

Congregational newsletter



LUTHERAN CHURCH
— Founded 1955 Gegründet —

February 2010

DEVOTION

Dear Fellow Christians !

In January, a word from Deuteronomy has guided us into the new year as the watchword of the month: You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. However, in the watch-word calendar, this word from Deuteronomy 6:5 had been quoted without the introductory verse 4, which is really very significant: Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. For these two verses comprise the most important creed of Jewish Faith, the Sh'ma Yisrael, spoken like a prayer by many mornings and evenings. One could say it summarizes the central message of the Old Testament; for this reason, I had once written it on the first page of my study Bible in Hebrew letters.

For Jesus also it represents the clearest summarization of God's will. In Mark 12:28-31, we read that Jesus points first of all to this:

One of the scribes asked Jesus, "Which commandment is the first of all?"²⁹ Jesus answered, "The first is, **'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; ³⁰you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.'** Then he adds: The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

This combination was not unusual for Judaism of the time of Jesus. When I showed photos of my travel to

Israel, the one you see here was also among them. It is a relief on the 5 m high bronze Menorah in front of the Knesset in Jerusalem.

Here at the left, the famous Rabbi Hillel can be seen, who came from Babylon, but who became the scribe to call the tune in Jerusalem during the century before Christ's birth. There is the famous story about him:



A heathen came and said, "If you can tell me the meaning of the Torah, in the time I am standing on one foot, then I am willing to join you." Hillel did not do as Schammai, a strict colleague of his, who angrily chased away the questioner. Rabbi Hillel said, "What is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow! That is the entire Torah. Everything else is interpretation. Go and learn!"

That is similar to the Golden Rule, which Jesus expresses in Matthew 7:12, as follows: In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets. And with Hillel as with Jesus, the love of God and the love of the neighbour are most closely connected.

This is the interesting thing. Surely we see a great many passages where Jesus was in conflict with scribes and authorities of his time. But it can also be discerned that closeness existed between him and what the Rabbis taught.

I want to explore this still more with you. In March I will, first of all, hold an information session to facilitate a better understanding of Jewish Faith, and later

on invite to a visit of a synagogue. You will find details in this newsletter and the calendar.

*Kind regards and blessings,
Your Pastor Alexander Mielke*

From March 5 to April 9, **Nancy Rahn** will be **student-of-internship** at Martin Luther Church. She is a student of Theology in her 2nd semester in Tuebingen, and introduces herself with the following paragraph. A heartfelt thank-you goes to Gisela Wilhelm, who is glad to take Nancy into her home during this time.



*Hello to everybody in the Martin-Luther-Church!
My name is Nancy, I'm twenty years old and I'm studying theology in Tübingen, in southern Germany. On the fifth of March, a plane is going to depart from Frankfurt with me on board, flying directly to Toronto. I'm visiting your congregation to do an internship for five weeks. My anticipation is increasing from day to day and I'm really excited!*

Before I started studying, I've been to Namibia for nearly half a year. I was working with children and young people, at first in a school, situated in a small African village, later in an orphanage in Windhoek-City. In this orphanage, this picture was taken.

When I'm not busy with my studies, I love reading, playing soccer and acting in a theatre group or I spend time with my friends. In Tuebingen, I've been since last April and I'm living in a funny, variegated flat-share, and I really feel very comfortable. In the weekends, I sometimes help in a program where poor and homeless people get something to eat and have somebody to speak with. I'm also involved in a team, preparing church services for children. My parents live with my fourteen year old sister two hours from here in Schwäbisch Hall, on some weekends I take the train and go there, but the three of them also like to visit Tuebingen very much.

During the last holidays, I worked in a seniors' lodge, in the next holidays I'll write an assignment for the university and so now it's the right time to look beyond my own nose once again.

In Africa they say: "To learn, you have to step out of your house."

I'm really looking forward to getting to know many of you soon!

Warm regards from Tuebingen, take care!

Nancy

On February 9, 2010, **our church member Edward Lischewski will have his 100th birthday**. So his daughter Lydia Berg, on behalf of the family, extends the cordial invitation to a **celebration which is open to friends and members of our church on Feb 13, Saturday**, in the afternoon, 2-4 pm, in the "Leisure World" Caregiving Centre, 170 Red Maple Rd, Richmond Hill.

Our best wishes and God's blessings also to **Elfriede Schmidt** who could celebrate her **95th birthday** on Jan 14!

On February 14th, I will be in Ottawa with the confirmand-group and conduct the church service at the Martin Luther Church there (many thanks to Tanya, Iris and Peter, Larissa and John, who will accompany us). On the last weekend of February, my wife and I will take part in the EKD-North America-Conference. A heartfelt thank-you to my wife who will conduct services on Jan 31, Pastor Knaack, who will do so on February 14, and to Pastor Lange, who will come to Martin Luther Church on February 28.

A cordial invitation to the German World Prayer Day on March 5, 1:30 p.m., at the German United Church. Through the topic "Let everything that has breath, praise the Lord!", much can be learned about Cameroon and its churches.

On Saturday, **March 6**, the **Sunday School** invites to the annual **Swim Party!** Enjoy a really good time, with your kids, in the Norseman Community Pool, 105 Norseman Street!

We continue the series, which has begun with my photo presentation on my travel to Israel. On **Saturday, March 13**, we will visit a Synagogue in Mississauga; the **Shabbat service** begins there at 10:00 a.m. So that we have already an idea beforehand of the order of a Shabbat service, and how we, as guests, should conduct ourselves, I will, in preparation, give **basic information on the understanding of the Jewish faith (in English)**, namely on **March 7**, following the Joint Service, which begins, as always, at 11:00 a.m.

The **Annual General Meeting** will take place on **April 11** this year. Unfortunately, it cannot be held earlier because of conflicting dates. Please hand in your reports of the groups, circles and projects to the pastor or the church office before February 14.

Please note: In future using the elevator should only be done while accompanied by a member of the church council!

A big Thank You for all donations for Haiti! We have forwarded them to Canadian Lutheran World Relief, in support of emergency aid and rebuilding efforts.

A preview of some highlights of this year – please mark them in your calendar!

On **Palm Sunday, March 28**, we can look forward to a concert of the **Male Voice Choir "Harfentoene"** in our church.

We are looking forward to the **visit of the Brazilian Pastor Edilson Tetzner from April 15 to 22** in our Martin Luther Church He will have much to report on our partner Lutheran congregation in Sao Paulo and their work among children.

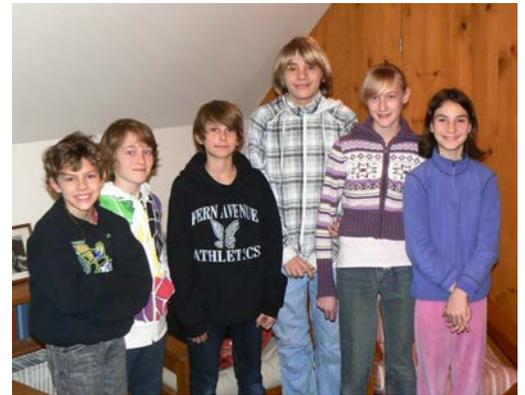
The **Congregational Picnic** is planned for **June 6**.

On **June 13**, we can celebrate the **40th Anniversary of our Kindergarten and Day Care**. We are glad that **Bishop Michael Pryse** has confirmed his attendance at the Special Sunday Service.



Eugen Pahnke has said fare-well to the German Contact Circle. For 15 years he has participated faithfully in this circle on behalf of the Martin Luther Church, and for this we thank him very much. We wish him, his wife and his entire family God's blessing and guidance. In the German Contact Circle, pastors and delegates from Bonhoeffer-Church, Epiphany-Church, First Lutheran Church, St. Georg's Church and Martin Luther

Church meet four times a year for exchange of ideas and discussion.



Our new confirmands (from left to right): Derek Frantzke, Marc Schwentek, Samuel Rosati, Graham Buceta, Veronika Mielke, Amy Schweiger.

The bazaar, which the Sunday School held on December 6, was a huge success. Many people came and were quite impressed with the wonderful crafts. The proceeds of C\$ 1,326.85 are for the benefit of the work among children in Sao Paulo. For this and for the joyful Christmas play on the 3rd Advent Sunday our heartfelt thanks to the children and the team!



BAPTISMS

Nicole and Ben Schwarz

November 29, 2009

Honour God by accepting each other, as Christ has accepted you. *Romans 15:7*
We know that God is always at work for the good of everyone who loves him. *Romans 8:28*

Mariela Angelika Henning

December 20, 2009

God, you are all around me—in front and in back— and have put your hand on me. I praise you because you made me in an amazing and wonderful way. What you have done is wonderful. I know this very well.

Psalm 139:5.14

Isabella Bethany Schmidt

December 27, 2009 (Blessing)

Jesus Christ said, Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.” And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

Mark 10:15+16

FUNERAL

Irmgard Iles, née Kurthen, at the age of 85 years

January 25, 2010

The Lord is my shepherd. Even though I walk through the darkest valley
I fear no evil; for you are with me.

Psalm 23

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