people of that time took shelter in Wittenberg as they have escaped the war. In those years of 1636/37 the 'black death' was rampant. The church registry had to record all whose deaths in separate death registers. Paul's home town, close to Wittenberg, was destroyed on April 11, 1637 by Swedish troops. . On November 7, 1637 Paul's brother passed away. All those experiences left a long-lasting impression on Paul Gerhard. – In 1643 Paul Gerhard went to Berlin. The city had been greatly affected by the Thirty Years' War. 'Black Death', pox and dysentery had eliminated the 12.000 inhabitants to a number of just 5.000. Here he found a new position as teacher in the household of Justice Andreas Berthold and his wife Elisabeth, nee Hortleder. In the same year Paul married one of their daughters, Sabina, and expressed his heartfelt thanks to her through one of his very first poems. – Paul Gerhard wrote many hymn texts reflecting the war and its implications and developed in style and theology. In terms of serving in pastoral duties Paul Gerhard worked at the Nicolai Church in Berlin. There also worked Johann Crueger as cantor. When Crueger re-published his song book, Paul provided 18 hymns for it. Until the fifth edition 1653 the number increased to 82. – After his theological Exam he was ordained on November 18, 1651 and started to work as the Pastor of Mittenwalde on November 30. He had to take care of 11 parishes. – He continued to write hymns. 1653 he gave Crueger for his fifth edition of the songbook another 64 hymns. In this time he wrote the famous hymn-text "O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden " (O Sacred Head Now Wounded) which today is part of the world cultural treasures and was first published in Cruegers sixth edition in 1656. Johann Sebastian Bach included this hymn into the Saint Matthew Passion.
(Part 2 will be published in the next newsletter)



Introduction of our new caretaker and musical director, Ali Giedraitis

I would like to thank everyone for the very warm welcome that I have received. I not only feel “at home” already, but also that I have “landed in the right place”.

As some of you already know, I’ve been asked to reawaken the musical potential in our church, especially the German Choir and the Brass Ensemble.

The first get-together of the choir is the second Friday in March, the 9th, at 7:30 pm. Everybody who can hold a note for at least two seconds will be welcomed with open arms.

Anybody interested in supporting music in the church whether by singing, playing an instrument, having ideas or even donating time and financial assistance, please contact me at mlchurch@bellnet.ca or through the church office, or just talk to me whenever you see me.

I hope over time a vibrant music program can develop that includes the whole community.

Ali Giedraitis

Sunday School Swim

Save the date for another big splash ...

Martin Luther Church & Day Care

4th ANNUAL SWIM



Please join us on Saturday March 24th from 4 to 6pm at Norseman Pool, 105 Norseman Street (Norseman Street just east of Islington).

We have the entire pool rented from 4 to 5 pm. After the swim we have the party room booked for pizza, pop and fun. Please stay and join us.

All are welcome. Please sign-up on the Sunday school room door.

For more information contact Monika Schmidt at 416-760-7082 or email mschmidt@workbrain.com



*New Church Council installed
on March 4*

On **Sunday, March 4**, we will officially install the new church council. Two of the three new members, Robert Peter and Dan Sommerfeld, have previously been members of the council. Dina Wancar will join the council for the first time. It is important that the congregation supports the work of the council through prayer, advice and active support.

*Please, enroll your children
for Confirmation Class*

On **Tuesday, April 10**, the new confirmation class will begin. It starts at 7:00 pm and takes place at the church.

*World Day of Prayer in our
church!*

On **Friday, March 2**, we will hoist this year's World Day of Prayer and have invited other German-speaking congregations in Toronto. The German service starts at 1:00 p.m. Followed by Coffee time. The order and topic of the service is provided this year by women from Paraguay. An English service is held at Mimico Presbyterian Church at 2:00 p.m.

Weekly Lent Service in German

Every week on Wednesday nights we conduct German Lent Services in our church. They start at 7:00 pm. This year's topic is "Seven questions – seven answers. Passages from the Gospel of John."

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Church Choir practice continues

The first Church Choir practice with our new conductor Ali Giedraitis starts on **Friday, March 9**, at 7:30 pm in church.

Tax receipts sent out separately!

Just in case you wonder that the tax receipts have not been sent out with this newsletter we had the following reasons not to do it:

- Some have disposed the newsletter with the tax receipts in recent years, because they have not opened the letter at all.
- It was a time-consuming effort to sort through all the receipts and address labels. This way it was more efficient.

Passed away...

**Mr. Gustav Kumpa
Mrs. Ruth Kraft**

**Into your hand I commit my spirit.
Psalm 31:5**

The Last Word:

**Pray diligently,
Live peacefully,
Serve candidly
(Paul Gerhardt)**