



The Morningstar

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF

EPIPHANY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

20 Old Kingston Road, Scarborough, Ontario M1E 3J5

416-284-5922 • www.epiphanylutheranchurch.ca


Pastor Rasma Caune • 647-382-5093 • epiphluth@bellnet.ca

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Submissions due 15th of the month

Layout: Sigi Sommer 416-264-9929

sigisommer@rogers.com

he opened windows of our advent calendar revealed a star, angels, choirs and an organ – all in preparation for the coming of God's light in Christ into our hearts and lives. Now, as we stand on the threshold of a new year, imagine another calendar as a jigsaw puzzle with 365 pieces. What will each piece look like? How will they fit together and what tableau will emerge? Will it be abstract or realistic, colourful or subdued? Will one piece reveal the coming of light into our darkness so that "The splendor of the Lord is over the earth and heaven" as it is revealed in Psalm 148:13? Or, will the light slowly creep into the puzzle piece, moving from black, to indigo to a shade of blue with a bit of silver or gold sprinkled in? Of course each and every one of us will create a different end result, perhaps even more than one puzzle for reflecting the many projects or community events you and I will be involved in. With each event announcing the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation the calendar puzzle may end up being representative of the spirit of the Reformation that includes the historical, theological past mixed in with the idea of being ever-reforming, through which we learn to be a better neighbour to people of other faiths, ethnicities, needs, and sensitivities.

There will be the personal life intermingled with that which informs the life of the world in this calendar. One day may reveal

a great joy, another a day of sadness, yet another will reveal a day of celebration, perhaps of a union of marriage or the birth of a child. Another may reveal a day of mourning, which may bring into question past joys and remembrances or regrets. For some there may be a puzzle piece with a falling tear or perhaps even a torrent of rain that won't let up – or so it might seem. Will there be light, a rainbow, a hand reaching out in support and consolation? Might there be a piece illustrating fear and anxiety of losing one's job, one's home, one's relationships?

Perhaps, as we keep walking toward the Light shining over, and in, Bethlehem we will rejoice in the joy that it brings as we experience God among us and in us; we rejoice in the Light sharing his love, grace and compassion with us so that our darkness will dissipate and our light continue to grow as we assume those same godly attributes. Let us give God thanks for each new day whatever it may bring. So dare to cut out your first new calendar piece.

A prayer for the new year —

In times of joy, Lord, laugh with us!

In times of sorrow, weep with us!

In times of inner darkness and despair, console us!

In times of emotional, physical and spiritual pain, stretch out your hand of healing.

God, grant us joy and your peace this new year! Amen.

Pastor Rasma

Thanks 2016 Christmas Tree Crew!

The arrival of the Christmas tree at Epiphany was truly a group effort. Robert Jesswein carefully selected a 12-14 foot specimen at a farm in mid-December, cut it down, loaded it in his truck and delivered it to the church. Then it was brought into the building between snow storms by our capable Property Committee members: Franz, Fred, Werner, Wolfgang and Martin. They trimmed the tree to fit into place and then hung the strands of lights, all in readiness for the December 18th decorating. The congregation was sustained with Glühwein, mulled apple cider, hot chocolate and finger foods while placing the homemade paper and crocheted stars on the tree. It was beautiful! Thanks also to Norbert who positions the indoor Advent Wreath and to Werner who ensures there are lights on the outdoor cross and front evergreen tree.

Lilli Kilian

Kudos

Thank you to all readers, choristers, ushers, altar guild members, bakers, and families and friends for all that was given to us in love: gifts of time along with the treasure of memories, for the tree and its decorators, and the advent wreath elf. All of you helped to bring light out of the darkness to warm our hearts and enrich our spirits.

Ecumenically

I am hoping to begin a three part series using the joint Lutheran/Roman Catholic document: "From Conflict to Communion" which can be downloaded from the Lutheran World Federation website (<https://www.lutheranworld.org>). Dates to be announced, for beginning either at the end of January or beginning of February.

Pastor Rasma

This New Year, this new day...

Dear Morningstar Readers — Epiphany's council meetings begin with a devotion given by council members on a volunteer basis. In December, our chairperson, Greg shared a thoughtful and timely devotion with us. We'd like to share it with you as well, as we all begin this new year together.

For some time now, I have been working on a Christmas devotion without really putting any words to paper. I've been influenced by current blogs and posts that talk about "The Season" and how that sits with those for whom this is not their season. This is my devotion...

It is at this time of year that most of us are fortunate to experience the Joy and Happiness of the Season, and celebrate it with family and friends within our homes and communities.

Many, however, are not so fortunate. They live and work within our community, but don't have joy or happiness. Some aren't even fortunate enough to find work and barely live (at least by our definitions) – they only remain to be.

The reasons are numerous. Some have arrived as refugees. The mental scars from their turmoils are deep, while other people experience mental health issues that virtually paralyze their ability to relate to their community and its civic expectations.

And it's not like it will get better after the holidays. Winter slams many of them, whether they live on the streets, or are able to make use of shelters.

There are many ways to extend care and comfort to those less fortunate. It starts by acknowledging them. Don't look down or away, but look the person in the eye, accept them for the human being they are. And, if possible, offer support.

January and February are perhaps harder months for many street people to cope with than the last (joyous) weeks of December. Keep those in need in your thoughts year round, but especially this winter. Spread a little Christian love around – not only Christmas greetings.

Remember, we are all flawed. Cracked or broken vessels and pots that do not function as originally designed... but that's another devotion.

Greg Furan

Outdoor Church Sign Volunteers Needed

Church Council is seeking volunteers to change the message on the outdoor church sign. This would occur a few times throughout the year, mainly at the Lenten and Advent seasons. The wording of the message is provided and a short training session will be offered.

If you are interested or know of someone who might be, please contact Pastor or Nancy Kostroman. This would be good for a student seeking community service hours! Thank you.

2016 Annual Reports time

Epiphany Committees are asked to please prepare your 2016 Annual Report and send to Sigi (sigisommer@rogers.com) by January 15 for collation and printing. All congregational members are required to have copies for Epiphany's Annual Congregational Meeting to be held in February. Thank you.



'Tis the season to resolve...

A Resolve for Every Morning of the New Year —

I will this day try to live a simple, sincere and serene life, repelling promptly every thought of discontent, anxiety, discouragement, impurity and self-seeking, cultivating cheerfulness, magnanimity, charity, and the habit of holy silence, exercising economy in expenditure, carefulness in conversation, diligence in appointed service, fidelity to every trust and a child-like trust in God.

(FROM A CALENDAR BY BISHOP JOHN H. VINCENT, CIRCA 1909)

As the calendar turned to the year 1909, Bishop Vincent recorded this New Year's resolution, his "resolve." Annually, as the calendar marks a new year, many choose to follow the Bishop's example. Some of us resolve to have less sugar, less wine, or more exercise. Some resolve to take a trip, sell the house, or write a book. Most resolutions are intended to produce a future, positive result or transformation of body, mind, or spirit.

This suggests to me the Christmas-story resolution that Joseph makes. To solve the problem of Mary's child not being his child, Joseph resolves to quietly divorce Mary (Matthew 1:19, ESV). With this resolution, Joseph intends to transform his present circumstances into a different future.

Modern psychology however, tells us there is a recurring problem when it comes to making a new resolution, and particularly a New Year's one. Research shows that well-intentioned resolve weakens and often falters. Sometimes we don't make the resolution specific enough (e.g. "lose weight" is not as specific as "lose 10 pounds in 6 weeks"). Or, like the good Bishop Vincent's above, the resolution is overwhelming in scope.

Some of the problem, too, is that change is difficult and scary. As one psychologist puts it, "being [what we've always been] is easier than becoming" [someone different]. Yet the term itself, either as a verb (resolve) or a noun (resolution), is indicative of positive change. The dictionary tells us that to resolve something is to deal with that issue successfully, that a solution to the problem or challenge has been found.

Nevertheless, one often repeated tip for success is to "commit publicly" to the intended resolve. This takes me back to Joseph. He resolved to divorce Mary and, most likely, find a new wife and begin his own family. Before this solution is implemented, an angel of the Lord shows Joseph another way to resolve this matter: marry Mary! This is a very public commitment to a very deliberate plan.

Another frequently heard tip for successfully accomplishing a new year's resolution is to seek support from family and friends: don't try to go it alone! Consider how the angel's message to Joseph was to revise his resolve, but that the rest of the message is reassurance that Joseph is not alone: he is part of God's great plan. As we know, Joseph does take Mary as his wife, and his family includes her child, Jesus. Joseph's

"new" resolve then directly connects him – and us – to God's plan for a new future through Christ.

Joseph's was a single resolution that linked him to an extraordinary and dramatic change for the future of humanity. Many of us attempt an annual resolution and hope for success year after year. Bishop Vincent's resolution admittedly has several features that suggest it may meet with limited success. Yet there is one aspect that strikes me as hopeful, perhaps even wise. The Bishop intends to revisit his resolution "every morning of the New Year." His intention is to focus on his commitment at the beginning of each new day, not just at the beginning of the new year. Perhaps, of all the strategies, this is the one most likely to ensure success. God meets us at the beginning of each new day, reassuring us of his presence there and in each day of our new and transformative future. Consider, too, the Bishop's diurnal "trust in God" at the end of his "resolve." That trust reminds us daily of God's resolve, his covenant, to love us every day of every new year, making both Christmas, and the future, "merry and bright."

Happy New Year!

Denise Dennis

Volunteer Webmaster Needed

Epiphany's Website has long passed its "Best Before Date" and will cease to function properly within the foreseeable future. The programs used to run it are just so old and obsolete, the foundation of the site is unsustainable in its present form.

We need a volunteer to create our Website from scratch and maintain it by making a few changes every month.

Before you say "no" in your head, consider this: absolutely anyone can get excellent results with the "Site Builder" tools provided by our host "GoDaddy." Select a template (there are many), upload your pics, copy your text and you are ready to go live. It's pretty much that simple.

The current High Resolution pics and text copy are available and our volunteer is free to create it their own way. Once up and running, it is possible to even update it through a cell phone, for anyone that savvy.

If YOU would like to make an enormous contribution to Epiphany and become our Webmaster, don't hesitate to contact Gord Munro, Pastor Rasma or anyone on Council. We welcome you with open arms.

Gord Munro

GTA East Reformation service and challenges

Sunday, January 22, 2017 will mark the first joint event bringing in the year of commemorating the 500th anniversary of the reformation. The service will be held at 10:30 a.m. at Christ the King Lutheran Church, 1825 Manning Road, Whitby L1N 3M4. Bishop Michael Pryse will preach. We hope to organize carpooling so that we can be well represented at this important service. The congregation in Peterborough are renting a schoolbus to come to the event to worship with other Lutherans. Let's meet the challenge! There will be a potluck luncheon of sandwiches, baked goods, crackers and cheese, veggies, etc.

The offerings for that Sunday will go to scholarships for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCIJHL). Special offering envelopes are to include full name/address/home church so that counting can be done in each congregation. Please inform the pastor with your willingness to attend.

Other commemoration suggestions:

- ◆ Tree planting opportunities at each of our locations.
- ◆ Scholarships and books.
- ◆ 500 hours of volunteering: This is important to help Lutherans feel good about being church. It helps us to see that we make a difference. It lets us know that our members have a variety of interests and activities beyond church. Let's think of creative ways to count our volunteer hours and announce at our October 2017 service the number of volunteer hours per week, per month, or per year that our congregations cumulatively does.
- ◆ Cultural meal(s) where people bring dishes.
- ◆ Picnic at Peterborough zoo.
- ◆ Pulpit exchange.

If you have any other suggestions let the pastor know.

Pastor Rasma

Our Seniors

26 seniors started their Christmas Party on 'Nikolaustag' (Saint Nicholas Day), December 6th with a Schnitzel and Sauerkraut luncheon catered by Vienna Meats (and of course some 'beverages'). It continued with the singing of German Christmas Carols and some funny and not so funny stories and poems read by Norbert, Ute and Eva. Later there were Stollen and homemade cookies and coffee. After some lively conversation and good wishes for a Merry Christmas, everybody went home happy and relaxed (at least I hope so)!

The ELW invited all seniors to participate in a luncheon with them on Thursday, January 12th at 12 noon. Please let Lilli or me know if you plan to attend.

Wilhelm Wittemeier



The two chief things are faith and love.
Faith receives the good; love gives the good.
Faith offers us God as our own; love gives us
to our neighbor as his own. — MARTIN LUTHER

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You are invited to Epiphany Church Women's WINTER LUNCHEON

THURSDAY JANUARY 12 — 12 TO 3 PM



Please mark down this NEW lunch DATE on your calendars. Last year's January lunch was so successful we are having it again! The Church Women and the Church Seniors are gathering together in place of their regular monthly meetings to celebrate WINTER! We also extend an invitation to anyone of the congregation able to join us on that day and time. We ask that everyone try to make a special effort to invite, include and bring along someone who needs a ride to church. Can YOU think of someone to ask? Contact them now. Please note that even if this person is unable to attend, we gladly send home a lunch take-out container for them to enjoy. Please sign up on the church bulletin board to give us an idea of how many people to expect. Last year every seat at the table was taken and we will gladly add more chairs this year.

You can expect some usual old country favourites on this year's menu, including sauerkraut, meats, desserts and coffee! We are waiting to see what corporate donations we will receive. Last year Husky Food Importers, Melitta, Haribo and Montmartre Bakery contributed to the lunch.

Please speak to Lilli or Fred Kilian if YOU:

- will let us know you plan to come;
- have a connection or contact with a company or small business who might consider a contribution to the Church Luncheon;
- would be willing to prepare some of the donated sauerkraut;
- would contribute to the program between courses; e.g., music, songs, stories, jokes, magic acts, dance performances... let your imagination go wild!

We ask you to RSVP to us by telephone or sign up on the church bulletin board, so that we can notify you by email or phone if we need to CANCEL because of bad weather. In that event, in order to accommodate as many people as possible, we will postpone the lunch to SATURDAY January 14th at noon! Thank you.

Lilli Kilian • 416-267-5300 • kilianlf@gmail.com

Congratulations to the 2016 Advent Bazaar Raffle prize winners!

We are grateful to and thank our raffle prize contributors. Thanks also to members of the congregation who helped obtain these prizes.

- GRAND PRIZE: Lebkuchen Schmidt, Gingerbread World 2016 Festive Chest ~ Gerda Manssen
- Lubecker Marzipan Chocolates (Gingerbread World) ~ Janet Hodgson and Wilhelm Wittemeier
- Brandy Chocolates Gift Pack (Gingerbread World) ~ Mary Delph
- Giffen Mack Gift Basket ~ Marilyn Scuvuzzo
- Swiss Chalet Gift Certificates ~ Nalini Badley and Theresa Currio
- Gerhard's Cafe Gift Certificate ~ Nancy Kostroman
- West Hill Florists Gift Certificate ~ Michael Shipler
- Vienna Fine Foods Gift Certificates ~ Pat Murphy and Wilhelmine Herrmann
- ValuMart Guildwood Village Gift Basket ~ Wanda Scott
- Bulk Barn, Kingston Rd. & Sandown Ave., Gift Certificate ~ Ms. Draper
- Kal Tire Gift Certificate for Oil Change, Tire Rotation & Inspection ~ Ina Moratz
- Fresh Evergreen Floral Arrangement ~ Nancy Kostroman
- Red & White Lap Quilt ~ Edda and Franz Fuerst
- Quilted Pillow Cushion ~ Ute Wentzel
- Glass & Silver Serving Dish ~ Theresa Currio
- Cast Iron Fondue set ~ Josie Tedes

Revenue received from 2016 Advent Bazaar

Bake \$861.55 + Crafts \$485.40 + Raffle \$950.00 + White Elephant \$407.85 = \$2,704.80

If you would like to provide flowers for the altar, please let the Altar Guild member for that Sunday know.



ALTAR GUILD

1st Sunday of the Month

Ute Wentzel • 416-439-7996

2nd Sunday of the Month

Josie Tedes • 416-283-0895

3rd Sunday of the Month

Paulette Correia • 416-414-4497

4th Sunday of the Month

Hildegard Kinder • 416-283-1836

5th Sunday of the Month

Erika Haebe • 416-266-8660

EPIPHANY COUNCIL

Pastor Rasma Caune

647-382-5093 • rasmac@sympatico.ca

Greg Furan, Council Chair

416-284-5622 • gfulan@sympatico.ca

Nancy Kostroman, Vice-Chair

416-283-0318 • jnkostroman@rogers.com

Paulette Correia

416-414-4497 • polly222001@yahoo.ca

Geoff Crewe

416-267-3383 • geoff.crewe@gcrewe.com

Denise Dennis

416-264-4091 • dadennis@rogers.com

Sigrid Engler

416-283-8536 • sigengler@gmail.com

Fred Kilian

416-267-5300 • kilianlf@gmail.com

Sigi Sommer

416-264-9929 • sigisommer@rogers.com

TREASURER'S REPORT

NOVEMBER 2016	RECEIVED	SPENT	SURPLUS(DEFICIT)
CURRENT	\$6,096.29	\$10,489.36	
CHANGE IN INVESTMENT ACCT	0.00		
BENEVOLENCE	1,334.00	2,334.00	
CLWR	1,000.00		
AMMS RENTAL INCOME	2,575.00		
AMMS PARSONAGE UTILITIES	604.86		
AMMS FELLOWSHIP HALL RENT	1,200.00		
FAITH FINANCIAL	500.00		
MEMORIAL - PAULA LEHMANN	200.00		
CURRENT MONTH TOTALS	\$13,510.15	\$12,823.36	\$686.79
YEAR TO DATE TOTALS	\$124,430.78	\$135,781.47	(\$11,350.69)

Yours in Christ, Nalini Badley, Treasurer

January 2017

SUNDAY		MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	1st Sunday of Christmas WHITE 10 AM Joint Communion Service	2	3	4 11 AM -2 PM Church Office	5	6 10 -11:30 AM Bible Class EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD	7
8	Baptism of Our Lord WHITE 9 AM German Communion Service 10:30 AM English Worship Service	9 1 PM Craft Circle 7:30 PM Worship & Music Meeting	10	11 11 AM -2 PM Church Office	12 12 NOON -3 PM Winter Luncheon	13	14
15	2nd Sunday of Epiphany GREEN 9 AM German Worship Service 10:30 AM English Communion Service	16	17	18 11 AM -2 PM Church Office	19 7:15 PM Council Meeting	20 10 -11:30 AM Bible Class	21
22	3rd Sunday of Epiphany GREEN GTA Area worship service with Bishop Michael Pryse at Christ the King, Whitby at 10:30 AM	23 1 PM Craft Circle	24	25 11 AM -2 PM Church Office	26	27	28
29	4th Sunday of Epiphany GREEN Pulpit Exchange among our German speaking congregations 9 AM German Worship Service 10:30 AM English Worship Service Pastor Ceconi presiding; Pastor Rasma at First Lutheran	30	31	Feb. 1 11 AM -2 PM Church Office	2	3 MORNINGSTAR collating 10 -11:30 AM Bible Class	4