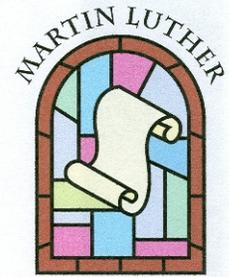


Congregational newsletter



LUTHERAN CHURCH
— Founded 1955 Gegründet —

March 2009

DEVOTION

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

At the Annual Meeting we listened to the watchword for the year 2009. It is a word of Jesus in Luke 18:27, What is impossible for humans, is possible for God. This verse is very encouraging. Against our worries, against our doubts, it is to strengthen our faith: God is with us, God has power, to help you and to guide you, even beyond your expectations!

First of all, this is word of Jesus about discipleship. A rich man came and asked, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" After reminding this man of the Ten Commandments, then Jesus said, Sell all that you own and distribute the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me." ²³But as the rich man heard this, he became sad, and left silently. ²⁴Jesus said, "How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God."

This is a famous image. You can see it on the picture. What noone would expect – that this eye of the needle could be opened -, God is able to do it. God can change hearts and lives, God can make that the life of a human takes a completely new direction. Therefore this is a good word for every

new day. Every new morning Jesus calls us to follow him. He doesn't just demand that, he strengthens us for that too.

Second this is a word of God for our fears and afflictions. Many times I have experienced the truth of this encouragement. There were friends going through dark hours. There were fellow Christians getting into deep troubles and worries. They could not imagine how to get out of this. But God was with them, and God helped them, and God opened a new way before them.

So when you worry, when you are full of fear, always remember this promise: What is impossible for humans, is possible for God. Always remember, God is Love, God is a great blessing power, God is able and is willing to open a new way before you. Trust in God and let him guide you!

Third we can take this word as a big promise for all our congregational work. Sometimes we worry here too. We look back to the past, the strong beginnings of the Martin Luther Church, then the over 53 years of development, all the commitment and care we devoted to this church. And we look forward and see the future is uncertain. There are many other congregations that are getting smaller, that are struggling and finally being closed down. But let us always look at Jesus' promise: What is impossible for humans, is possible for God.



And let us not forget. Only a few verses before this meeting of Jesus with the rich man, we see, how Jesus invites the children: Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs.

Our openness for children, our openness for young families, in our worship, in our meetings, this will be most decisive for the growth and good future of the Martin Luther Church.

Corrie ten Boom, the famous preacher of the Gospel and of Reconciliation, said, "It is not my ability, but my response to God's ability that counts." So let us put our trust and hope in God, and let us ask God to help us to be able to respond to his great possibilities.

*With kind greetings and blessings,
yours,
Pastor Alexander Mielke*

We cordially invite to a **Concert Worship on Palm Sunday, April 5, 2009, with the male-voice choir "Harfentoene"**. This Joint Service will be a reflective and musical one, receiving its solemn character from pieces of **Franz Schubert's "German Mass"**, (partly with English texts), which will be a good introduction into the Holy Week. The Joint Service will start at **11:00 a.m.**, after that the choir "Harfentoene" will sing additional folk melodies and spiritual music. The entrance is free. Come, enjoy and invite your friends and neighbours also!



A cordial invitation is extended to an **English World Day of Prayer Service** which will be held in **Wesley Mimico United Church, March 6, 2:00 p.m.**

We also cordially invite to the World Day of Prayer Service, which will be conducted by the German speaking congregations of Toronto, to take place on March 6th, 1:30 p.m., at the St. Patrick Catholic Church, located 141 McCaul Street

A hearty welcome to the **English Lent Devotion on Tuesday, March 24, 7:00 p.m.** We gather for German Lent devotions on Wednesdays, 7:00 p.m.

Please mark in your calendar :

Easter Sunrise Service at the Lake Ontario

(Humber Bay Park West)

**Easter Sunday, April 12, 5:45 a.m. gathering at the park place,
6:00 a.m. Service begins**



**Swimparty of the Sunday School Saturday, April 18 –
everyone welcome!**

Congregational Picnic in Camp Edgewood, Sunday, June 28

Summer Camp, a joyful exciting event for young and old, the entire family, **July 26 – 31**, Golden Lake

In this newsletter you find an envelope for the Easter Donation. Thank you for all the support you give to the Martin Luther Church!

In the **Joint Service on March 15 at 11:00 a.m.**, followed by a time of get-together, we can cordially welcome **guests from Wesley Mimico United Church**. For many years, there has been a good cooperation in their foodbank. A warm welcome! Come and have some time for getting to know and welcoming our fellow Christians!



*Photos from our visit at the Wesley Mimico United Church on February 15.
Top left: Pastor Mielke with Pastor Linda Petrides and Curate Donalee*





Since November, Teresa Kurek has taken over the responsibility of the supervisor in our day care. After having been part of the team for many years, she has familiarized herself fast with everything. We thank her for all her commitment and dedication and wish her, together with the entire team, all the best, God's blessings for the work!

After Gunter Gall has returned from Sao Paulo/Brazil he gives us the following report on our partner congregation Guarulhos:

Like so many things well planned, the person who was to provide transportation for me, was unable to do so resulting in changing dates and re-arranging things at the last moment. Pastor Edilson had his father-in-law coming from the far away state of Matto Grosso for emergency cancer treatment in Sao Paulo, requiring Edilson and Denise to make daily Hospital visits. Against this background, we agreed to have a working luncheon at the Kolping Club in Sao Paulo. Present were Pastor Edilson, his Wife Denise and their little Baby Nathalie Sophia.



By good fortune, Mario Schroeder, Secretary of the Lutheran Churches of Sao Paulo also attended a luncheon there and we therefore had a chance to exchange greetings and church information. Our Church in Guarulhos has seen some growth in attendance from 44 members to now 70 families. They have come from the poorer area and value Pastor Milton Schwantes' desire to bring our message of hope to them. Pastor Schwantes is now completely blind, but continues to teach at the University of Sao Paulo, his specialty being the Old Testament.

The children's work in Cabucu was taken over operational wise by the Town but the Town and families have asked Edilson to maintain supervision and continue to provide counsel and help the children with clothing, some food items, and generally keep an eye that the Christian principles that had come with Pastor Schwantes do not get lost. Edilson has accepted this challenge and in keeping with my mandate from our Church I presented our donation to him.

Edilson is the third Pastor in that church who I have met and I was very impressed by the dedication which he shows. In a humble way, he is fulfilling Milton Schwantes dream and I trust our church will continue to support this important work. I was a guest of Renate Ehlert, who so generously housed me, fed me and provided transportation. I am much indebted to her kindness. This visit was spirit oriented and in another report I shall highlight these wonderful experiences.

God bless us all ! Gunter Gall



Our new church council. From left, front: Dina Wancar, Heidi Jonuschies, Edmund Scholz (Vicepresident), Irene Zielke, Ernst Carl; second row: Robert Peter, Dan Sommerfeld, Sylvia Kunde (Secretary), Doris Cheda; back: Pastor Alexander Mielke, Ernie Wienecke (President), Keith Rabey (unfortunately not present: Gordon Weber). **Inauguration on Sunday, March 8.**



On March 1, the children of the Sunday School decorated a table with many interesting things from Papua Newguinea.

*Please, now in the Lent Season, remember the Foodbank
which urgently needs food donations!*

FUNERAL

Edward Horn, in the age of 82 years
February 23, 2009

Do not cast me off in the time of old age; do not forsake me when my strength is spent.
Psalm 71:9

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

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