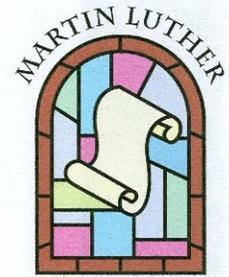


# Congregational newsletter



LUTHERAN CHURCH  
— Founded 1955 Gegründet —

October 2010

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## DEVOTION

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

Jesus took bathtub and towel, kneeled down and washed the feet of his disciples, just a slave, to clean from the dirt of the street. They wanted to refuse this, but Jesus said, "I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet."

The washing of the feet was important at a big gathering of worldwide Lutheranism. July 20 – 27 in Stuttgart, delegates were gathering for the 11<sup>th</sup> Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation, sent by 145 churches from 79 countries, representing 70 million Lutherans. This assembly took a historic step in asking for forgiveness from Mennonites.

Bishop Mark Hanson, the President of LWF, asked for forgiveness "from God and from our Mennonite sisters and brothers for past wrongdoings and the ways in which Lutherans subsequently forgot or ignored this persecution and have continued to describe Anabaptists in

misleading and damaging ways". After that, the Assembly participated in a powerful Service of Repentance, with everyone making the sign of the cross with olive oil in the hand of the neighbour.



This is a truly historic event - asking for forgiveness after 500 years of misunderstandings, hostility, persecution and suffering. I think, here in Ontario we can understand the importance of this event. There are many Mennonites in Ontario, many of us know them,

by personal friendship and/or by visiting their services.

What exactly had happened? At the time of the Reformation, groups of anabaptists too came into life. With 2 major geographical origins: Switzerland, where they got into conflict with Zwingli; and the Netherlands, where the Frisian pastor Menno Simons (1496–1561) got attacked by Martin Luther. The various governments of that time, be they catholic, lutheran or reformed, suppressed the anabaptists with bloody persecutions, e.g. in the cities of Zurich and Basel they became extinguished. So most Mennonites

saw emigration as their only refuge, e.g. to North America, starting in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, or to Russia and Ukraine in the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Nowadays there are 1.5 million Mennonites worldwide, but only 5 % live in Europe - more than 40 % in North America and 28 % in Africa.

What was the reason for this terrible conflict? First they did not accept infant baptism. In their understanding, it was an adult who had to make up this decision of getting baptized. I am convinced, this is a simplifying understanding of the New Testament. As evident in Acts 16:31-33 and 1 Corinthians 1:16, complete households got baptized already in the very beginnings of the Christian church. Meaning: after the house father, surely sometimes together with his wife, came to believe in Jesus, he would decide that all in his household should be baptized, all the children, all the workers, all the slaves. In this very same way I have seen it during my work in Africa among the Massai. I certainly would admit, this does not perfectly relate to a personal call of an individual. But there is the advantage that it now provides a Christian framework for this community, there is now the knowledge in this community, that Jesus is the lord and you are expected to trust and obey Jesus.

Second they clearly accepted the demands of Jesus' sermon on the mount: "You are the salt of the earth; you are the light of the world; you shall not murder; you shall not commit adultery; do not swear at all; do not resist an evildoer; love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven." Mennonites would not accept any sophisticated interpretation nor be willing to compromise about this. Neither in court nor when

being installed into any office, they were ready to take any oath. So they excluded themselves from many areas of the public sector. They also refused military service, they were definitely more willing to suffer to be oppressed and even killed than to accept any kind of military service. This way, the Mennonites together with the Quakers formed the famous "peace churches" which did not take part in any wars.

I believe, reconciliation celebrations of this kind make sense if we accept the challenge of reading the Bible with the eyes of other Christians and learning from their experiences. So the big question is, do we take seriously what we read in the sermon on the mount?

The Mennonite President Danisa Ndlovu of Zimbabwe presented Lutheran Bishop Mark. S. Hanson with a pine foot-washing tub. Here in Ontario too, the practice of foot-washing has long been maintained among the Mennonites. This means a twofold task: First let's be open for Christians of other churches: how do they understand and live the Bible, does it challenge us to read and understand Bible in new ways? Second, let us be open for Jesus challenging our ordinary way of life. Let us think anew about our every day life and start anew!

Jesus says, "I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another."

*Kind regards and God's blessings,  
Your Pastor Alexander Mielke*

Services on Thanksgiving, October 10  
9:45 a.m. English, 11:00 a.m. German, both with Holy Communion

**October 17, 11:00 a.m. Joint Service, followed by Potluck Luncheon**  
**(moved from Oct 10!)**

**with Camp Reunion** – a warm welcome to all those who enjoyed the  
**summer camp at the Golden Lake !**

*Come and join us for our Annual Summer Camp Reunion.  
Bring your lucky Pot (hopefully with some food in it) and  
join the Congregation in the Service followed by the Pot-luck  
Luncheon. Slide on down for a visit, you never know what  
Stars may show up! Dan Sommerfeld*

And we will hear more about the good progress of the children project of  
our Brazilian sister congregation in Sao Paulo/Guarulhos.

**Next Special German Service – October 24, 11:00 a.m.**

**"ReReading Theodor Fontane's Stechlin"**

*(In January: Michael Ende, 50 years after "Jim Knopf")*

*In September I was conducting two special services. If you are interested, you can find summaries  
of these presentations on our website ([www.martinluther.ca](http://www.martinluther.ca), photos archive, photos 2010)*

*"God the Creator and the Universe – How to Correlate the Biblical Message and Modern Science"  
on Sep 19*

*and Quotes of Jean Paul 1763 – 1825 (German homepage) on Sep 26*

***Announcements***

For **Sunday Nov 7**, we very cordially invite to a **German Family Service** which will be starting at  
11:00 a.m., a lively service with contemporary songs for young and old.

Very welcome to the Advent Concert on the **first Advent Sunday, Nov 28**, 1:30 p.m., presented  
by the **Edelweiss Choir** under the direction of Manfred Petz.

We are looking forward to the **Christmas Play on the third Advent Sunday, Dec 12**, the great  
event during the Advent Season. All children are very welcome to participate. Practicing will be  
done during the sunday schools beforehand.

There will be another **Adult Retreat** in the end of January. For the second time, we will meet for  
this in the cozy **Mount Alverno Centre**. It is going to start with supper on Jan 28 and end with  
lunch on Jan 30. Join us for this weekend of good fellowship in having time together, singing and  
Bible reading.

Katarina Prosenjak is starting as a student of internship in January 2011. Financed by EKD as well  
as Protestant Church in Hesse and Nassau, she will be with us until November. She is wellknown  
in our congregation because of two months she already spent in the Martin Luther Church during  
Dec 2008 and Jan 2009.

### *Here We Need Your Help !*

You will find a special Thanksgiving Envelope in this newsletter. Thank you so much for all support you can give to our Martin Luther Church!

**Please think of the FOODBANK – especially around Thanksgiving donations are very helpful !**

**Flowers on the altar** make our church beautiful for the Sunday. Flower donations which can be made in memory of loved ones are very much appreciated. Please sign up in the the list which you find in the entrance hall, for a Sunday which is still free and convenient for you. For coordination it might be helpful if you leave your phone number on a card.

Please also have a look at the **Coffee Duty List** – thank you for helping on a Sunday!

We are very happy that **Linda Marcinkus** is our **new main organist**. We will welcome her officially in the joint service on Oct 17. Here she introduces herself with explaining her professional career.



*Linda Marcinkus was born in Toronto of Lithuanian heritage and has been a life-long resident of Mimico. She began studying piano at age 7 and pursued her love of music with further studies in voice and piano at the University of Toronto, receiving a Bachelor of Music in Performance and a Diploma in Operatic Performance.*

*As a freelance musician she welcomed all the opportunities that were available to her after graduation. She was privileged to sing for 2 years in the Canadian Opera Company Chorus under the late general manager, Hermann Geiger-Torel. As a pianist she has worked for the Toronto Opera Repertoire, various musical theatre groups, ballet schools and choirs. In the field of church music she has experience as a vocal soloist, choir director and organist.*

*Linda currently serves as accompanist for "The Men of Note", a male choir that is based in Stouffville, and the German male choir, "Harfentoene". She also frequently performs in concerts.*

*She lives with her husband, Alfred Uhl, who has been a member of the "Harfentoene" for over 40 years and has also published a book of poetry entitled "Meine Gedanken".*

We very cordially thank Klaus Schneeberger for having served as the main organist in the MLC during the last years. It's a great joy that he still is willing to help with playing the organ once in a while, as he has already done in September. For him and Katie who married in July, our best wishes, may our Lord guide and bless them!

Nearly 60 participants, young and old, took part in the congregational trip on Sep 25 and enjoyed a lovely boat cruise on the Grand River. A big Thank You to Pastor Bahr and Mrs Weingaertner who gave us a warm welcome in the St John Lutheran Church Hamilton and told us lots about the history of their congregation.



Ali Giedraitis moved out of the 5 Superior apartment in August. We very much thank him for all he did for MLC during the last years. For the future, we wish him all the best and God's blessings.

Since September, Michael and Robert Broderick live in this apartment. We cordially welcome them and wish them all the best, also with their new responsibility as caretakers.

Reinhold Bojanowski was custodian in our congregation for many many years which the MLC remembers with great gratitude. With great sadness we learnt that he passed away on July 27, 2010, at the age of 81 years. We wish his family comfort and hope from the Living God.

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## FUNERALS

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Reinhold Bojanowski, at the age of 81 years  
*August 3, 2010*

The Lord is my Shepherd. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil.  
*Psalm 23*

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

*Editor of MLC Newsletter: Pastor Alexander Mielke*

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