



THORNHILL LUTHERAN CHURCH

149 Bay Thorn Dr., Thornhill, ON, L3T 3V2

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THANKSGIVING *ECHO* ERNTEDANK

GEMEINDEBRIEF – ERNTEDANK 2022 NEWSLETTER – THANKSGIVING 2022

Dear Faithful Friends in Christ,

Martin Luther's famous hymn, ***A Mighty Fortress*** – a favourite among Lutherans – is based on Psalm 46, which begins, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

And Brother Martin certainly had his share of trouble. As a public figure, he was often involved in conflict. As a parish pastor, he was a frequent target of criticism. As a husband, he struggled to balance the responsibilities of a 24/7 church vocation with the responsibilities of marriage and family. As a parent, he grieved the death of two children. As a mortal, he suffered lengthy bouts of depression. As a convicted criminal, he faced the daily possibility of imprisonment and potential execution.

Like Pastor Luther, we too sometimes feel overwhelmed by life's stress and strain. At such times we do well to remember the sound advice offered in Psalm 46's best known verse, "Be still and know that I am God" (Ps. 46:10). In a hectic life that often exhausts us, in a restless world that often frightens us, we give thanks for the psalm's assurance: "The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold" (Psalm 46:7, 11).

As the waves of chaos rage in the world around us, or the winds of confusion roar in the world within us, the voice of God's Holy Spirit calls us into holy communion with Jesus Christ. In our weekly discipline of public worship, in our daily discipline of personal devotion, Jesus' voice speaks to calm the tossing sea of anxious hearts and worried minds. In his "real – not just spiritual – presence" of God's word and sacraments, Jesus renews our energy to meet life's many challenges; restores the faith we have lost in the face of life's changes and challenges; and strengthens us to make our own unique contribution to God's salvation of the world.

Rejoice, give thanks and sing!

Pastor Peter

Liebe treue Freunde in Christus,

Martin Luthers berühmte Hymne ***Ein feste Burg*** – ein Lieblingschoral der Lutheraner – ist basiert auf Psalm 46, der mit „Gott ist unsere Zuflucht und Stärke, eine sehr gegenwärtige Hilfe in Not“ beginnt.

Und Bruder Martin hatte sicherlich seinen Anteil an Schwierigkeiten. Als Persönlichkeit des öffentlichen Lebens war er oft in Konflikte verwickelt. Als Pfarrer wurde er häufig kritisiert. Als Ehemann kämpfte er darum, die Verantwortung seiner kirchlichen Berufung mit den Verpflichtungen von Ehe und Familie in Einklang zu bringen. Als Elternteil trauerte er um den Tod zwei seiner Kinder. Als Sterblicher litt er lange an Depressionen. Als verurteilter Verbrecher war er täglich mit der Möglichkeit einer Inhaftierung und möglichen Hinrichtung bedroht.

Wir fühlen uns auch manchmal, wie Pastor Luther, von den Belastungen des Lebens überwältigt. In solchen Zeiten tun wir gut daran, uns an den guten Rat zu erinnern, der im bekanntesten Vers von Psalm 46 gegeben wird: „Seid stille und erkennt, daß ich Gott bin“ (Ps 46:11). In einem hektischen Leben, das uns oft erschöpft, in einer unruhigen Welt, die uns oft Angst macht, danken wir für die Zusicherung des Psalms: „Der Herr Zebaoth ist mit uns; der Gott Jakobs ist unser Schutz“ (Psalm 46:7, 11).

Während die Wellen des Chaos in der Welt um uns herumtoben oder die Winde der Verwirrung in unserer inneren Welt heulen, ruft uns die Stimme Gottes Heiligen Geistes in die heilige Gemeinschaft mit Jesus Christus. In unserer wöchentlichen Disziplin des öffentlichen Gottesdienstes; in unserer täglichen Disziplin der persönlichen Andacht spricht die Stimme Jesu, um das wogende Meer ängstlicher Herzen und besorgter Gedanken zu beruhigen. In seiner „wirklichen – nicht nur geistlichen – Gegenwart“ von Gottes Wort und Sakramenten erneuert Jesus unsere Energie, um die vielen Herausforderungen des Lebens zu meistern; stellt den Glauben wieder her, den wir angesichts der Veränderungen und Herausforderungen des Lebens verloren haben; und stärkt uns, unseren eigenen einzigartigen Beitrag zu Gottes Errettung der Welt zu leisten.

Freut euch, dankt und singt!

Pastor Peter

(bearbeitet von Edward Stahlberg. Vielen Dank, Edward!)

Church Council Update

Holy Communion, including wine (individual cups only) will resume on **Thanksgiving Sunday, October 9th** and will be distributed in a continuous manner. Pastor Peter will need one assistant each Sunday for distribution. If you would like to join the Servers rotation, please let him know.

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Ongoing conversations regarding **Stewardship** as well as our current **Mission Statement** will be addressed in a specially appointed Task Force. You will be hearing more from us in the near future. In the meantime, if you would like to join the conversations, please speak to the Pastor or a council member. Our Town Hall Luncheon has already inspired commitments from Ruth Boothby, Rosarie Lisinski, Monika Bos, Edith Schiller, and Doris Lottermoser, and raised hopes that some of our younger members may join us.

The outcome of this initiative will determine whether council will contact the Eastern Synod for a formal assessment and advice about the long-term viability of our pastoral ministry and congregational mission.

A **Thanksgiving Potluck Luncheon** is planned for Sunday, October 16, following worship. A sign-up sheet has been posted on the east wall of the narthex. Speaking of Thanksgiving celebrations, food donations, non-perishable and fresh produce, are welcome to be collected between Canadian Thanksgiving, October 9 and American Thanksgiving, November 24.

And don't forget to use your "Thanksgiving Special Offering" envelope for donations of money to support our local Richmond Hill and Toronto Food Banks. Thanks!

A discussion has begun about reinstating our **Christmas Bazaar**, with a tentative date set for Saturday, November 26, dependent on congregational participation and support. Please give **Doris Lottermoser** your opinion and/or advice before our next meeting on Wednesday, October 21. A **suggestion box** will be available soon to facilitate your suggestions on this, or any other matter of concern or interest to you.

Altar Flower and Cake/Coffee sign-up sheets have been posted in the narthex. Pastor will announce Coffee and Cake socials as the schedule is filled by those willing to provide and/or serve refreshments.

COVID Guidelines Update

As we hope and pray that the pandemic continues to recede council recommends that we

- Continue Self -Assessment
- Encourage mask use
- Continue with Hand Hygiene
- Continue with Contact Tracing
- Continue with Social Distancing in the Fellowship Hall
- Return hymns books and cushions to our worship benches
- Begin using plates, cups, and cutlery as long as the dishwasher is used. Otherwise, paper plates, etc.

A **Community Peace Vigil** was held in our sanctuary on Sunday, September 25, at 12:45 p.m. A dozen people attended, including four pastors and three members of each of our respective congregations from the Thornhill Ministerial, and one “unchurched” neighbourhood resident. A **second gathering** is being planned for **Saturday, October 22, at 12:45 p.m.**, under the theme “*Fasting For Peace Fast*”.

- ***Property Committee***

- New members are urgently needed!!!
- Exterior by Design Stucco & Stone Inc. removed the graffiti that was sprayed on the church wall free of charge.
- Bushes by our driveway and in the front need to be trimmed. If you would like to help, please contact the Pastor.
- The annual test of our backflow system was done by Lexington Plumbing and they sent the city confirmation that it had been done and was in proper working condition.
- Plans are being made to replace our withered oak tree, planted and dedicated in June 2019, prior to the COVID 19 epidemic. A donation of \$400 has been received toward completion of the project

Respectfully,
Doris Lottermoser

Financial Update: January 1, 2022 -- August 31, 2022

| INCOME | | DISBURSEMENTS | |
|-----------------------|------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| Offerings & Donations | 13,805.00 | Benevolence | 4,098.50 |
| Rent | 10,900.00 | Ministry | 64,936.96 |
| HST Refund | 5,906.20 | Church Maintenance | 24,167.08 |
| Investment Dividends | 45,678.93 | Organist | 3,252.70 |
| GIC Interest | 179.74 | Other | 719.68 |
| Sundry | 104.32 | | |
| Special Mission | 245.00 | | |
| | <hr/> | | <hr/> |
| TOTAL | 76,819.19 | | 97,174.92 |
| SHORT FALL | | | -20,355.73 |
| ATTENDANCE | 375 | | |

Treasurer, Edith Schiller

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THANKS + GIVING = THANKSGIVING

Between Canadian Thanksgiving Sunday, October 9, and U.S. Thanksgiving on November 24, we are invited to support our local food banks with non-perishable goods, personal hygiene products, fresh produce and/or monetary offerings (cheques should be received no later than November 20, payable to Thornhill Lutheran Church, and designated for “Food Bank Support”).

Please bring your contributions to worship on Sundays, or drop them at the church on Tuesdays between 11:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.

Many thanks!

IN GOD'S HANDS FROM BIRTH BEYOND DEATH

In this season of Thanksgiving, we rejoice with those of our companions in faith celebrating birthdays: **Edith Schiller, October 21** and **Diana Habekost, November 9**. Happy Birthday, Dear Sisters in Christ.

In this season of Thanksgiving, we remember our companion in faith, **Inge Liske**, who died on September 21. Bon Voyage, Dear Sister in Christ!

Please remember **Karl** and their family in your prayers.

DEO GRATIA! GOTT SEI DANK! THANKS BE TO GOD!

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UPHOLDING TRADITION by Pastor Peter Lisinski

It is often said that "In order to know where you are going you have to know where you have been." This familiar "proverb" of our culture reflects the meaning of the word 'tradition'. I understand tradition as preserving the best from the past to best provide for the present and best prepare for the future. Upholding tradition was the very inspiration for the Reformation!

The most ancient tradition of all among the followers of Jesus of Nazareth is reflected in his call to mission: "Go and make disciples of all *nations* (not individuals) teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19-20). The mutual care for those inside the church, and the church's compassion for those outside of our companionship, attracted public attention, and inspired a spiritual movement of social reformation. Conversely, the Christian church today, including our congregation, is declining in membership and influence because our original tradition of communal worship and community outreach has been neutralized by the privatization of faith in self-centered lives.

At this *present* time our congregation stands at the intersection where the *past* COVID 19 pandemic meets the *future* of *global* reformation. As we ponder "where we are going" after COVID, let us remember "where we have been" before COVID. The nations Jesus sends his church to engage now live on our very doorstep! Let us "Go and make disciples" among them by renewing our most ancient tradition of faithful worship of God in Christ-centered lives of self-giving love for our neighbours. We may not reap immediate fruit; we may not even survive as a congregation; but we will have upheld the worthy tradition of faith in Jesus Christ, our only justification, past, present, and future.

FASTING FOR PEACE FAST



THORNHILL LUTHERAN CHURCH

149 Bay Thorn Dr.,
(across from Heintzman House)

Saturday, October 22

12:45 p.m.

(outdoors, weather permitting)