The Morningstar

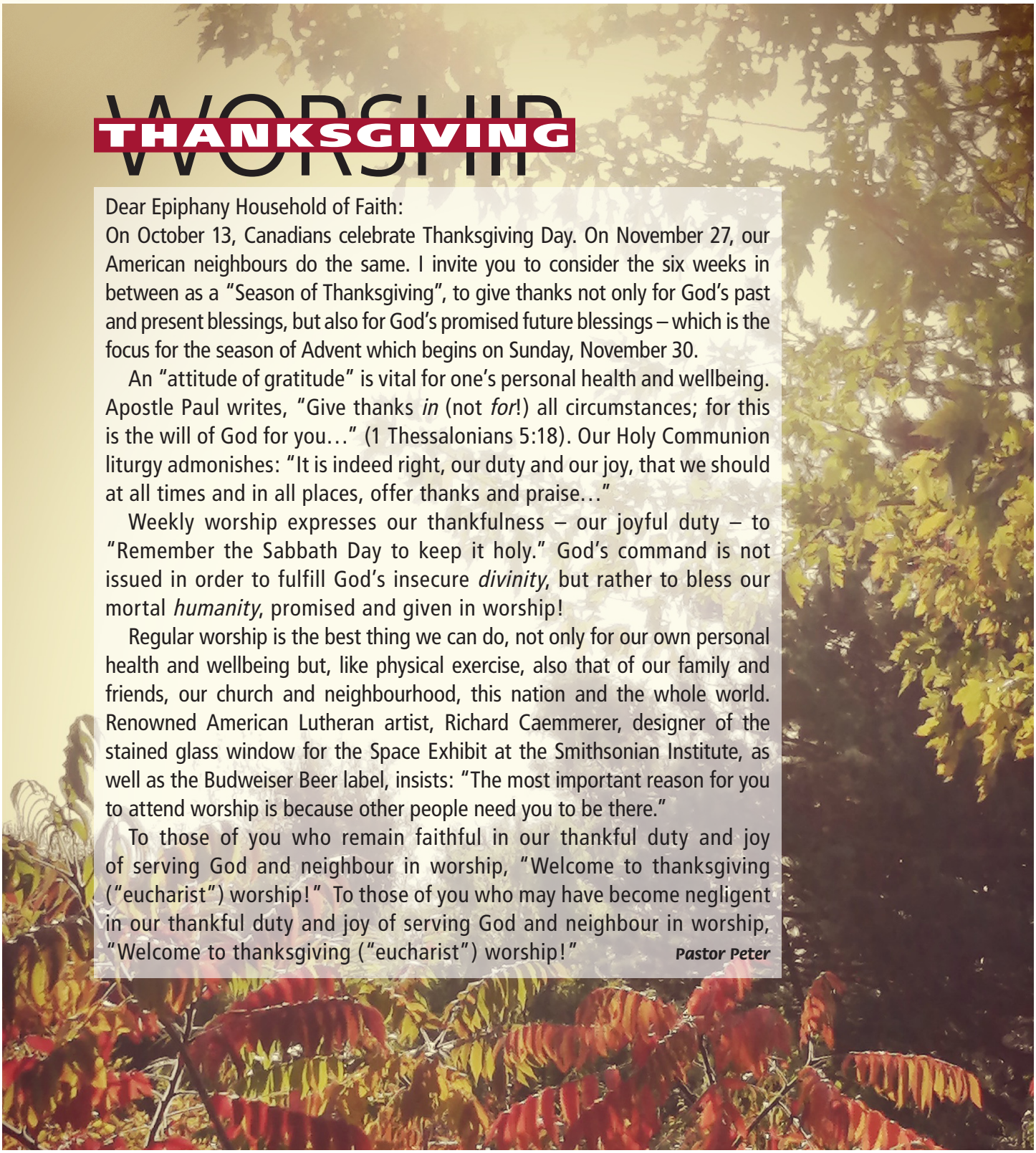
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF

EPIPHANY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

20 Old Kingston Road, Scarborough, Ontario M1E 3J5
416-284-5922 • www.epiphanylutheranchurch.ca
Pastor Peter Lisinski • 647-395-7649 • fryarpuck@hotmail.com

NO. 678 • OCTOBER 2025

Submissions 15th of the month
Layout: Sigi Sommer 416-264-9929
sigisommer@rogers.com



WORSHIP THANKSGIVING

Dear Epiphany Household of Faith:

On October 13, Canadians celebrate Thanksgiving Day. On November 27, our American neighbours do the same. I invite you to consider the six weeks in between as a "Season of Thanksgiving", to give thanks not only for God's past and present blessings, but also for God's promised future blessings – which is the focus for the season of Advent which begins on Sunday, November 30.

An "attitude of gratitude" is vital for one's personal health and wellbeing. Apostle Paul writes, "Give thanks *in* (not *for*!) all circumstances; for this is the will of God for you…" (1 Thessalonians 5:18). Our Holy Communion liturgy admonishes: "It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places, offer thanks and praise…"

Weekly worship expresses our thankfulness – our joyful duty – to "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy." God's command is not issued in order to fulfill God's insecure *divinity*, but rather to bless our mortal *humanity*, promised and given in worship!

Regular worship is the best thing we can do, not only for our own personal health and wellbeing but, like physical exercise, also that of our family and friends, our church and neighbourhood, this nation and the whole world. Renowned American Lutheran artist, Richard Caemmerer, designer of the stained glass window for the Space Exhibit at the Smithsonian Institute, as well as the Budweiser Beer label, insists: "The most important reason for you to attend worship is because other people need you to be there."

To those of you who remain faithful in our thankful duty and joy of serving God and neighbour in worship, "Welcome to thanksgiving ("eucharist") worship!" To those of you who may have become negligent in our thankful duty and joy of serving God and neighbour in worship, "Welcome to thanksgiving ("eucharist") worship!"

Pastor Peter

OCTOBER CALENDAR

FRIDAY OCTOBER 3
10:00-11:15 a.m. Bible Class (GoogleMeet)

SUNDAY OCTOBER 5
17TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (GREEN)
12 noon Service of the Word
Pastor Peter Lisinski (In-person & Zoom)

THURSDAY OCTOBER 9
7:00 p.m. Council Meeting

SUNDAY OCTOBER 12
THANKSGIVING SUNDAY (GREEN)
12 noon Holy Communion Service
Pastor Peter Lisinski (In-person & Zoom)

FRIDAY OCTOBER 17
10:00-11:15 a.m. Bible Class (GoogleMeet)

SUNDAY OCTOBER 19
19TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (GREEN)
12 noon Service of the Word
Pastor Peter Lisinski (In-person & Zoom)

SUNDAY OCTOBER 26
REFORMATION DAY (RED)
12 noon Holy Communion Service
Pastor Peter Lisinski (In-person & Zoom)

FRIDAY OCTOBER 31
10:00-11:15 a.m. Bible Class (GoogleMeet)

Zoom Link to EPIPHANY LUTHERAN
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9890800583?pwd=R05md05jWjZBTnNwc202SWJpSG5kZz09

Or by phone following the prompts:
+1 647 374 4685 Canada
Meeting ID: 989 080 0583
Passcode: 095565

Stewardship

This month we celebrate "harvest time," a traditional celebration of the blessings from the fields and farms that feed us. From a stewardship perspective, I see the "harvest" stretch beyond the October weekend set aside for Thanksgiving, and beyond an agricultural focus. The members of Epiphany give time, talents, and treasures to sustain our Lord's ministry in our community by sharing your "bounty" with neighbours in this community. With that in mind, I offer this prayer in thanksgiving for your continued support of our stewardship mission and goals.

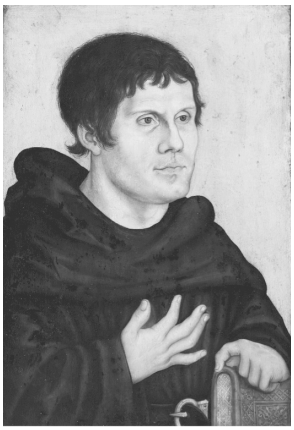
Lord, hear this prayer of thanksgiving for the:

T ime we are given to live, laugh, and love our neighbours as ourselves;
H ope we have for today and for our future in the Lord;
A pples we savour and share;
N ew directions Epiphany is undertaking in mission and ministry;
K indness seen and experienced in a multitude of expressions;
S eeds gathered as promises for future harvests;
G ifts from caring hands and hearts in continuing support of our neighbours;
I nstruments of worship: our pastor, musicians, lectors, and liturgists;
V isioning of a new worship space to serve the community;
I nstruments of peace: police, politicians, people of faith; and the
N ever-ending love of God who inspires
G rateful hearts to regularly hear, study, and share the Lord's words and promises.

Amen

Thanksgiving blessings, Denise

REMEMBERING REFORMATION



Few individuals in the history of the world have had greater impact than Rev. Dr. Martin Luther. His efforts to reform the sixteenth century church in Europe, changed the religious, political and social landscape of western civilization.

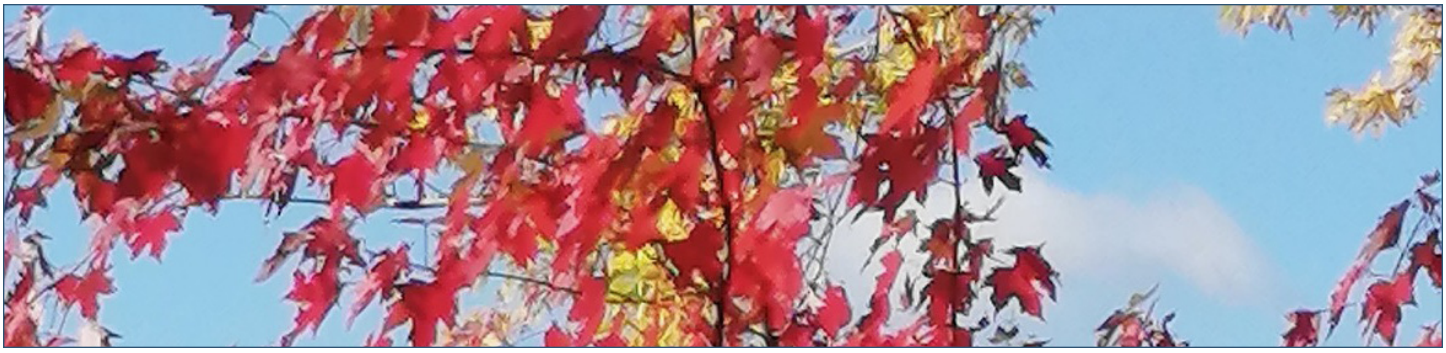
Born on November 10, 1483, in Eisleben, and baptized the next day, St. Martin's Day, young Martin was fascinated by Christianity at an early age, and was ordained an Augustinian monk in 1507. Often tormented by feelings of guilt and unworthiness, he dedicated himself to serious theological study, hoping to find some spiritual comfort for his troubled soul.

In Luther's day it was widely believed that salvation depended on confession of personal sins and priestly absolution, followed by works of penitence. The medieval concept of purgatory, a place for the "purging" of unabsolved sins between death and final judgment, inspired a dramatic rise in the sale of "Papal Indulgences" – official certificates of remission issued under the authority of the Pope, and marketed for purchase not only on behalf of oneself, but also in the name of deceased loved ones.

Pastor Luther insisted "sola fide" ("faith alone") 'justifies' sinners as a gift of God's grace. On October 31st, A.D. 1517, Luther posted his "Disputation on the Power and Efficacy of Indulgences", commonly called "Ninety-five Theses", on the door of All Saints' Church, which served as community bulletin board. It was not his intention to divide the church, but to invite biblical scholars and theologians to Wittenberg University for a public debate on the subject. He fully expected that the Pope, when informed of the local situation, would take immediate measures to correct the theological error, spiritual confusion and rampant financial exploitation. Instead, after three years of controversy and censure, Luther was excommunicated by decree of Pope Leo X, in April 1521.

But Luther's sympathizers and supporters, thanks to his translation of the Bible from Latin into German, initiated a movement of biblical literacy. These "evangelical" (literally, "good news") reformers soon became known as "Lutherans" – originally a term of derision – continuing to grow in number, and today representing Christianity's largest "Protestant" denomination, with some ninety-million global members.

Pastor Peter



Bible Study: Joy

Join us! We meet online for Bible study every other Friday morning from 10:00 – 11:15 a.m. This month we will meet on October 3, 17, and 31. We continue to search scripture and explore what it means to "find joy." Everyone is welcome to attend whenever you are able. A new link (for a Google Meet) is sent in advance of each meeting. For the link, or more information, contact Denise: denise.dennis@outlook.com

"May the God of hope fill you with all JOY and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit" [Romans 15:13]

Pastor Peter's sermon for Holy Cross Day, Pentecost 14 – September 14, AD 2025

"THE MOST IMPORTANT MESSAGE EVER"

(TEXTS: 1 CORINTHIANS 1:18-24; JOHN 3:13-17)

IN A.D. 335, Roman Emperor Constantine commissioned the construction of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, at the site of Jesus' death and burial. According to legend, on September 14, shortly after the project began the old rugged cross of Jesus' crucifixion was uncovered. Holy Cross Day has been celebrated on the church's liturgical calendar on September 14th ever since. During the Reformation, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther, of sainted memory among Lutherans, often seized the occasion to proclaim what came to be called the "theology of the cross" – God's chosen life of divine humility and compassion for humanity as the means and method of salvation, exemplified in today's appointed Gospel reading for Holy Cross Day: "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, so that every one who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life." Pastor Luther, who will be our guest preacher next Sunday, often referred to John 3:16 as "the Gospel in a nutshell."

The central message of the Gospel is the good news of God's universal, unlimited, unconditional love for all human beings created in his divine image. '*Grace*' is the theological word for it; and the good news of God's grace is the most *important* message any and all of us will ever hear! Grace is the corner-stone of all creation; it is the eternal source of your life, and mine. It is the foundation of life's meaning, the focus of life's purpose, and the fulfillment of life's promise. In a world that tells us our personal value depends on our health, wealth, and success; or beauty, fame and fortune, the Gospel message proclaims that God's love is the surest hope for peace and happiness – *in* life, and beyond *death*!

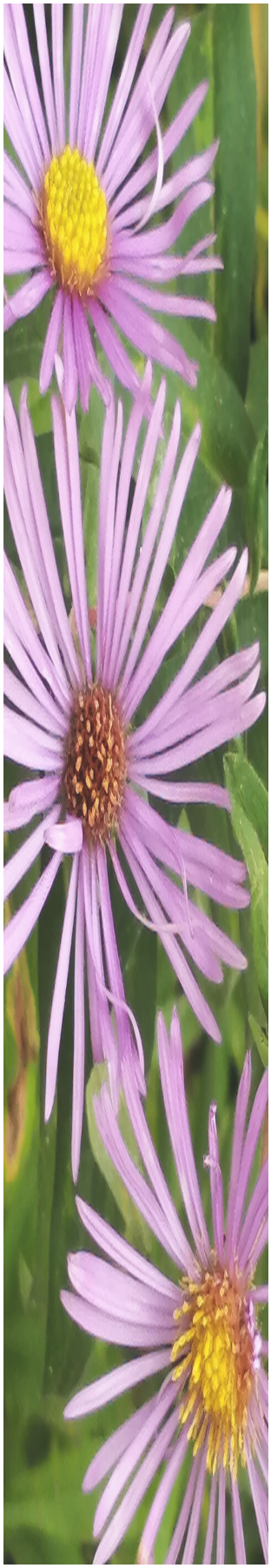
God's only-and-eternally begotten Son, *miraculously made truly and fully human* in the birth of Jesus Christ – '*incarnation*', is the theological word for it – proclaims the *scandalous* message distinguishing Christianity from every other world religion, ancient or modern. In what Apostle Paul today acknowledges to be "the *foolishness* of God" in the *worldly* mind of *popular* spirituality, God incorporates all of human history into God's *own divine* history – *His Story* – uniting God's divine *immortality* with our *mortal* humanity. In the holy cross of Jesus Christ's crucifixion, God *consummates* the marriage of covenant with his people and, in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, establishes us in the eternal holy communion of mutual love with all God's children. And, like a magnifying glass that gathers, focusses and concentrates the many invisible rays of the sun on a single point to ignite a flame, the cross of Jesus Christ gathers, focusses and concentrates all the passionate fire of God's infinite love on one single, solitary human being, whose name is spelled: Y-O-U!

You are the single, most important human being in the world God so loves! God's love for the whole wide world is no greater than God's love for ***you***; God's love for ***you*** is no less than God's love for the whole wide world! God loves ***you*** as if you are the one and only person in the world! God loves you with a love that no one else in this world can promise or provide, and nothing in this world can ever deny or take away from you! And *knowing* that God loves you, *believing* that God loves you, *trusting* that God loves you, makes all the difference in your life, and for the life of the world God so loves.

Faith in God's love for us frees us from all of life's very real fears – fear of rejection, fear of failure, fear of harm, fear of loss, fear of pain, even fear of death. No, God's love cannot promise that our worst fears will never come true; even *God* could not, and cannot, avoid personal pain and suffering – that's the very price of love, as the holy cross of Jesus most profoundly reveals! But God's love *can* and *does* promise the *courage* to face our fears with integrity, the *strength* to live with our fears in dignity, the *will* to make our own unique personal contribution to the evolution of God's intelligent design for creation in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, who suffers *all* life's trials, temptations and tribulations *with* us, and overcomes them, *in* us and *for* us!

The message of God's love is the most important *message* ever, because the love of God is the most precious *gift* you and I will ever *have* – and *will* have *for* ever! It's a message we would never have heard without the mission of the church; and it's an easy message to *forget*, given life's many other duties and demands, distractions and delights, disappointments and disasters. So, week after week, God's Holy Spirit calls his children together in worship "for the remembrance" of the holy cross of Jesus, and to *give thanks* – '*eucharist*', in Greek – for its most important message ever: ***You*** are God's beloved child! ***You*** are a person of infinite value! God's love for ***you*** is everlasting!

Pastor Peter Lisinski



"PREACHING PEACE IN A WORLD AT WAR"

(TEXTS: 1 CORINTHIANS 1:18-24; JOHN 3:13-17)

Few individuals in the history of the world have had greater impact than the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther. The church reformation movement he ignited and led during the first half of the sixteenth century profoundly shaped the cultural values of religious freedom, human rights, personal liberty, social justice and national sovereignty – all of which are currently being violated by authoritarian government administrations and military aggression around the world, most obviously in Russia's war with Ukraine, Israel's war in Palestine and, most alarmingly in the U.S.A.

This sermon consists of excerpts from *Professor* Luther's many books and *Pastor* Luther's many sermons edited, updated and rearranged, then preached under the title, ''*Preaching Peace In A World At War*'' on Sunday, September 21 – *United Nations International Day for World Peace*.

+++

Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Dear Friends in Christ:

Not since Argentina and England engaged in the Falkland Islands War in A.D. 1982 have two nations within ostensibly Christian civilization, namely Russia and Ukraine, engaged in armed military conflict; and not since the end of World War 2 have weapons of mass destruction been unleashed on European soil! And, once again, the principal protagonist of these brutal crimes against humanity is a political tyrant in "pursuit of archaic national interests", as the late Pope Francis described it. Such scandalous affront to God in heaven is beyond all human comprehension, and now seems increasingly beyond diplomatic resolution.

Meanwhile the entire world laments the cold-blooded killing of countless civilians, especially of innocent children. God is my witness that my heart is filled with grief and anxiety that, unless Judgment Day intervenes, God may withdraw divine providence and visit upon all of Christian civilization – east and west – a moral blindness the very thought of which makes me shudder. I fear the whole world will suffer dire consequences if the sinister, not-so-subtle threat of nuclear weapons were to be carried out.

To prevent war and bloodshed is a great virtue, but one that is very rare in the world and among the ravening wolves in sheep's clothing who inflame anger and incite violence, yet call themselves "Christian" rulers. Government is indeed duty bound to defend and protect its people, not to inflict suffering on other nations to serve its own interests. Anyone who claims to be a Christian and a child of God, does not initiate war, but gives counsel to seek and pursue peace. Therefore not "Christian" but rather "children of the devil" is the name for the proud and haughty who fill the world with bloodshed and misery simply because they claim they have a just cause.

Therefore, we who by the grace of God live under the authority of the gospel, and know the truth, dare not ignore the admonition of Christ: "Blessed are the peacemakers" (Matthew 5:9). As a pastor and preacher, I have been commissioned to watch and guard the flock of Christ, lest any be misled and go astray; and I must give account for it at the Last Judgment. For it would be wrong to neglect my vocation out of fear, and thus refuse to denounce what should be denounced. For I must place

the Word of God above everything else, irrespective of personal considerations. To keep Christ and stay with Christ, who is our highest Treasure in heaven and on earth, I must be willing to risk the popularity of the world, my reputation, all my happiness and, indeed, my very life.

"Therefore, dear friends, let us harbour no wish for revenge on our enemies, but rather show them patience and compassion. For we are called not only to love those who do us good, but our enemies, too. Besides, even if we were able to avenge the senseless sufferings inflicted by bombs and tanks, nothing would be gained. For the worldly comfort of vengeance is not worthy of Christian people. Rather, let our remembrance of the lunacy of war help us to remember and renew our trust in God. God will not let any violence go unpunished, but will take divine vengeance on the enemies of peace in the end.

"The Father of all mercy has granted us faith in a living Christ, whom God has raised from the dead, and placed at his right hand as Lord over all things – sin, death, devil, and hell included. Since we are partakers of one and the same Spirit, we ought to inspire one another to make our common profession of faith active in love, trusting that, against and beyond all reason, sense, and evidence, indeed when everything appears to be fear and violence God remains the greatest arbiter of goodness and mercy. Yet, even if matters were to become worse in the short run, our hope is sure and will not perish. Thus, Christ himself declares: "In the world you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." (John 16:33).

"Therefore, let us thank the God of all consolation and see to it that our faith reflects God's love in our prayers and in our deeds of kindness on behalf of friend and foe alike. Let us pray, above all, that God may inspire more and more people to praise, glorify, and confess Jesus Christ with a joyful heart in the face of the hardened hearts and stiff-necked leaders of all wayward nations, that there may be peace again in our time, for them as well as for us all. Till then stand firm, dear Sisters and Brothers. Do not grow weary in the gospel! Edify and comfort one another with the promises of God's word, which overcomes everything. Pray also that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ may unite all Christians in truth, confirm us in faith and renew us in fervent love for one another, until the coming day of his eternal glory. Amen"

Pastor Peter Lisinski

CHURCH COUNCIL

Council Chair:	Geoff Crewe
Council Vice-Chair:	Denise Dennis
Council Secretary:	Frank Dietz
Councillor-at-Large:	Greg Furan
Councillor-at-Large:	Gord Munro
Councillor:	Frank Dietz
Councillor:	Sigrid Engler
Treasurer:	Nalini Badley

COMMITTEE LIAISONS

Education:	Open
Finance:	Geoff Crewe
Property:	Geoff Crewe
Stewardship:	Denise Dennis
Visioning:	Gordon Vollmer
AMMS Liaison:	Geoff Crewe
Worship & Music:	Marg Crewe
Morningstar:	Sigi Sommer
Seniors Group:	Ute Wentzel
Advertising Coordinator:	Nalini Badley
ELW:	Sigrid Engler
Envelope Secretary:	Sigrid Engler
Mutual Ministry:	Open
Spiritual Society Liaison:	Open

TREASURER'S REPORT

AUGUST 2025	Received	Spent	Surplus(Deficit)
Offerings	$3,325.00		
AMMS Parsonage Rent	2,575.00		
AMMS Fellowship Hall Rent	0.00		
AMMS Parsonage Utilities	370.56		
AMMS Property Tax	1,252.00		
GST/PST Receivable	69.19		
Current Month Totals	**$7,591.75**	**$7,014.18**	**$577.57**
Year to Date Totals	**$75,825.08**	**$70,590.23**	**$5,234.85**
CIBC Bank Balance at August 31, 2025			69,740.19
CIBC Investor's Edge Account Balance at the end of August			194,875.57
Scotia Bank Non Redeemable GIC at 5% maturing August 28, 2025			30,000.00
Interest			2,160.21

Yours in Christ, Nalini Badley, Treasurer