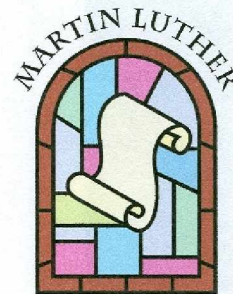


Congregational newsletter



May to July 2007

LUTHERAN CHURCH
— Founded 1955 Gegründet —

Devotion on the Verse of the Month for May

Dear Members and Friends of Martin Luther Church!

One of the most disregarded words in our

vocabulary is the word “to confess”. And every tongue should confess, it says here and the question is, what does it mean, how does this work? Maybe we think of Sunday’s Church Service, more specifically of the moment when we confess our faith reciting the Creed together with others. But is this sufficient? Shouldn’t

we confess our belief in Jesus Christ also outside of the church? One is only able to confess what one knows, or is convinced of it, or what one is moved by – short: what one believes in. To confess something includes to do this publicly and to say, what is on one’s heart – and I think this is what our problem is. We think our faith is a very personal, a private matter. And as long as I confess my faith in church among those of the same mind

everything is ok. As long as I come to church and talk about God to people of faith or as long as I confess my faith with them, everything might be in order. But what if I confess my faith in front of people who are hard to assess, or in situations in which I do not know how people will take what I say? Sure, I have witnessed people, too, being to persistent with bringing Jesus into conversations or having pressured people too much with their beliefs. Nevertheless: When you’re excited about something, you simply can’t help talking about it. -

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Confessing is not just talking about something. When I live with God and, when I believe, when I am pious (also used scarcely), others will find out

anyway. - So, do I then need to talk about my faith at all? Isn’t it enough if others observe that I go to church and pray and believe in God? - Faith is communicated through a sermon, a conversation, through the mentioning the bible in a conversation with someone. You do not have to convince

everybody all the time and evangelize people in inappropriate ways. But wouldn’t it be fabulous to say in a very relaxed way: "You know, my faith is very important to me." Or: "As a Christian I see it this way." - Our faith is supposed to be part of our lives; no; even more so, it should be the definitive

factor. Jesus once said: „Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.” And Paul pointed out in the letter to Timothy: “For God did not give

us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline. Do not be ashamed, then, of the testimony about our Lord.” – Our faith should not be an embarrassment to us. It should become visible. Not only because of what we do, also because of what we say about Jesus Christ as we confess him.

With best wishes for the coming months May to July, and for the future remains with kind regards
Your Pastor *Stefan Wolf*

**And every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.**

Letter to the Philippians 2:11

Six Years and Seven Months

Dear Members of Martin Luther Church!

This is it, the word of departure. Naturally, we can not even touch on all the things we have encountered and were moved by in all those years. It was a very intense time; a time, precious to us and filled with different experiences and personal developments. Our children have grown into men during this time. They had no problems to adjust and have gathered experiences which will shape their lives. It was good for all of us to live – even if only for a short time – in a different corner of this world. We will keep fond memories of the friendliness of Canadians and the diversity of the society. That we felt at home is also of course the result of you, making us part of your congregation and of your lives. You have welcomed us very warmly. That we will not forget. Many have cared about us and have taken us into their hearts. This has made it easier for us to arrive here and made us feel very comfortable living among you. We like to express our heartfelt thanks for this. – We have tried to contribute to the work of this congregation to the best of our abilities. Surely we have not been able to satisfy all wishes and to meet all expectations. It is also clear to us, that success in this regard is not only the doing of the Pastor and his family – many have been involved in this and as Christians we also know that it is God’s “vineyard” and in everything we do, we have to ask for his blessing and actually rely on his blessing. Therefore we have foremost to thank God himself, who led some of the seed sprout and grow and who has given many Projects and tasks meaning and direction. – Nevertheless we are allowed to say that many things have been accomplished and steps towards the future of this congregation have been made. In my view the most important developments are not represented through the building projects and the growths in numbers of attendance. My hope is, that people feel energized in terms of their faith and have found a new approach to important topics of their faith. This result is certainly less measurable, but they will determine the future of this congregation: Do we as individuals, but also as members of this congregation, what our faith demands of us? – Part of the blessings of the work in this congregation is certainly the progress in its engagement in social work. Individuals, groups and circles have done a tremendous job through the Day Care and the social work to care for people around our church as well. This is beside faith the second pillar of congregational work, if we abide by the important maxim of Dietrich Bonhoeffer: “The Church is her true self only when she exists for humanity.” – To be honest, this did not always go well with some or has been appealing to people, but still it is what people judge our congregation by, how serious we take our Christian faith. Faith needs not only words, but deeds as well. – There were many changes and challenges. My impression is that at times we would have been able to achieve more or put things easier to action, if we had not been too hesitant or quarrelsome and had cared more about the whole picture than the little insignificant details. But we need to leave this up to God’s assessment. – In many ways this congregation has reason to look ahead with confidence. It will again and again be the question how we make the best of our resources. I understand that people might look forward to more quiet times, but a congregation can never just stand still; God’s mission is way too important. Like with a house, in a congregation are always things which need to be changed, repaired and new projects to be taken on. In this Service (for God) we will never finish our work, but in this is so much good, because will always bless the effort and the diligence. – The ‘change of generations’ is not carried out, yet. Therefore, although external building projects have been done (this time I talk about the buildings) except a few renovations in the basement of the church and in the parsonage – the inner alterations and renovations need to be continued, if the congregation wants to secure the participation of youth and the engagement in congregational work on the level of the middle-generation. For this I wish my successor, Pastor Mielke, intuition, dedication and God’s blessing. – We have given you as a congregation in those almost seven years a close look into our family life, and have always been very open to you. Sometimes we might have stepped on a few toes, which at times also has happened the other way around. But we do not hope that this is and does not remain to be the only and lasting impression. We also hope that the congregation looks back favorably on the time we had with you. – How do things continue for us? Often I had to give as an answer that the new assignment in

Germany in general has something to do with supporting children and youth, and schools and organizations which deal with young people. The Peter-Glaesel-Foundation is similarly as the congregation six years ago at this junction to have new leadership and requires new perspectives for its work. We take this on in the trust of God's guidance. We are curious how we feel about living in the new "old" home-country and how Merlin and Fynn will cope with entering into the German school system. Jan-Lukas will remain to be a "wanderer between two worlds", continue his studies in Canada and also come to visit us in Detmold. We are looking forward to have family and friends close by again. And for sure there are waiting new tasks already in the Lippe Church and in the periphery of family and society which we do not know about yet, but which will find us anyway, like we have experienced this many times before.

We like to thank you and wish you faith in God and his blessing. In Ephesians, chapter 3, there is a well fitting wish for the congregation, which we like to pass on to you: *"I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love."*

With kind regards we remain yours truly
Mirjam, Stefan, Jan-Lukas, Merlin and Fynn Wolf

Farewaell to Pastor Wolf and Family on June 24th

After many years of service, Pastor Wolf and his family are returning to Germany this summer. On behalf of the Church Council and the Farewell Committee, we would like to extend an invitation to you and your family to join us in paying tribute to the Wolf family's dedication to our congregation and the community, and in bidding them a fond farewell. A special service will be held Sunday, June 24th at 2 PM at the Martin Luther Lutheran Church at 2379 Lakeshore Blvd. W, Toronto. After the service the congregation will move to nearby hall (Polish Cultural Centre at 2282 Lakeshore Blvd. West) for coffee and cake. If you plan to attend farewell celebration at the Polish Cultural Centre please sign in Church Foyer or phone Martin Luther Church Office 416- 251-8293. Please respond no later than May 31st 2007.

Ed Scholz (President of Church Council) and the Farwell Committee

Pastor Alexander Mielke elected!

Dear congregation!

We found a new Pastor! On April 15th the church council made a recommendation to call Pastor Alexander Mielke as the new pastor of the Martin Luther Church. 114 congregation members were in attendance and 99 people voted yes. Pastor Mielke responded right away with a Thank you e-mail which was read to the congregation on Sunday the 22nd of April. Now, you are probably asking yourself: "When will Pastor Mielke and his family arrive in Canada?" We are planning for some time in August. Please keep Pastor Wolf, Pastor Mielke and their families in your prayers during this time of transition. A lot of courage and strength are needed in the months ahead.

May the words from Joshua 1:9 help along the way. *"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go."*

Yours Iris Schweiger (Chairperson of the Search Committee)

Confirmation on May 27th

Another confirmands group approaches confirmation! After more than a year of concentrated instruction, the learning by heart of important texts, which are used in the Church Services of the congregation, the reading of a complete gospel and dealing with our Lutheran traditions, our confirmands, Naledi Cheda, Mark Emmanuel and Fynn Wolf are now looking forward to their big day. On Saturday, May 26th, we invite the congregation, the confirmands and their parents and families to a Holy Communion Service at the Church at 6:00 p.m. As in the years before, this marks the festive commencement of the Confirmation. On May 27th, the confirmation then takes place in a festive Church Service at 10:00 a.m. Together with the youth two adult confirmands are going to be confirmed that day as well: Brenda Bridges and Cory Therrien, who have attended an adult confirmation class. We ask the entire congregation, to take part in the Church Services and to be with the confirmands through your prayers. We wish the five confirmands all the very best and God's blessing on their road through life.

Congregational Picnic on June 3rd in Camp Edgewood

On June 3rd we hold again our traditional picnic in Camp Edgewood. The program is as follows:

- 09:30 a.m.!** **THE BUS IS LEAVING FROM THE CHURCH. Please be on time!**
11.00 a.m. **Church Service for the entire family**
 with the church choir, brass band and a short play
12.00 noon **Lunch**
01:00 p.m. **A game for everyone!**
Followed by **Crafts, singing, hiking, playing soccer... Offers for big and small.**
4:00 p.m. **Joint (brief!) Conclusion**

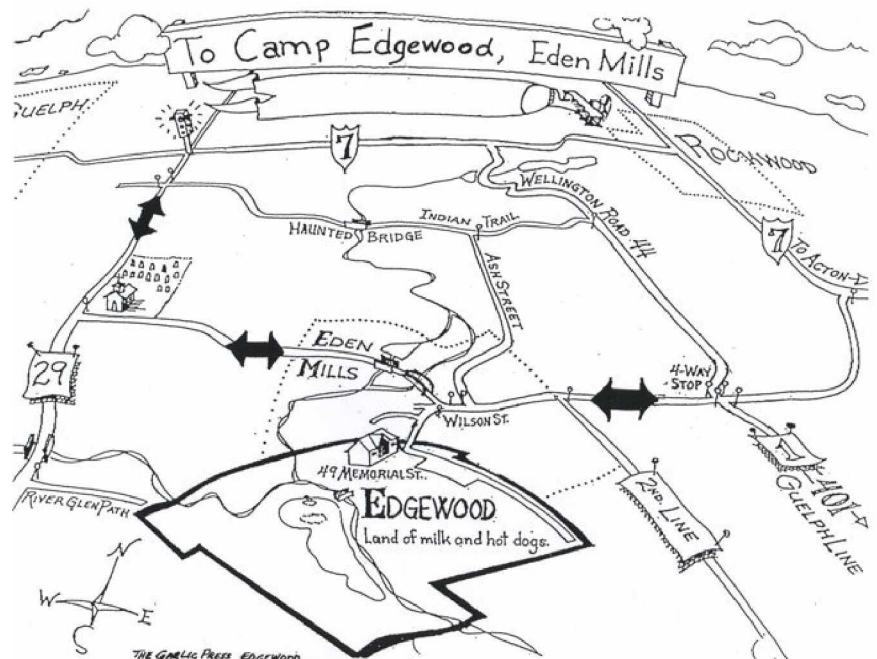
Please do not forget to bring your own lunch, plate, cutlery and also a cup for tea or coffee. We want to ask you to stay together during lunch time!

How you reach the Camp:

From Toronto:

- Highway 401 West
- Guelph Line 1, exit northbound
- Through town of Brookville
- Stay on Guelph Line until you come to a 4 way stop (huge stop-sign)
- Turn left to Eden Mills and follow signs to the Camp

Please come and bring along your Family!!!



Camp Lutherlyn 2007 – Please Enroll!

Dear Congregation, Camp supporters and Attendees! Please find attached to this newsletter the 2007 Camp Lutherlyn fee schedule. I'd like to let you know that our fees have not changed since 2003. During the same time period, Camp Lutherlyn has raised their fees 10%. My heartfelt thanks go to everyone who has contributed towards making the Camp a truly unique experience, we've come a long way since 1999 when I started directing the Camp.- This year presents new challenges for the Camp Lutherlyn Board of Directors as they struggle to remain financially viable. In an effort to bring in more revenue as a Camp and Conference Center, they have reorganized the Day Camps. Effective this year, our Camp begins Sunday at 4pm and finishes Friday at noon. Our 2007 Camp charges have not changed, therefore our rates also have not changed. I am sympathetic to their plight and wish them success in achieving their goals. While we may have lost a day of Camp, a worse scenerio is that we lose the Camp altogether. Looking ahead, please join me in making this year another memorable one. Parents, if you have kids 15 years and older that are qualified and/or interested in being a Camp Counsellor, please contact me. As always, we offer financial support to those who wish to attend but are cash poor and rich in personality!

Best Regards, *Dan Sommerfeld* (Phone 905-274-6602, evenings between 7 and 9)

Attention: Concert!

Sunday, May 20, 2:00 pm with Winona Zelenka, violoncello
Solo Bach Suites



Winona Zelenka, one of the top musicians in Canada, is donating this concert to establish a music fund for musical development in the Martin Lutheran Church for the local community. We are hoping there is enough interest to further open the doors of the church by starting a series of concerts and musical activities in helping the community through music. Although it is the Victoria Day weekend, we hope you will invite all of your acquaintances (as well as your neighbours!) to come and enjoy this concert. For those of you who cannot attend, due to sailing, fishing, golfing, cottaging, maybe you would consider an extra donation envelope with Music Fund written on the outside, as well as sending two or three people to fill the large void which we will feel missing you. Unfortunately it requires a lot of hard work and money before even the first note can be played or heard. We would like to be able to place a strong accent on young talent and community involvement. Special thanks to Winona Zelenka for her generosity and taking time in her very heavy schedule to support us.

Yours, *Ali*

More Music News from our Choir Director

The Martin Luther Brass Ensemble will be rehearsing on May 1st at 7:30 pm in the church (back door, upstairs). The German Choir meets every Thursday at 7:15 pm (we will be singing on May 6th German service and anyone is very welcome even at the last minute). I would very much like to hear from any child or adult as well as in between who would like to play or sing a solo during the church services.

Thank you, *Ali*

Important Dates

Third and Last Event with Hogle's Funeral Home

The last presentation of a series of events called "Don't be caught unprepared" in regards to will and estate planning takes place on May 6th after the German church service and deals with pre-planning of a Funeral. Lunch will be provided. We hope for good attendance.

A cordial invitation to the Mother's Day Church Service

On **Sunday, May 13th**, it is Mother's Day again! On this day, there will be a joint Service at 11:00 a.m. with the traditional luncheon prepared by the men of the congregation. The men will meet at 8:00 a.m. at the church! We would gladly receive some cakes 'donated'!

Church Service on Christ's Ascension Day

As in the past year, there will be a joint Church Service with the other Lutheran congregations. It will take place on **Thursday, May 17th**, at our church at 7:00 p.m. in St. George's Church. Following the Service coffee-time; afterwards the German Cluster Circle of the Lutheran Churches meets.

Special Church Services in June

Please note that there are a few special Church Services in June:

- 03.06. Picnic in Camp Edgewood
- 10.06. Service with Pastor Guenter Dahle
(Eastern Synod)
- 17.06. Service with Dr. Karen Hamilton
(Canadian Council of Churches)
- 24.06. Farewell Service for Pastor Wolf
and Family

Thanks

to Pastor Joachim Knaack and Pastor Erwin Lange for holding Church Services in July.

In August...

...will the Church Services be held at the regular times. Further information will be given to the congregation at a later time.

Film Crew in Church Service

On June 24th a small TV Film Crew will be filming during the Church Service. They document our return to Germany. The Church Council has approved.

We Baptised...

Gloria Maria Babko

**To each is given the manifestation
of the Spirit for the common good.**

Letter to the Corinthians 12:7

The Last Word

**If it is true,
what Christians confess,
why then do they talk about it
so uninterestedly?**

Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, norwegischer Dichter
(1832 - 1910)

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