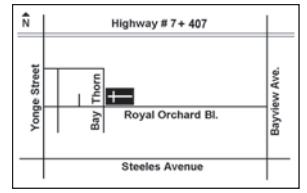




Thornhill Lutheran Church

149 Bay Thorn Drive, Thornhill, ON, L3T 3V2
905-889-0873, office@thornhill-lutheran.org
www.thornhill-lutheran.org
Interim Pastor Christian Ceconi
(416) 567 2487



Dear Congregation,

When will it be Christmas?

Have you ever thought about the moment it feels like Christmas to you? When do you get the feeling: Now I've made it to Christmas?

For me, it is the moment in the worship service when the song "Now at the manger here I stand" is played. Every year on Christmas Eve I look forward to this song. Not only the wonderfully flowing melody penned by Johann Sebastian Bach reaches my heart, but also the touching text by Paul Gerhardt.

Paul Gerhardt seeks out where the connection between Christmas and his own life lies:

Before I took on flesh and bone,
Thy spirit rested on me
And chose that I should be thy own
Before I thought upon thee.

Even though the events took place more than 2000 years ago, it is renewed in every person who experiences it. Not only then does God dare to mark a unique new beginning in the world into which he sent his Son. He dares to mark a new beginning here and now with us when Christ is born into our lives. This is how Gerhardt describes it in the image of night and sun.

I wandered lost in dark of night;
Thou rose as sun prevailing,
A sun that brought renewing light,
Life, love, and joy unfailing.

Finally, Gerhardt leads us directly into the company of those who have gathered around the manger: the shepherds, the animals, the child's parents, and finally the wise men. They have all arrived at the manger. Amazed, they surround the newborn and on their faces something is emerging from the light coming into the world.

Unto the cradle I draw near
And find in it salvation;
And finding safety only here,
I stay in adoration.

And suddenly we are in the middle of this colorful group, our eyes fixed on the newborn.

I wish you an enjoyable journey to the manger, accompanied by the songs and texts of Advent and Christmas, a celebration in the joy of the arrival of our Savior.

Sincerely in Christ,
Pastor Christian Ceconi

Liebe Gemeinde,

Wann wird es Weihnachten?

Haben Sie schon einmal überlegt, wann es für Sie Weihnachten wird? Wann haben Sie das Gefühl: Jetzt bin ich angekommen?

Für mich ist es der Moment, wenn im Gottesdienst das Lied erklingt „Ich steh an deiner Krippen hier“. Jedes Jahr freue ich mich am Heiligen Abend auf dieses Lied. Nicht nur die wunderbar fließende Melodie aus der Feder Johann Sebastian Bachs geht mir zu Herzen, sondern auch der anrührende Text von Paul Gerhardt.

Paul Gerhardt macht sich auf die Suche, wo die Verbindung liegt zwischen dem Weihnachtsgeschehen und dem eigenen Leben:

Da ich noch nicht geboren war,
da bist du mir geboren
und hast mich dir zu eigen gar,
eh ich dich kannt, erkoren.

Auch wenn das Geschehen mehr als 2000 Jahre zurückliegt: In jedem Menschen der dem nachspürt wird es von neuem aktualisiert. Gott wagt nicht nur damals einen einzigartigen Neuanfang mit seiner Welt, indem er seinen Sohn sendet. Er wagt hier und jetzt einen Neuanfang mit uns, wenn Christus in unserem Leben geboren wird. So beschreibt es Gerhardt im Bild von Nacht und Sonne.

Ich lag in tiefster Todesnacht,
du warest meine Sonne,
die Sonne, die mir zugebracht
Licht, Leben, Freud und Wonne.

Schließlich führt Gerhardt uns direkt hinein in die Gemeinschaft derer, die sich um die Krippe versammelt haben: Die Hirten, die Tiere, die Eltern des Kindes und schließlich auch die Weisen. Sie alle sind angekommen an der Krippe. Staunend umringen sie das Neugeborene und auf ihren Gesichtern zeichnet sich etwas ab von dem Licht, das in die Welt kommt.

Ich sehe dich mit Freuden an
und kann mich nicht satt sehen;
und weil ich nun nichts weiter kann,
bleib ich anbetend stehen.

Und plötzlich stehen wir mitten in dieser bunten Gesellschaft, den Blick fasziniert auf das Neugeborene gerichtet.

Ich wünsche Ihnen einen guten Weg zur Krippe, begleitet von den Liedern und Texten der Advents- und Weihnachtszeit, ein Fest in der Freude über die Ankunft unseres Heilands.

*Herzlichst, im Dienst Christi,
Pastor Christian Ceconi*

From the Pastor's Desk

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

Writing these lines, I have been your interim pastor for four weeks already. Some of you knew me before and some might still wonder who I am. So here is some background information for you: I was born and raised in Germany, in the area of Hanover, did my theological studies in Munich, Heidelberg, Jerusalem and Göttingen. I was ordained in 2003 in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hanover, one of the provincial churches (Landeskirchen) in Germany. In 2013 my wife and I (accompanied by our three daughters) came to Toronto accepting a call from Martin Luther Church. Since then I have served the people on the lakeshore (Martin Luther Church is located on Lake Shore Blvd. W). In November 2015 I was appointed Dean of the Central Toronto Ministry Area and have also served on the Board of DELKINA (German Interest Conference) where I worked closely with Pastor Sebastian on resources for worship in German language based on the Revised Common Lectionary.



When the Synod Office and church council asked me to support TLC in the interim period I was happy to help. Since I still have a full time call at Martin Luther Church, you might not see me as often as previous interim pastors. Following the guidelines of our Eastern Synod, my "duties will include attendance at Congregational Council meetings, pastoral acts, and crisis response." I will preside most of the services in German language and will arrange for supply for all other services.

I know that times of change can be quite a challenge. I encourage you to embrace this time of transition as an opportunity for prayer and holy conversations around the future of your congregation. Ask God and each other and discern what your call will be for the next 10 or 20 years. How can you serve the neighbourhood (immediate and beyond)? What is God's mission for the people around you?

Discerning your call as a congregation will help you to find the pastor that best fits your team. Support your call committee in prayer and honest conversations. The variety of supply pastors presiding your worship over the next couple of months might help you to find out, what kind of pastoral personality you are looking for.

Finally, do not hesitate to give me a call when you need me. My number is 416 567 2487. Thanks for your trust and companionship in Christ.

Blessings and peace to you!

Pastor Christian

DELKINA

The German Evangelical-Lutheran Conference in North America held its biennial conference in October 2017 in Toronto (and Niagara Falls). Around 20 pastors and lay people from congregations in Canada and the US came together to discuss the future of German ministry and to learn about Reformation during a one day symposium at First Lutheran Church. The symposium was videotaped and the presentation will soon be available online. Scholars from Germany, Canada and the US discussed "Luther and Freedom Today". Check www.delkina.org to watch the videos.

Pastor Sebastian Meadows-Helmer has resigned as President. He is followed by Pastor Kerstin Weidmann (former Vice President).



[Pastor Sebastian in conversation with Prof. Dr. Volker Leppin from Tübingen, Germany]

[Gunter Kunzelmann at the lectern with Pastor Ceconi]



Eastern Synod / ELCIC:

Our Central Toronto Ministry Area will join the CLAY Youth Gathering 2018

August 15-19, 2018 the biennial CLAY Youth gathering is taking place at Lakehead University, Thunder Bay, ON. The theme is "*threads*": Stories are the diverse threads that God weaves together to form the tapestry of our lives. They can be ancient, personal, intimate, and can help us find meaning and purpose. We gather stories from each other and from our surroundings.

Join youth from across Canada at *threads*, where we will learn how to discern our God-given stories.

Our Central Toronto Ministry Area has set the goal to bring 50 youth to CLAY. Contact Pastor Christian (pastor@martinluther.ca) to participate and join our delegation. Minimum age: 14 years.

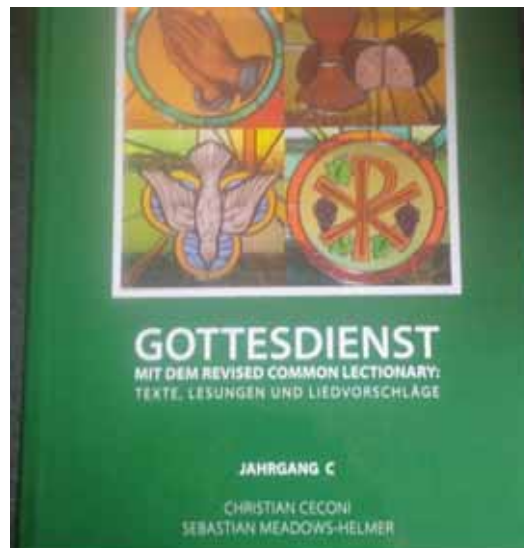
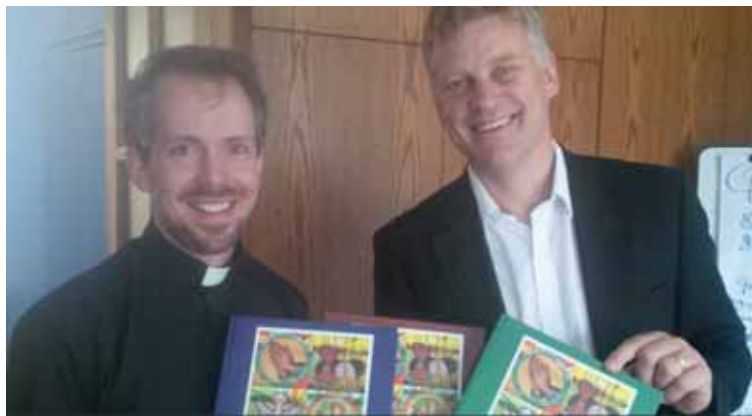
More information: <http://claygathering.ca/>



A 4-year project comes to an end!

In October 2017 my 1200-page DELKINA project with Pastor Christian Ceconi was finally published via www.lulu.com ! Entitled: "Gottesdienst mit dem Revised Common Lectionary: Texte, Lesungen und Liedvorschläge", it is a worship preparation resource for German congregations using the 3-year lectionary cycle. Christian wrote the prayers and the introductions to the day, and I formatted the readings, added hymn suggestions, cross-referenced the readings to the 6-year German lectionary, and did the data management. It was a challenging, but engaging and useful project, as I was able to use the materials considerably over the past 4 years (we always worked several months in advance). The individual files are available for download at www.delkina.org. A copy of all three volumes is in the church office.

Pastor Sebastian



Invitations - Einladungen

To our Special Worship Services and Events
Zu unseren besonderen Gottesdiensten und Veranstaltungen

Saturday, December 2

10:00 a.m. - 2.00 p.m.

Annual Advent Bazaar

Unser Weihnachtsbasar findet an diesem Tag statt.



Sunday, December 10

10:00 a.m.

Joint Advent / Christmas Family Service – Adventsfeier

Joint Family Service followed by Potluck Lunch. Santa will make an appearance. Raffle prizes from the Bazaar will also be given out.

Zweisprachiger Gottesdienst mit anschließendem Potluck Lunch.

Der Weihnachtsmann kommt vorbei. Die Preise aus der Tombola sind an diesem Festtag zu gewinnen!



Sunday, December 17

11:00 a.m.

Joint Hymn Sing Service followed by Potluck Coffee Hour

Gemeinsamer Gesangs-Gottesdienst gefolgt von Kaffee und Kuchen



Sunday, December 24

4:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve Services – Weihnachtsgottesdienste

5.45 p.m.

Christvesper – Deutscher Gottesdienst*

7.30 p.m.

Christvesper – Deutscher Gottesdienst

English Candlelight Service

**Der erste Gottesdienst richtet sich vor allem an Kinder und ist oft überfüllt. Im zweiten Gottesdienst findet sich meist leichter Platz.*



Monday, December 25

Nativity of our Lord

11.00 a.m.

Christmas Communion Service

at St. Paul's Lutheran Church,

10131 Bayview Avenue, Richmond Hill



Sunday, December 31

10:00 a.m.

English New Year's Eve Service

at St. Paul's Lutheran Church,

10131 Bayview Avenue, Richmond Hill

3:00 p.m.

German New Year's Eve Service

Deutscher Silvestergottesdienst mit Abendmahl



Invitations - Einladungen

To our Special Worship Services and Events
Zu unseren besonderen Gottesdiensten und Veranstaltungen

Sunday, January 28, 2018

Annual Report available

Der Jahresbericht 2017 ist erhältlich.



Sunday, February 11, 2018

10:00 a.m.

Joint Family Service – *Gemeinsamer Familiengottesdienst*
followed by Potluck Coffee Hour and **Annual Meeting**

Im Anschluss an den Gottesdienst findet unsere

Jahreshauptversammlung statt. Kaffee und Kuchen werden gereicht.



Wednesday, February 14, 2018

Ash Wednesday Service

together with St. Paul's Lutheran Church
at Thornhill Lutheran Church

Time to be announced!



Sunday, February 25, 2017

10:00 a.m.

Joint Family Service of Holy Communion

(Installation of newly elected Council Members)

followed by Potluck Coffee Hour

Gemeinsamer Familiengottesdienst

(Einführung der neugewählten Gemeinderatsmitglieder),

gefolgt von Kaffee und Kuchen



Congregational News – Aus dem Gemeindeleben



As always, our thoughts and prayers are with all our members and friends who are sick, in hospital or at home. We also pray for their care-givers who are doing all they can.

Birthday

Anneliese Hellwinkel will celebrate her 90th birthday on December 16, 2017.

Erika Goegginger will be 91 years old on January 31, 2018

We wish both of them all the best.



Die Weihnachtsfeier der **Frohen Runde** findet am Sonnabend den 16. Dezember um 14 Uhr statt. Wir freuen uns auch über alle Gäste, die daran teilnehmen möchten.

Erika Koepke

Greetings from the Newsletter Committee

The members of this Committee will always welcome contributions for upcoming newsletters. Please do not hesitate to get in touch with one of the undersigned if you wish to work with us.

Meanwhile, we would like to take this opportunity to wish all members and friends a blessed Christmas season combined with all good wishes for the New Year. Diana Habekost and Gisela Neitzert.



Special Christmas Offering

A special blue envelope is included with your regular envelopes for a donation to **Canadian Lutheran World Relief**. They handle centrally all donated funds for global aid and relief from all congregations. Should you prefer to donate to another cause or to the congregation, please mark your envelope accordingly.



*Einen blauen Umschlag für Spenden an **Canadian Lutheran World Relief** finden Sie in dem Kästchen mit Ihren regulären Umschlägen. Diese Institution leitet alle Geldspenden an notleidende Gemeinden in vielen Ländern weiter. Sollten Sie es vorziehen für eine andere Organisation oder für die Gemeinde selbst eine Weihnachtsspende zu machen, vermerken Sie das bitte auf dem Umschlag.*
Gitta Urbschat

"I was hungry and you gave me something to eat."

Matthew 25:35



Feed the Hungry

Once again we will be collecting in December non-perishable food items and monetary donations for the „Out of the Cold“ programme with Thornhill Ministerial

The Food Drive will be held Sunday, December 3 until Sunday, December 17.

Christmas Tree Set up

This year's Christmas Tree Set up and decoration will happen on Sunday, December 17 after the service. Everyone is welcome and some strong men are needed!!



Letter from the Chair:

Our congregation at TLC continues to be blessed with the helping hands of members and friends who have graciously given their time, money and support as we prepare for the busy Advent and Christmas season.

Our interim Pastor Christian Ceconi, has prepared Sunday service coverage and coordinated with St. Paul's for special Lenten services. Currently, members of the Worship and Arts committee with Council are preparing seasonal bulletins, and providing hymn suggestions to our supply pastors. We are fortunate, that Vicar Thara Klein will be presiding at our Christmas Eve services. As well, thank you to Pastor Schultz, and Pastor Lisinski for preaching at our church and who will possibly be covering some services in 2018. A list of supply coverage for each Sunday until January is posted at the church.

We are very grateful to Petra and Gottfried Boehringer and the Krutzler family for providing the monies for our new sign, which is a wonderful and fitting tribute to each of their amazing loved ones. A dedication service will be held in the spring.

Also, a great big thank you to members of the property committee, Edith, Fred, Karl Liske, Kevin and Fiona Tobin, and Sean Nicholas for coordinating the electrical work and digging the trench to the sign. Lastly, thank you to the Antony Georges for donating the conduit for the ethernet cable.

Before resigning from TLC Pastor Sebastian, and Rene worked diligently with the sign company to ensure the LED panel and light boxes met our specifications, and co-ordinated with our renters, Newlight Presbyterian Church. Thank you both, too.

At our good-bye service for Pastor Sebastian, members presented him with a monetary gift, collected by Prisca Kenel from members of the congregation and friends. Pastor Sebastian requested that the money be donated to the ELCIC Praise Appeal, in thanksgiving of his seven years of ministry at our church.

Upon the Meadow-Helmerts move from the parsonage, Council has interviewed several prospective real estate agents. The listing for the property will proceed most likely late November. The house was left immaculately clean, and tidy which is not surprising given Pastor Sebastian's attention to details!

Presently, the Congregational Council is preparing a Congregational Mission profile which is necessary before proceeding to call a pastor. At our last Council meeting, we discussed names of members to be asked to join the Call Committee, and noted members who expressed interest in serving in this capacity. Our timeline is to confirm

the membership of the Call committee is early December.

After this happens, the assistant to the Bishop, Doug Reble (who will be leading service on Dec. 10) will meet with the Council and Call Committee, to review the Congregational Mission profile. Next, he develops a list of no more than six names for consideration for call. Then Pastor Reble passes Availability for call forms to the Call committee to review and create a short list of no more than three names for interviewing. This process will likely take several months starting in January 2018. If you would like more information please speak with one of the Council members, or Call Committee members whose names will be posted on the hallway bulletin board.

In closing, please support our upcoming Bazaar on Sat. Dec. 2, join in our family advent afternoon on December 10, and check the attached calendar for many more important activities and service times.

Sincerely,
Deborah Tobin

Annual Meeting – Jahreshauptversammlung

Please be sure to attend the Annual Meeting on February 11. You will be informed about past, present and future developments and events concerning our congregation and will be asked to vote on items important to all of us. This includes election of Council Members, and/or members of Committees. If you would like more information, please contact the Council Chairperson Deborah Tobin at 905-508-1048,
E-Mail: deborah Tobin@hotmail.com Your presence is urgently requested.

*Bitte kommen Sie am 11. Februar nach dem Gottesdienst zu unserer Jahreshauptversammlung. Wir informieren über das vergangene Jahr und bereiten uns auf das laufende Jahr vor. Auch müssen wir wahrscheinlich über gewisse Punkte abstimmen.
Für weitere Informationen, wenden Sie sich bitte an, Deborah Tobin Vorstandsleiter, 905-508-1048,
e-mail: deborah Tobin@hotmail.com
Ihre Anwesenheit ist dringend erforderlich.*



Council Highlights



September:

- Final steps regarding the trench; wiring; debris removal; etc.; regarding the sign are organized.
- Council moving to have warranty for 5 years for the new Sign.
- Edith Schiller and Petra Georges have agreed to be the contact people regarding the realtors and the sale of the parsonage.
- The majority of our Church services this fall will be led by Pastor Lisinski and Pastor Christian will lead our German services.
- Our Newsletter will be streamlined for the next while. Thank you to Diana Habekost and Gisela Neitzert for all the work you do on the Newsletter.
- Council decided not to increase our Church secretary's hours and various members of Council have volunteered to do various secretarial jobs, as Bitra has resigned.

September 24th Congregational Meeting regarding the Sale of the Parsonage:

- Review of information regarding the sale of the Parsonage and how the vote will be via ballots.
- Quorum was met and the vote was Yes: 40, No: 1 out of 41 votes to confirm sale the Parsonage.

October:

- Final steps done regarding Pastor Sebastian's resignation. Keys returned, files organized, etc. and he also met with Pastor Christian.
- Council made a motion that the dead Spruce tree (on the south side of the new sign) is to be removed. Property can spend up to \$1,400.00 +GST
- Thank you to Fred Neitzert and Karl Liske for filling the trench.
- Sale of the Parsonage: work is underway in this process. A low offer was made and was countered by council.
- Future Council meetings will be on the second Wednesday of the month starting in 2018.
- New Sign to be dedicated in the Spring.
- Due to lack of interest, the Lantern Walk has been canceled this year.

We invite you to help us celebrate Advent and Christmas!

Sunday, December 10, 2017

at 10:00 a.m.:

Joint Family Service

followed by Advent Celebration Afternoon

St. Nicholas comes for a Visit

Sunday, December 17, 2017

at 10:00 a.m.:

Joint Hymn Sing Service

followed by Potluck Coffee Hour

Sunday, December 24, 2017

at 4:00 p.m.:

Christvesper (German)

at 5:45 p.m.:

Christvesper (German)

at 7:30 p.m.:

Candlelight Service (English)

Monday, December 25, 2017

at 11.00 a.m.:

English Christmas Service

at St. Paul's Lutheran Church,
10131 Bayview Avenue, Richmond Hill

Sunday, December 31, 2017

at 10:00 a.m.:

New Year's Eve Service (English)

at St. Paul's Lutheran Church,
10131 Bayview Avenue, Richmond Hill

at 3:00 p.m.:

Silvester-Gottesdienst (German)
mit Abendmahl

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
26	27	28	29	30	1	2
						10am - Christmas Bazaar
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Food Drive "Out of the Cold"						
Advent 1 10am - Joint English		2pm - Frauengruppe		7pm - Kontaktkreis @		
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Food Drive "Out of the Cold"						
Advent 2 10am - Joint Family 11:30am - Advent						2pm - Frohe Runde @ Hall
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Food Drive "Out of the Advent 3 10am - Joint Hymn Sing 11:30am - Christmas tree			8pm - Council			2pm - Circle of Friends - Craft
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Christmas Eve 4pm - German Family 5:45pm - German 7:30pm - English Christmas	Christmas Day 11am - Joint Christmas					
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
New Year's Eve 10am - English Service at 3pm - German New Year's		2pm - Frauengruppe				

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
31 New Year's Eve 10am - English Service at 3pm - German New Year's	1	2 2pm - Frauengruppe	3	4	5	6
7 10am - German Service,	8	9	10 8pm - Council meeting	11	12	13
14 10am - Joint English	15	16	17	18	19	20 2pm - Frohe Runde @ Hall
21 10am - English Service @	22	23	24	25	26	27 2pm - Circle of Friends - Craft
28 Annual reports available 10am - Joint English	29	30	31	1	2	3

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28 Annual reports available 10am - Joint English	29	30	31	1	2	3
4 10am - German Service @	5	6 2pm - Frauengruppe	7	8	9	10
11 10am - Joint English 11:30am - Annual Meeting	12	13	14 Ash Wednesday 10am - Joint Service with 8pm - Council meeting	15	16	17 2pm - Frohe Runde @ Hall
18 First Sunday in Lent 10am - English Service @	19	20	21	22	23	24 2pm - Circle of Friends - Craft
25 2nd Sunday in Lent 10am - Joint English	26	27	28	1	2	3