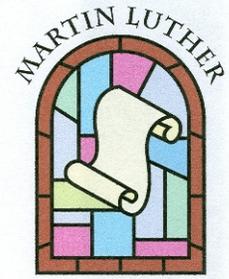


# Congregational newsletter



LUTHERAN CHURCH  
— Founded 1955 Gegründet —

February 2009

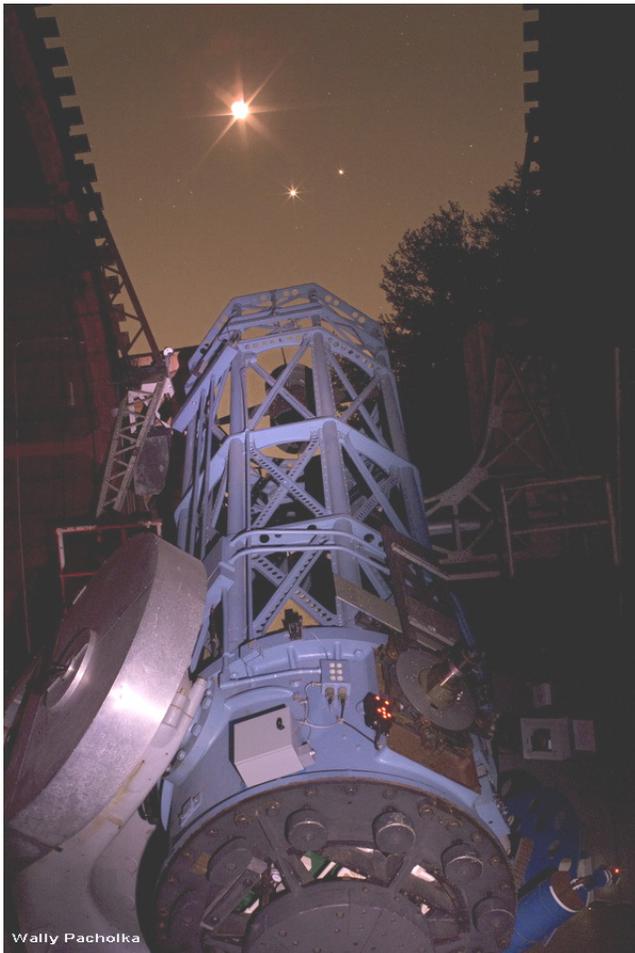
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## DEVOTION

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*Dear Members and Friends  
of the Martin Luther Church!*

The year 2009 has been proclaimed as the “International Year of Astronomy”. The occasion for this are the exciting observations of the year 1609, 400 years ago, which were made with the telescope developed shortly



**On February 15, we join the service in the Wesley Mimico United Church which already begins at 10:30 a.m. (no service in the Martin Luther Church on this Sunday!!!).**

**Read more on page 3 !**

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before: moon craters, sun spots and the four large moons of Jupiter, which are especially connected with the name of Galileo Galilei (British scientists however are not very happy with this, they point to Thomas Harriot, who composed a sketch of the moon already a few months earlier in that year 1609).

Corresponding to this anniversary, I found the photo in the internet, which you see here, on the website of NASA "Astronomy Picture of the Day" in mid December. It shows the exciting conjunction of moon, Venus and Jupiter, seen through the now one hundred year-old Wilson-Telescope. With this venerable telescope near Los Angeles, astronomers like Edwin Hubble and Harlow Shapley, could revolutionize our understanding of the universe through examination of stars and galaxies.

When I saw this photo shortly before Christmas, I had to think of the star which shone over Bethlehem and led the wise men

from the Orient there. A similar conjunction may have been the sign at the time, which pointed to the birth of Jesus Christ.

The world of the stars has always fascinated humankind, and this also becomes clear in many places of the Bible. Particularly in comparison with other planets, it is like a miracle that earth is, on one side, protected by an atmosphere which permits life; that the earth, on the other side, is not permanently covered by clouds, so that it is possible for us to look into the sparkling sea of lights of the universe at night.

At the beginning of the 21st century, astronomy opens a "New Frontier" for us, huge new dimensions of the universe are revealed to us, also in connection with other areas of natural sciences, when, for example, in hydrogen sulphide eruptions in the depth of the oceans unexpected forms of life were discovered, which have developed independently of light, oxygen, or chlorophyll. All this lets us question anew the understanding of the universe, life and mankind.

Here it is important for me, that science and faith do not have to battle each other, but they can complement and enrich each other through different experiences of reality. 400 years after Galilei, the conviction of many churches is this: Neither Christian faith which denies the findings of the natural sciences, nor a science which acts as being superior to all religious superstition, help us to master life in this world. The rational, unbi-

ased perception through science and the preservation of the spiritual riches of mankind, both together let us, as humans, find identity and courage.

For this openness in a kind of synopsis attest contemporary natural scientists like Francis Collins, who speaks of the "richly satisfying harmony between scientific and spiritual worldviews" or Paul Davies, who points to the "fine-tuning" and the "bio-friendliness" of the universe.

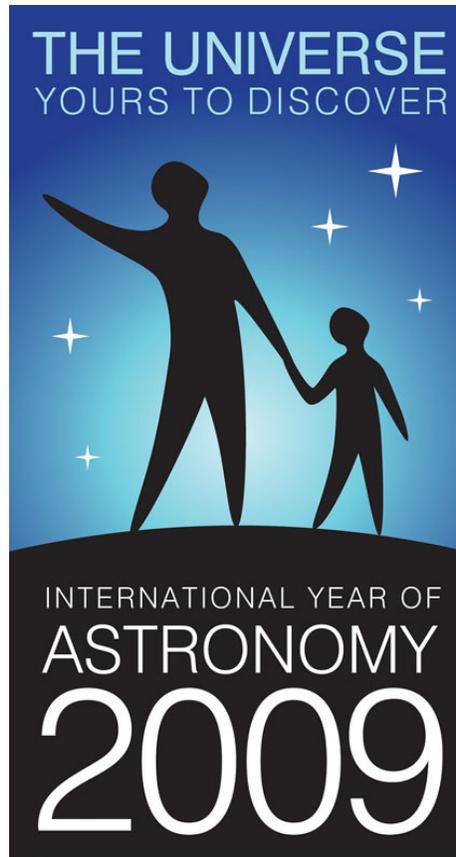
The word from Psalm 36 has always spoken to me in a special way, „With you is the fountain of life; in your light we see the light.“ All light in this world has its origin in God's light; everything that we experience as true and good, is rooted in the living and inexhaustible Spirit of God. Also this universe, which is ever widening enormously in front of our eyes.

In the star of Bethlehem we see what Jesus says of himself in John 8, 12, "I am the light of the world. He who follows me will not walk in darkness,

but will have the light of life." Let the star of Bethlehem guide us through our life, also in the midst of all the new and exciting natural science discoveries and insights.

*With kind greetings and blessings,  
yours,*

*Pastor Alexander Mielke*



## Meetings in Church Services together with our neighbouring Wesley Mimico United Church

The church services on February 15th and March 15th, we will celebrate together with our neighbouring Wesley-Mimico-United-Church. First, on February 15<sup>th</sup>, we will take part in their service, later on they will come to us on March 15<sup>th</sup>.

For several years now, the Martin Luther Church has been supporting the local food bank of the Wesley Mimico United Church.

Since I came to be Pastor in the Martin Luther Church, I have been able to get to know Pastor Linda Petrides as a friendly and open-minded colleague. In the church council we have decided that the joint services are a good opportunity, to get to know the neighbour congregation. Many congregational members support the food bank with their donations time and again; here is a good opportunity to **learn more about the work of this food bank.**



### **February 15, service at 10:30 a.m. in Wesley Mimico United Church ! No service in Martin Luther Church !**

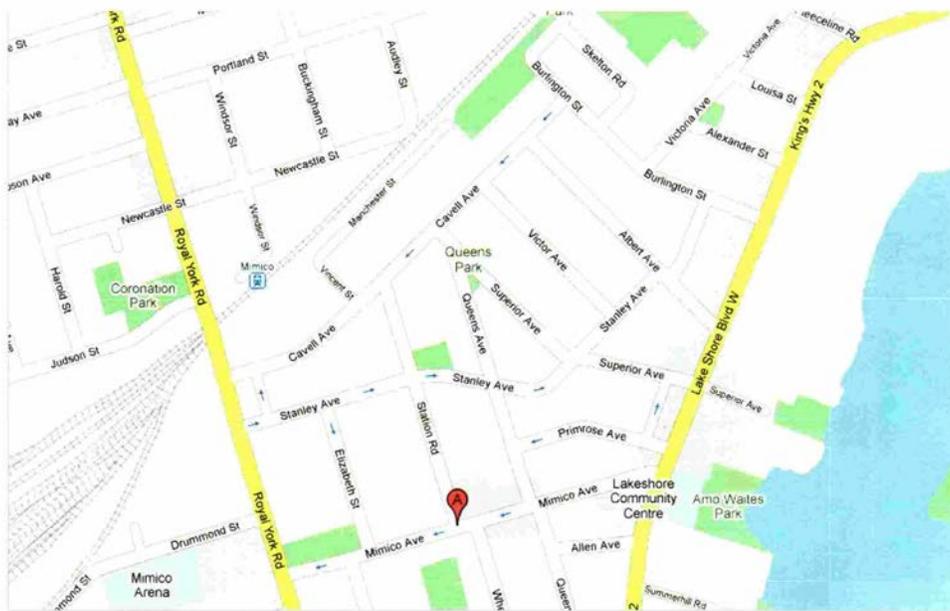
On February 15th, we are taking part in the service of the Wesley Mimico United Church, which **begins already at 10:30 a.m.** On this Sunday, there will be **no service at Martin Luther Church.** During both months we use the Sundays of joint services for these meetings.

On February 15th, we will introduce the history and present work of our Martin Luther Church to the congregation we visit. After the service, all are cordially invited to a **pleasant get-together with pancakes.** The Wesley United Church is only a few minutes walk from us, at 2 Station Road (see map and instructions). The **parking lot of the Hogle Funeral Home opposite**, offers plenty of parking spaces. You can use the Martin Luther Church donation envelopes, which will be channelled to our church. Or you can support the Wesley Mimico United Church with a cash donation. During the service there, **Sunday School** will also be offered to the children. Please note that the church service there begins already at 10:30 a.m.!

**On March 15th, we will have the congregational members of the United Church as our guests.** The church service will take place at the usual time at 11:00 a.m. On this Sunday, the guests will introduce their congregation to us.

*I invite you cordially to these beautiful and important church services, where we have the opportunity, to experience Christian community, exchange ideas for congregational work and get to know our neighbourhood better.*

*Your Pastor Alexander Mielke*



A. Wesley Mimico United Church  
 2 Station Road, Etobicoke, ON M8V 2P9 -  
 (416) 251-5811

**Address of Wesley  
 Mimico United Church:**

**2 Station Road**

**Directions:**

Head west on Lake Shore Blvd W -  
 Turn right into Mimico Ave

after 300 meters you see the  
 church on your right

## *More Events*

Please remember:

We now need the reports of our groups and circles for the **Annual General Meeting**, which will take place on **March 1<sup>st</sup> at 12:00 p.m.** after the Family Joint Service. This joint service will be arranged as a **family joint service at 10:00 a.m.**, which will have **Papua-New Guinea** as its focal point (the country which is also the topic of the World Day of Prayer). Please bring your lunch for after the service!

A cordial invitation is extended to a World Day of Prayer Service, which will be jointly and ecumenically conducted by the German speaking congregations of Toronto, to take place on March 6<sup>th</sup>, 1:30 p.m., at the St. Patrick Catholic Church, located 141 McCaul Street.

We also cordially invite to the **English World Day of Prayer Service** which will be held in **Wesley Mimico United Church, March 6, 2:00 p.m.**

On Ash-Wednesday we begin with the German Lent Services, which take place every Wednesday respectively at 7:00 p.m.

## *Please mark in your calendar*

On **April 5th, 2009, Palm Sunday, the choir "Harfentoene"** will sing in our Martin Luther Church. With songs for the Lent Season, we will be tuned into the proper contemplative mood for the Holy Week.

This year our **congregational picknick in Camp Edgewood will be on June 28.**

In the joint service on January 18th, these **new congregational members** were introduced officially: Petra **Groenewald** with Tristan and Roman (also husband Jan and daughter Melissa belong here); **Florine Nolte**; **Waltraut Laser**; as well as the **Schwarz** family with daughter Nicole, father Kenneth und mother Tina (son Ben is unfortunately not in the photo). Pastor Mielke greeted them cordially and in a prayer requested God's blessings for them.



From November to January, **Katarina Prosenjak** was an assistant at Martin Luther Church. She has concluded her studies of Evangelical theology in Marburg and now begins her curateship in the Hessen-Nassau Church. She sent us the following fare-well greeting:

Hello,

By now I'm back in Germany, I have adjusted to the German time and I'm enjoying the "warm" temperatures after being constantly cold for two months in Canada. I've started the preparations for the curateship and I'm looking forward to my new congregation in Rüsselsheim.



I've told my family much about the German-Canadian congregation, which welcomed John and me so warmly into their midst. My parents were very interested in the book about the congregation, that I received in church before I left for Germany as well as the recipes from the cookbook Dan gave me.

The time I spent in your congregation was not only interesting, but also a lot of fun: contributing to the church services – especially helping with holy communion, which was a new experience for me -, taking part in different group meetings – the women's circle, church council and English Bible Study (which, on this day, was a rather small circle) und simply spending time with you was an inspiration for me. One of John's

and my highlights was the very well done nativity play in church on the third of Advent; the performance of the soldiers still brings a smile to our faces...

John and I felt welcomed from the beginning and by the time of my departure like old congregation members. We were lucky to meet Irene Zielke who agreed to teach John German so he won't feel all that lost when he comes to Germany. For that we are very grateful.

I am happy to have chosen and contacted your Martin Luther Church out of all the German-Canadian Churches there are in Toronto. Pastor Mielke was very easy-going and helpful and let me take part in all kinds of things. John and I spent quite some time with him and his family, which we enjoyed very much.

I hope we will stay in touch with the Mielke family and your congregation. Next time I am in Toronto I will definitely come for a visit.

*All the best to you and many greetings from good old Germany,*

*Katarina*



On the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent Sunday, the **Edelweiss Choir and Schola Cantorum** under the direction of **Manfred Petz**, let wonderful Christmas melodies from Austria and Germany resound in our church. **Gunther Kunzelmann** put those present in a reflective mood by his recital of very well-chosen serious and humorous texts.

We could go into the **New Year** with zest. **Magnus Hjerpe** (guitar, left) and his friends (base and saxophone) played **lively jazz melodies**. A sample can be found on our homepage [www.martinluther.ca](http://www.martinluther.ca) under "Photos".



[www.martinluther.ca](http://www.martinluther.ca)

The children of the Sunday School presented a joyful **Christmas play** on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Advent. This time, there was no snowstorm like last year, so that many people attended the presentation. Concerning both, the singing and the acting, it was a special achievement this time, for it was a musical with many songs. A special applause was given to the marching in of a frightful Roman cohort. A heartfelt thank you to all those involved!



Our team **“In Mission For Others”** contributed to the joint service on January 18th. Following the service, some stayed for a workshop, in order to think about what God’s mission is in which we should participate, and how, out of simple plastic material, a forceful symbol for the church can be created. In March, the team, consisting of Doris Cheda, Inge Koo Tze Mew, Peggy Seifert-Rabey, Iris Schweiger and Pastor Mielke, will visit another seminar. (More in the next newsletter!)



From January 23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup>, this cheerful group met at **Camp Edgewood for an adult retreat**. The theme were texts from Acts, which encourage us to live our church **“In Mission For Others”**. In our midst was the birthday child Else Weigelin, who on this very Saturday could enjoy the many good wishes for the new year in her life.



Before the inauguration of President Barack Obama in the USA, **high ranking German politicians of various parties have publicized an appeal**, which I consider so important, that I want to pass it on to you here in the congregational bulletin. They point to the absolute **urgency of new disarmament negotiations**, in order to reduce the weapons arsenal of the super powers which has dramatically increased during the last few years.

## **For a World free of Nuclear Weapons**

**By Helmut Schmidt (former chancellor), Richard von Weizsäcker (former president), Egon Bahr and Hans-Dietrich Genscher (former minister for foreign affairs)**

Henry Kissinger, George Schultz, William Perry and Sam Nunn have called for a nuclear weapons-free world in 2007. They have gained respect in administrations of Republicans and Democrats as Foreign- and Defence Ministers and in the chairmanship of the Armed Forces Committee of the Senate in the United States and further afield. Particularly their knowledge and experience lend weight to their concern for growing nuclear dangers. As realists, they know that the abolition of all nuclear weapons can only be achieved step by step, and they propose urgent practical steps, so that the essential vision becomes reality...

Our answer, from a German view-point, takes into consideration the expectations which are connected to the Presidency of Barack Obama. The key word of our century is co-operation. No global problem can be solved by confrontation or the employment of military might: neither saving the environment and climate protection or the energy demand of a growing population, nor mastering the global financial crisis. The United States bear an outstanding, indispensable responsibility.

This is particularly true at a time when the number of states who have nuclear weapons at their disposal is growing or who obtain the ability to produce such weapons and thereby the raw material for a disastrous terrorism. At the same time, the nuclear states are developing new nuclear weapons.

We support without any reservation the call of the four American personalities for a severe change of direction in nuclear politics not only of their country. This is particularly true for the following proposals: The vision of a world without nuclear threat, as Regan and Gorbatschow have developed in Reykjavík, must be revived. With the aim of drastically reducing nuclear weapons, negotiations must be resumed, at first between the United States and Russia, who have the greatest number of warheads at their disposal, in order to also win over the other states who possess such weapons. The Non-Distribution Contract has to be strengthened decisively. America must ratify the contract regarding the encompassing ban of nuclear experiments. All nuclear short-range arms must be destroyed....

The contract regarding rocket defence must be re-instated. Space may only be used for peaceful purposes. The co-operation in the interest of common security has enabled the Presidents Bush and Gorbatschow to remove the mutual threat of nuclear mid-range rockets towards the end of the cold war and in 1990 has created the largest conventional de-armament in history....

Barack Obama has demanded in Berlin to overcome the thinking in the categories of the cold war. That ties in with the considerations that were discussed after the end of the East-West Conflict under the concept of security from Vancouver to Vladivostok....

We recommend probing the chance seriously. Security and stability for the the globe – that can only be managed through solid and committed co-operation between America, Russia, Europe and China....

Stable security in the north of our world would relax certain global crises and make them easier to solve. Fundamental efforts of the United States and Russia for a nuclear weapons-free world would, with all the other states with nuclear weapons – whether with or without permanent seats in the Security Council of the UN –facilitate communication regarding adequate action. A spirit of co-operation could have consequences from the Near East across Iran to East-Asia...

Partnership does not go well with the still valid doctrine of NATO and Russia for the First-use of nuclear weapons, even though both sides will not attack each other with nuclear weapons. A general Non-first-use-Contract among the nuclear armed states would be an urgently welcomed step.

Co-operation as the key-word of our century and secure stability on the northern part of the globe can become milestones on the road to a nuclear weapons free world. These are our answers to the appeal of Kissinger, Schultz, Perry and Nunn.

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## BAPTISM

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Sophie Victoria Seidel  
*June 29, 2008*

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## MARRIAGE

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Andrea von Moeller und Ferdinand Arcon  
*January 9, 2009*

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## FUNERALS

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Oskar Pohlmann, in the age of 71 years  
*November 24, 2008*

Gerhard Greiling, in the age of 74 years  
*November 27, 2008*

Joe Zungri, in the age of 61 years  
*December 1, 2008*

Fritz Kessler, in the age of 86 years  
*December 27, 2008*

Charlotte Lein, in the age of 85 years  
*January 26, 2009*

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup>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.

*Römer 8:38*

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**Radio Devotion (in German) every Sunday 9:30 a.m. on AM 530**

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