

The Morningstar

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF

EPIPHANY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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NO. 572 • MARCH 2016

Submissions due 15th of the month

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“Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.”

MATTHEW 11:28

How is it that someone, who offers us solace and peace, has to suffer and die for us? It seems unfair. It seems contradictory. The weary are given rest, but Jesus suffers and carries our burden.

What makes us weary? Being too busy with things that need not be done; distractions that take us away from our priorities as we become overwhelmed? We become weary when stuck in worldly commitments, responsibilities, and challenges. Social media has become more of a distraction for some than a helpful tool. We get caught up in texting, in preparing tax returns, cleaning house and washing dishes, shuffling through mounds of paperwork.

Are these the things that Jesus needs to carry for us? If we were more conscious of God's presence in our lives, could we reduce the cause of our weariness, our anxiety, worry, even distractions?

“Come to me, all you who are weary!” By carrying our so-called burdens, his yoke is not made easier with things that are not important. Instead we bring our own worry, exhaustion, pain, grief, sin, and anxiety to him. These are the things that we cannot deal with on our own. These are the things Jesus is more than willing to help us carry.

Imagine Jesus trudging to Golgotha under the heavy weight of his yoke representing our sins and utter destruction. Dying for us was

Jesus' act of love. Jesus did it in order to open the gates of his paradise for us. It is there that all will be changed – transformed. There will be no more pain, or sorrow or tears. Those who come to him will be children of the resurrection, who will be given new life with new energy, new hope and a new purpose, strengthened by the Spirit to help us keep on trudging, but this time with a lighter step.

God grant you all a time to rest in Christ as he carries your burdens through Lent in anticipation of the resurrection, which comes in and through him. May you have strength for the journey and joy upon your arrival at a happy Easter!

Pastor Rasma

Kudos!

Kudos to all who lead our lay-lead services during my vacation. Thanks to Denise Dennis, Marg Crewe, Ron Heino, Dorothea Cameron, Sigi Sommer and Wilhelm Wittemeier.

Thanks to all cooks who fed us at the annual meeting and to those who accepted to serve on council as new members: Sigrid Engler, Fred Kilian and Geoff Crewe; and our new auditor: Joe Kostroman. Thanks also to Gord Munro for his secretarial skills during the meeting.

Epiphany's Future

A number of people volunteered for a future's direction or visioning committee to be struck so that we can look into what Epiphany will look like in future years or what we would like to see happen. We will keep you posted when the first meeting is held. It may even be an after-church meeting when those wishing to sit in have that opportunity.

Easter Flowers

With the success of our Easter flower pots last year, we thought we would repeat it this year. Once again you have the opportunity to purchase a potted flower for the sanctuary in memory of a loved one or just to wish someone a Happy Easter. The cost is \$10.

You will be given a cut-out flower which you can use as a "memorial" or "thinking of you" card. The cards will be gathered and made into a bouquet of flowers on our bulletin board. You will be able to take a potted flower home with you, donate it to the church or take it to a shut-in.

These will be unscented flowers. No lilies, or hyacinths. Proceeds will go toward our next church project. Sign-up sheet posted.

Pastor Rasma



THROUGH LENT TO EASTER

Our **Midweek Soup Supper & Service** continues Wednesday evenings **March 2, 9 and 16**. You are welcome to share in this intimate meditational time as we journey through Lent. A sign-up sheet is posted on the bulletin board for supper attendance or if you wish to contribute soup.

On **Easter morning, Sunday March 27**, following our Easter Sunrise Service, Epiphany's Council members will host **Easter Breakfast**. Please check the bulletin board for the sign-up sheet and include the number of guests expected. This will greatly help us to prepare.

Please refer to the calendar page for times.

MATTHEW 26:34, MARK 14:72

The Cock Crows...

The annual lead-up to Easter – Lent, Passion week, and of course, the dramatic switch from Good Friday grief to Easter Sunday celebrations – was barely in my mental calendar until I came across an interesting word: cockalorum.

The word conjures up images of that ubiquitous bird of the sunrise, the cock, or rooster. It is not too difficult to picture a rooster strutting around, and unfailingly crowing to mark the sunlight's arrival even before the first rays appear. Only recently have scientists uncovered how the cock crows unmistakably to signal the sunrise. It turns out the rooster has an internal clock that never fails him.

The connection between this feathered herald and language has given us such words as cocksure or cocky (overconfident), crow (to brag), and cockalorum (a boastful and self-important person). In other words, a human with any of these characteristics is perceived as a somewhat unpleasant person.

Language (and now science, too) highlights how the rooster is being true to his nature when he announces the imminent arrival of the new day. We, on the other hand,

are like Peter, making a conscious choice about our association with Jesus. Peter, as we know, was unmistakably denouncing the Son of Man just as the cock was announcing the sun. Peter, then, was a sort of cockalorum, boasting that he did not know Jesus. However, as the cock crowed, Peter, in the cold light of dawn, wept over his failure of faith.

For Peter, and for us, the new day, faithfully heralded by the cock's crow, signals the opportunity to make another denial, which is to not be a Peter-like cockalorum. Instead, like the rooster's internal clock that never fails him, we can rely on Easter's promise of renewal in the love of the Lord that never fails us.

Denise Dennis

Prayer for Contemplation

I looked, Lord Jesus, and saw my good works; you looked, and saw my pride. I looked and saw my righteous life; you looked and saw my sin. Finally through your eyes, I looked and saw my need of you; you looked and rejoiced over your repenting lamb.

An Old Testament God of Love

The Old Testament is so complex, so wrapped in history, oral tradition and Jewish culture, that it can be daunting to try to 'make sense' of many of the passages that present challenges to us let alone find the merciful and loving God of the New Testament.

As a challenge in our Bible Study, where we are considering 3 aspects of godly love, group members have been encouraged to find a section of the Old

Testament that demonstrates this love – a love of justice that includes compassion, a love of truth that is trustworthy and a love of grace that is based on a relationship of acceptance. The passage I decided to explore was Nehemiah 8:1-12.

The southern kingdom had lost its moral compass and connection to their God! Their kings tried to defend the status quo, not by turning to God and reforming, but by making an alliance with Egypt to defend themselves from the Babylonians. They had the temple in Jerusalem and felt this would never be destroyed: they were wrong.

In 586 B.C. King Nebuchadnezzar reduced Jerusalem to a rubble and took most of the people prisoner. Only a few of the poorest people were left in the land. It was interesting to read that while most were taken to Babylon, a small group, including the prophet Jeremiah, escaped to Egypt. These refugees began the Jewish diaspora: Jews dispersed from Israel who took up residence elsewhere in the world.

In 536 B.C., King Cyrus of Persia defeated the Babylonians. In contrast to many rulers, King Cyrus did not use defeated people as slaves and he allowed them to practice their own religions. He commanded the people to go to Jerusalem and rebuild their temple. It wasn't until a second wave of exiles returned and under the leadership of Nehemiah that the temple was finished and the walls of the city were rebuilt. I love the passage from Nehemiah 2:13 which describes how Nehemiah, who hasn't revealed his plans to rebuild the walls, got up in the middle of the night and with a few companions and a donkey went out of the city to inspect the broken walls. "It was still night as I left the city through the Valley Gate on the west and went south past Dragon's Fountain to the Rubbish Gate."

In approximately 450 B.C., the work was done and people were able to resume life with their families and their regular work. The people asked Ezra, a scholar and expert, to read the Jewish law to them. All of the people, men, women and children who are old enough to understand, gathered at dawn in the

square and listen to Ezra until noon. Translators went among the people because the law was written in Hebrew and they now spoke Aramaic – it had become their language of daily life in Babylon.

In verse 9 it says, “When the people heard what the Law required, they were so moved that they began to cry.” ... Ezra and those explaining the words told the people, “This day is holy to the Lord your God, so you are not to mourn or cry. Now go home and have a feast. Share your food and wine with those who don’t have enough. Today is holy to our Lord, so don’t be sad. The joy that the Lord gives you will make you strong.” And then, “So all the people went home and ate and drank joyfully and shared what they had with others, because they understood what had been read to them.”

This Old Testament passage makes me happy too. The restoration is complete, not because of the new temple, the new walls, but because of the restored connection with their God; a God who desires their happiness, their outpouring of love to others, and their understanding of his work and will in their lives.

Marg Crewe

Luther’s Corner

We often think of Luther as a strong man with a very forthright manner of speech. He didn’t hold back. He suffered from his *Anfechtung*, which could be understood as spiritual temptations. Because of

these temptations he asked himself whether he was worthy before God; was he good enough? He wanted to know, “How can I find a merciful God?”

Some thought that his early interpretation of God stemmed from a harsh relationship that he had with his own father who had been disappointed with him when he left his studies of law to study theology instead. It was this struggle of constantly searching and asking questions that would lead him to discover that he could do nothing to find favour with God, but to have faith in God and thus be justified – be made right with God – is through grace.

Come join me on the **Trail of Martin Luther Tour** this coming October 12-22. The deadline for the discount is **April 13th**. A presentation will be given at **Epiphany on March 11th at 7:30 pm** by Collette and Maritime Travel agents, who will be able to answer any questions you might have about the details of the trip. You will also get an inkling of some of the sights we will visit through a slide presentation.

Pastor Rasma

Council News

Epiphany’s small Council has good news – it’s grown! We are happy to announce that at last month’s Annual General Meeting, three willing Epiphany members agreed to serve on council. Many thanks and welcome to our new council member Geoff Crewe, and welcome back

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after brief intermissions to Sigrid Engler and Fred Kilian. The Installation of Epiphany's 2016 Council will take place during the 10:30 am Joint Communion Service on March 6.

We wish to thank Josie Tedes for her willingness to serve and her time on council, as she now steps down. We pray for continued strength and healing from health challenges she's faced and look forward to seeing Josie at church.

Council is also grateful to Pat Bramley for volunteering to serve as Recording Secretary. Thank you and welcome to the meetings, Pat!

On behalf of Council, Sigi Sommer

Treasurer's Report

JANUARY 2016	RECEIVED	SPENT	SURPLUS(DEFICIT)
CURRENT	\$4,026.93	\$12,590.56	
CHANGE IN INVESTMENT ACCT	0.00		
BENEVOLENCE	1,326.00	1,326.00	
AMMS RENTAL INCOME	3,775.00		
AMMS UTILITIES & INS.	584.22		
FAITHLIFE INCOME	500.00		
ENVELOPE INITIAL OFFERING	273.00		
LOONIE BIRD	2.00		
ADVERTISING FOR JOHN'S CARPETS	100.00		
MEMORIAL FOR LYDIA KUKASCH	2,085.00		
CURRENT MONTH TOTALS	\$12,672.15	\$13,916.56	(\$1,244.41)
YEAR TO DATE TOTALS	\$12,672.15	\$13,916.56	(\$1,244.41)

Yours in Christ, Nalini Badley, Treasurer



On the 2nd of February, still not a very wintery day, Wilhelm started the meeting by inviting all to sing with him the two versions of EG 321 'Nun danket alle Gott'.

Next he acquainted us with the strange story of a 'Holy Church of God' in an Appalachian Mountain village of Kentucky, whose minister keeps a large number of Rattlesnakes and very poisonous Copperheads as pets. It tells of his habit to bring a large rattler wrapped around his neck to his worship services, where he offers it to his congregants to wear also, as a quasi-necktie, to demonstrate their faith in God's protection, which reportedly is granted in most but not all cases, ahem. (One has to wonder how Jesus would react to such practices.)

After some discussion of this and experiences some of us have had visiting the region, Wilhelm raised the proposition to again, as in the past, support Dorothea Cameron's much appreciated gardening efforts outside the church with a donation to cover some of her supplies, which was unanimously agreed upon.

Then all enjoyed the socializing of coffeetime provided by our ladies, and with thanks look forward to meeting again at 1:30 pm on Tuesday March 1st.

Norbert Sommer



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ELW March 9, 2016 Meeting

6:30 PM SOUP SUPPER — 7:30 PM LENTEN SERVICE

In observance of the Lenten season, **there will be NO afternoon ELW meeting.** Instead, all are invited and encouraged to attend the evening program being offered. The April 13th meeting will return to the regular 1 pm format.

At the February meeting the following 2016 significant birthdays were recognized: **Heidi Horsch, Maria Dietz, Eva Wittemeier, Hildegard Kinder and Bettina Wittemeier.** Our own **Bob Haebe**, ELW Sunshine Convenor also celebrates a BIG birthday this month! Best wishes to the ladies and to Bob!

Sigrid Engler was also recognized and thanked for her efforts in preparing the annual ELW AGM financial statement, being the Envelope Secretary and preparing the tax receipts, updating the Fellowship Room Calendar, and for diligently checking in on the Church building.

Cooks for Lenten Wednesday Soup Suppers are required. The 11th Annual Gala Fundraiser Dinner for The Olive Branch for Children (Tanzania) is Friday, April 15th; cost is \$125. Check the bulletin board.

ELW will host the following 2016 events:

- **June 18 – Strawberry Social**
(Saturday of the Father's Day weekend)
- **October 15 – Applefest**
(Saturday after Thanksgiving)
- **November 26 – Advent Bazaar**
(Saturday before First Advent)

The concept of Summerfest picnics combined with single Church services was discussed; as well as asking if anyone in the congregation has a connection or info on the possibility of Epiphany hosting an Electronic Recycling event, for which we might receive a \$\$ rebate? This would be a service to the congregation helping people dispose of their electronics safely.

Highlights of the 2016 ELW budget included monies given for expenses incurred for the Altar Guild; Church Garden Committee (planter urn); Contact Committee (hospital parking) and the Church Emergency Fund (\$100 TTC, \$100 No Frills, \$50 Tim Hortons). Remaining funds will go towards any expenses anticipated with this year's installation of two Garden Sheds for the Church lawn equipment and excess chairs and tables. Depending on how much funding is required for this project, ELW will review their finances mid-year and determine if funds would be available to upgrade the Church Quiet Room into a suggested Lounge area and some recommended charities. The final distribution of the ELW budget is posted on the bulletin board.

Lilli Kilian, President; 416-267-5300

***Easter awakens us to the miracle in every moment and in every living thing.
ELW wishes for all a season filled with wonder and beauty.
Happy Easter! Happy Spring!***




Springtime Work Party

Here's your opportunity to learn how to put up a Garden Shed — and help install two new sheds at Church! We'll build a frame for the floor, lay the floor and erect the sheds.

Date to be announced. Please contact one of the Property Committee Guys if you'd like to participate: Frank Fuerst 416-266-6875, Fred Kilian 416-267-5300 or Werner Kinder 416-283-1836.

March 2016

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. JOHN 3:16

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 1:30 PM –German Seniors	2 11 AM -2 PM—Church Office 6:30 PM—Soup Supper 7:30 PM—Lenten Service	3	4 10 -11:30 AM –Bible Class	5
6 Fourth Sunday in Lent PURPLE 10:30 AM Joint Communion Service with Installation of Council	7	8	9 11 AM -2 PM—Church Office 6:30 PM—Soup Supper 7:30 PM—Lenten Service	10	11 7:30 PM –On the Trail of Martin Luther Tour Information Presentation at Epiphany	12
13 Fifth Sunday in Lent PURPLE 9 AM German Communion Service 10:30 AM English Worship Service DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME – SPRING AHEAD	14 1 PM –Craft Circle	15	16 11 AM -2 PM—Church Office 6:30 PM—Soup Supper 7:30 PM—Lenten Service	17 7:15 PM –Council Meeting	18 10 -11:30 AM –Bible Class	19
20 Passion/Palm Sunday PURPLE 9 AM German Worship Service 10:30 AM English Communion Service	21	22	23 11 AM -2 PM—Church Office	24 Maundy Thursday PURPLE 7:30 PM—Communion Service and Stripping of the Altar	25 Good Friday BLACK 9 AM—German Communion Service 7:30 PM—Tenebrae English Service	26
27 Easter Sunday WHITE 6:30 AM Easter Sunrise Service followed by Easter Breakfast 9 AM Joint Easter Communion Service	28 1 PM –Craft Circle	29	30 11 AM -2 PM—Church Office	31		

Weltgebetstag 2016

Friday March 4 at 12 noon
First Evangelical Lutheran Church
116 Bond Street, Toronto

World Day of Prayer 2016

HIGHLIGHTING CUBA
Friday March 4 at 2 pm
Church of the Holy Trinity,
Anglican in Guildwood,
85 Livingston Road, Scarborough

Trent Durham Area Day

THEME: WHO IS MY NEIGHBOUR?
March 5 from 9:30 am-3:30 pm
St. Peter's Anglican Church, Cobourg

This is a day's outing for the entire family with workshops and worship offered for all ages. See the bulletin board for details. There are extra copies on the counter under Luther's picture. See pastor if you are interested in going – we could carpool.

Health and Wellness

As March is Nutrition Month we are offering information sessions at our home on the food industry and food supply. Topics presented will include farming and production methods, environmental concerns, transportation issues, etc. Sessions will be held on Saturday March 12 and 19 from 2-4 pm and 7-9 pm.

If you and/or someone you care about would like to participate, please let us know at 647-345-8972 or at healthwisewealthwise@rogers.com by the Friday (March 11 or 18, respectively) before your choice of session so that we can properly prepare for you. Light refreshments will be served and seating is limited to the first 10 people to RSVP for each session.

Bettina and Martin Wittemeier,
Certified Nutritional Practitioner &
Health and Wellness Consultants