



# The Morningstar

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF

**EPIPHANY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**

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

NO. 582 • FEBRUARY 2017

Submissions due 15th of the month

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He has told you, O mortal, what is good;  
and what does the LORD require of you  
but to do justice, and to love kindness,  
and to walk humbly with your God?

— MICAH 6:8

So, what is it that the Lord requires of us, whether in our personal lives or within this congregation? It is truly a legitimate question as we look forward to the annual meeting and reflect on the past year and make plans for the future of our congregation and our ministry together. Might we discern new gifts to replace the old so that we can learn to think in new ways—outside the box? In this 500th year since the Reformation, is it time to make further reforms, to set new goals, and use our creativity in different and exciting ways?

If the Lord requires that we do justice, what better way to do it than to support refugees whose families alone cannot bring them to safety and give them an opportunity for a better life here? That would be an act of loving-kindness. Could it be that the Lord is asking you to step in and help in a new way by taking on a new responsibility within our congregation? Might you be able to come to the table with fresh ideas?

Perhaps the Lord is not concentrating entirely on the “doing” aspect of ministry, but rather on our attitudes, perceptions, and how we choose to interrelate with one another. For some it might mean clarifying wrong perceptions, or

rather, understanding why a person does something in a specific way. Being honest with one’s own feelings in a given situation and expressing them ought not intimidate, but open

up the channels of communication, which are so important for working together. The Lord requires us to be both good listeners and hearers: listening with an open heart and hearing with an open ear.

I believe it is vital that each of us takes stock of the things in our lives that need to be rectified, whether that be a character flaw, or a misunderstanding. After all, the Lord has requested that we love each other as he has loved us and as we ought to love ourselves. Walking humbly with our God does not mean that the path will be easy all the time or that it would be a joyous one all the time. I believe that walking humbly before and with our God means following in his footsteps by forgiving, loving, and healing the hurts so that no scars remain. What the Lord requires of us is that we are willing participants in anything that may come our way so that we can reconcile differences, engage in mutual activities helping others to discern their gifts, and make sure they feel as if they belong. Doing justice and loving kindness is for the sake of the other. However, walking humbly is about ourselves and whom it is that we are following. Christ is the centre; we are not. Yet, working together for the sake of Christ will reap its rewards for this congregation and our community at large.

God, grant us a new perspective and willingness to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with you as you take our hand to support us in answering your call to ministry together. Amen.

**Pastor Rasma**



*This life therefore is not righteousness, but growth in righteousness, not health, but healing, not being but becoming, not rest but exercise.*

*We are not yet what we shall be, but we are growing toward it, the process is not yet finished, but it is going on, this is not the end, but it is the road. All does not yet gleam in glory, but all is being purified.* — MARTIN LUTHER

On January 22nd we had the opportunity to worship with all the GTA East churches at Christ the King Lutheran Church, Whitby. A bus load came from Christ, Peterborough; Faith, Oshawa, representatives also journeyed down the 401 coming west, while people from Peace, Pickering, and Epiphany headed east—all converging to celebrate Holy Communion together and commemorate the 500 years of the Reformation. Keeping in mind that we as the church are ever reforming, we were guided in a special rendition of “Jesus loves me, this I know” that had

the pastors and the Bishop swinging back and forth and doing a “thumbs up,” affirming this to be true.

What a joy it was to process in, lead by an acolyte, while a youth sang a cappella, and later, to hear the choir sing “He Set Me Free” after the Bishop’s sermon that affirmed what he had just said. The children’s message brought smiles to all present as the children responded honestly to Pastor Scott Schellenberger’s questions. Other children played a violin version of Bach’s “Jesu, Joy of Man’s Desiring”, and a vocalist sang the benediction. We also had an opportunity to sing God’s praises with new and old, familiar hymns. The place was filled to the rafters – literally. One founding member of the congregation said he had never seen the church so full since its inception.

Getting back to the idea of being an ever reforming church, Bishop Michael Pryse quoted from Luther (as written above) “we are not yet what we shall become...” Luther had wanted to reclaim, re-language, and re-embodiment the gospel. The Bishop reminded us that being in a right relationship with God does not mean that this is our accomplishment, but rather a gift freely and graciously given to us by a loving God. Once touched by the experience of grace we will be changed.

The Bishop continued by relating the story of Itzhak Perlman who, as a child who had polio, walked onto the stage at the Lincoln Centre on his crutches to give a concert. He sat down, put his crutches down on the floor next to his chair, loosened his leg braces, picked up his violin, and signalled to the conductor to begin. A few bars into the music one of the strings of his violin snapped. Everyone gasped; the music stopped. What would happen? Would he have to struggle off stage, or would someone bring him another string? Itzhak Perlman closed his eyes for a moment and then signalled the conductor once again to continue from where they had left

off. As he played, he modulated back and forth on the remaining strings. What a profound experience it was for everyone, who witnessed such courage and such a feat. No one had ever heard such a virtuoso playing of this piece of music. After the piece was completed, silence fell upon the crowd. Then the audience stood en masse, amazed at what they had witnessed and heard, and gave him a long and well-deserved ovation. Itzhak Perlman stood up, closed his eyes as silence fell on the audience,

and then said that it was the artist’s responsibility to see how much music can be made with what is left.

The church strings, as well, are strained, stretched, and even broken, but the Bishop assured us that we can do a lot with the strings that are still left. He said that the foundation is strong and our music sweet. Just as for a piece of vocal music a choir tunes from the bass up, we as church rely on the good base line, which is God our maker, with our lives lived in Christ and the harmony grounded in the Holy Spirit—in, among, and through us for the sake of the world.

Though at times we lament our dwindling numbers and energy, there is much music to be made with that which is left. Occasions such as this, the first of many joint events throughout this anniversary year, encourage, enrich, and remind us that we indeed belong to something greater than ourselves; that coming together as a people of God in Christ Jesus strengthens us for mutual ministry—ministry beyond our understanding, beyond our expectations. Jointly we sing in harmony: all are welcome in this place. In this place where our foundation is strong and our music sweet, we strive to become what we are not yet. We are journeying together along the same road; we are growing and processing what it means to be ever reforming and what it means for our future together.



Many thanks to Pastor Suzanne Neville and the people of Christ the King Lutheran Church, Whitby, for their hospitality and generosity of spirit.

Pastor Rasma

### Kudos!

Thanks to Lilli Kilian and the ELW for having sponsored and arranged the sauerkraut luncheon for our congregation. It was very well attended and your efforts were appreciated.

### Bishop’s Spiritual Retreat

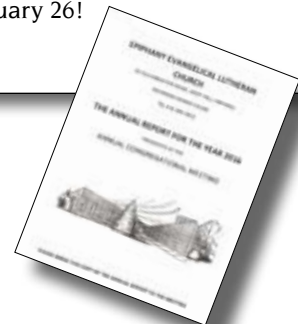
Pastor Rasma will attend the Bishop’s Spiritual Retreat at Mount Carmel in Niagara Falls from Sunday evening, February 19th to the 22nd.

### Epiphany’s AGM SUNDAY FEBRUARY 26

Please make every effort to attend this important meeting in the life of Epiphany. Help ensure we meet the Quorum required to proceed with this Annual General Meeting of our congregation.

A 10 a.m. Joint Communion Service will be followed by a brown bag lunch and the AGM. Coffee and Tea will be provided.

Thanks to all who contributed to providing the Annual Reports in such a timely manner. Please read the copy you picked up at church or received by mail, and bring it with you on Sunday, February 26!



## One Size Fits All

FEBRUARY is the month of “love,” but really, what’s the big deal?

In the month that celebrates love and all that it promises, we are encouraged, on the commercial side, to demonstrate the quality or intensity of love by equating that love with size. For example, where a single bloom might suffice, a big bouquet of the reddest roses is believed to show greater love; boxes of chocolates are suddenly available in awkwardly large heart shapes, intended to show how big the giver’s heart really is; and big, oversized cards that require special envelopes and extra postage when mailed, show the sender’s largesse – and love – in the extra size (and cost) of the Valentine missive.

Of course, experts encourage counter-measures, although perhaps not surprisingly, size still matters. One suggests going out to buy big bags of candy the next day when it’s half price. Another suggests ignoring the commercial aspects of the day (and consequent distractions) and instead tackle a big project that requires your full attention (a purge versus a splurge!). Another goes on to suggest avoiding romantic everything and instead buying a big pizza with which to enjoy a marathon of horror movies.

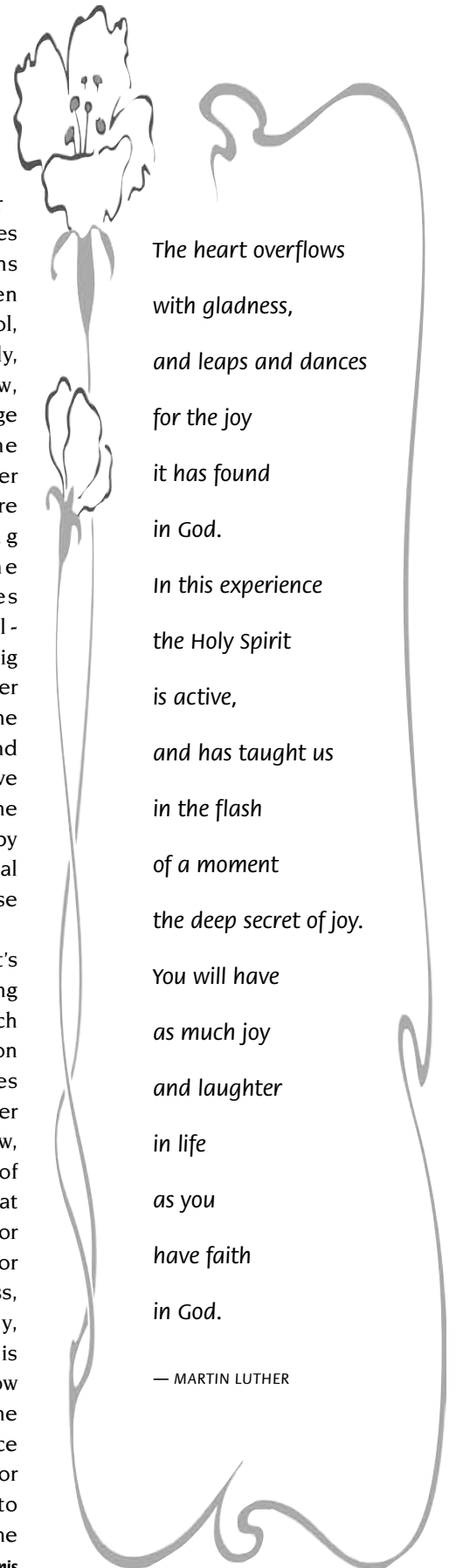
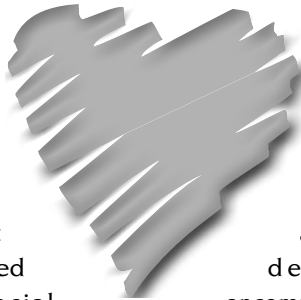
Whether we indulge in a big, romantic gesture or we actively engage in a big counter-step to the pink and flowery aspects of Valentine’s Day, is a personal choice. Either way, we are expected to navigate the storm of commercial prompts in order to convey love to someone else or to ourselves in a big way! We are discouraged from giving a single bloom or a 3-pack of Turtles chocolates for fear that a small

gesture will convey only a token emotion rather than the big deal of true love.

Yet Scripture gives us examples of love in small gestures. Remember the Israelites in the desert with Moses and Aaron? Their small donations of gold earrings (Exodus 32), when combined, resulted in that large idol, the golden calf. Conversely, consider the widow, who, unlike the large benefactors of the temple, gave only her mites as offering. Are these opposing examples? Let me argue that both cases demonstrate the all-encompassing aspects, the “big deal,” that is love. Perhaps it is easier to understand the symbolism of the widow’s mites; how hers was a grand gesture, a big deal, because she gave her all in response to God’s love. The Israelites, on the other hand, swayed by public pressure, needed a big, material object with which to convey their sense of (misguided) love.

So, when it comes to love, what’s the big deal? The widow’s offering is explained as a gift of love much bigger than those who give a portion of their income because she gives everything. It appears to be a reminder that in love, bigger is better. Now, those Israelites. If you read all of Exodus 32 you will be reminded that God forgave Aaron and the Israelites for their weakness and frail faith. That, for me, is the big deal! God’s forgiveness, a counter-measure to our anxiety, impatience, and doubt about love, is the perfect gift of love. The widow understands this and responds; the Israelites need to learn and practice how to love. Both give us models for understanding and responding to God’s gift of love, one that is truly one size that fits all!

Denise Dennis



The heart overflows  
with gladness,  
and leaps and dances  
for the joy  
it has found  
in God.  
In this experience  
the Holy Spirit  
is active,  
and has taught us  
in the flash  
of a moment  
the deep secret of joy.  
You will have  
as much joy  
and laughter  
in life  
as you  
have faith  
in God.

— MARTIN LUTHER



Our last meeting was on January 12th during which we had a good lunch (of course with lots of Sauerkraut!) and a pleasant afternoon with some readings, raffle prizes and lively conversations. The seniors were invited by the ELW and they wish to express their thanks for all the efforts by the ladies of the ELW.

Our next meeting will be on February 7th at the usual time.

Wilhelm Wittemeier

## World Day of Prayer 2017 – The Philippines

Friday March 3rd at 7 p.m.

Melville Presbyterian Church,

70 Old Kingston Road (just up the street from Epiphany)

Theme: “Am I being unfair to you?” – Matthew 20, 1-16

Anyone with a connection to the Philippines, its culture and cuisine, is asked to contact Cheryl Smith, Co-ordinator at Melville, 416-282-3514. Thank you.



**H.U.G.S. —**

**Helping Us Grow Spiritually is a weekend retreat for women of all ages**

**— May 26-28, 2017**

Sponsored by Women’s Ministry of the Eastern Synod, the event takes place at the Kempenfelt Conference Centre located just off Hwy 400 in Innisfil, ON (Just outside Barrie).

Two guest speakers will be featured; Ruth Smith Meyer, an inspirational writer and speaker and Brenda Byers, a story teller by profession.

The conference centre, on beautiful Lake Kempenfelt, is situated perfectly for outdoor activities which are included in the weekend (weather permitting).

Registration information can be found on the Narthex bulletin board or check the calendar on the Eastern Synod website at easternsynod.org

The cost for the weekend including meals is \$250 per person based on double-occupancy. If you do not wish to share a room you can elect to have a single room for an additional \$100 for the weekend. Every woman welcome.

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WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 8 • 1 PM

## ELW 2017 Planning Meeting & Richters Herbs

**I**t was a full house at the January 12th Winter luncheon with good weather and road conditions. Thanks to the 35+ people who came to join us, especially those who made the trek from Oakville and Etobicoke! We had food galore with enough for leftovers to be taken home and care packages for those unable to attend. Thanks to our Corporate Sponsors who supported our efforts with the following donations: **Mona of Melitta, Canada for the Deluxe Coffee, Coffee pods/cups, filters and scoops; Leanne of Husky Food Importers (Das Journal Ad/Supplier to Vienna Fine Foods) for the case of Hengstenberg Sauerkraut, Yorkshire Tea, Wieners, Davidoff & Tchibo coffees, Ritter Sport and Whittaker chocolate bars; and to Ruth/Mike of National Food Importers for the Haribo Gummies, boxes of Belgium Chocolates, bags of Noblese Cookies and jars of Hazelnut Caramel spread.** Everyone, including the AMMS went home with an edible prize! Each and every pot of sauerkraut, lovingly prepared by Hildegard, Hilda, Wilhelm and Erika, was delicious! Special thanks to the clean-up crew who left the Sanctuary clean and tidy for Sunday service. All in all, a good time was had by all and we hope those unable to attend this event will come to our July Summerfest picnic!

The 2016 Advent Bazaar was again successful in helping the Church women raise funds, thanks to the efforts made by the congregation who give so generously of their time and talents. Please join us in February as we budget and plan for 2017 and distribute the monies. Should anyone have a request for a charity or project, they are encouraged to contact any ELW members, Pastor, Church Council reps or to come and make a personal appeal at the meeting. All are welcome. The Church Women's distribution of funds is made public on the narthex bulletin board as well as in the AGM report. We acknowledge and thank Sigrid Engler, who as ELW Treasurer maintains excellent bookkeeping records for us.

The Church Women confirm these 2017 social activities and dates:

- **June 17th (Father's Day weekend) Strawberry Social**
- **October 14th (after Thanksgiving) Applefest**
- **December 2nd Advent Bazaar (let us revisit the Soup lunch)**

We have already applied and been approved for \$300 Faithlife Financial matching grants for each of the June and October events.

In the past, some women of Epiphany organized daytrips and local bus tours of interest to the congregation. Remember those? There has been talk of conducting such a tour again. Would you be interested? What destinations or attractions such as, theatre, concert, gardens, festival, brewery, winery would you like to visit. Please give this some thought and kindly let Lilli, Erika or Nalini know of your ideas! We may well be able to organize something for this year!

Please be advised that there will be NO March ELW meeting, rather we ask the Church Women to attend and support the Worship and Music Committee mid-week Lenten soup suppers and services.

It goes without saying, that should we have a snow or ice storm on February 8, unfortunately the meeting will be cancelled, possibly handled electronically or postponed until sometime later in March upon my return. Thank you.

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

*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**

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**Greg Furan, Council Chair**

416-284-5622 • gfulan@sympatico.ca

**Nancy Kostroman, Vice-Chair**

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**Paulette Correia**

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**Fred Kilian**

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**Sigi Sommer**

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### TREASURER'S REPORT

DECEMBER 2016	RECEIVED	SPENT	SURPLUS (DEFICIT)
CURRENT	\$16,830.51	\$12,384.01	
CHANGE IN INVESTMENT ACCT	0.00		
BENEVOLENCE	1,334.00	1,334.00	
CLWR	100.00	100.00	
AMMS RENTAL INCOME	2,575.00		
AMMS PARSONAGE UTILITIES NOV&DEC	1,625.16		
AMMS FELLOWSHIP HALL RENT	1,200.00		
AMMS FELLOWSHIP HALL UTILITIES SEP-DEC	867.48		
AMMS SANCTUARY RENTAL	100.00		
FAITH FINANCIAL	500.00		
MEMORIAL - INGRID LAMERS	100.00		
<b>CURRENT MONTH TOTALS</b>	<b>\$25,232.15</b>	<b>\$13,818.01</b>	<b>\$11,414.14</b>
<b>YEAR TO DATE TOTALS</b>	<b>\$149,662.93</b>	<b>\$149,599.48</b>	<b>\$63.45</b>

*Yours in Christ, Nalini Badley, Treasurer*

# February 2017

*In seed time learn, in harvest teach, in winter enjoy.* — WILLIAM BLAKE

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p><i>Every gardener knows that under the cloak of winter lies a miracle... a seed waiting to sprout, a bulb opening to the light, a bud straining to unfurl. And the anticipation nurtures our dream.</i> — BARBARA WINKLER</p>			<p><b>1</b> 11 AM - 2 PM — Church Office</p>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<p><b>5</b>    <b>5th Sunday of Epiphany</b> GREEN 9 AM German Worship Service 10:30 AM English Communion Service</p>	<b>6</b>	<p><b>7</b> 1:30 PM — German Seniors</p>	<p><b>8</b> 11 AM - 2 PM — Church Office  1 PM — ELW Meeting</p>	<b>9</b>	<p><b>10</b> 10 - 11:30 AM — Bible Class</p>	<b>11</b>
<p><b>12</b>    <b>6th Sunday of Epiphany</b> GREEN 9 AM German Communion Service 10:30 AM English Worship Service</p>	<p><b>13</b> 1 PM — Craft Circle</p>	<p><b>14</b>   VALENTINE'S DAY</p>	<p><b>15</b> 11 AM - 2 PM — Church Office</p>	<p><b>16</b> 7:15 PM — Council Meeting</p>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<p><b>19</b>    <b>7th Sunday of Epiphany</b> GREEN 9 AM German Worship Service 10:30 AM English Communion Service  Pastor attends Bishop's Spiritual Retreat from Sunday evening February 19-22</p>	<p><b>20</b>   FAMILY DAY</p>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<p><b>24</b> 10 - 11:30 AM — Bible Class  Morningstar Collating</p>	<b>25</b>
<p><b>26</b>    <b>Transfiguration of Our Lord</b> WHITE 10 AM Joint Communion Service followed by lunch &amp; AGM — <b>Annual General Meeting</b> (Please bring your copy of the Annual Report)</p>	<p><b>27</b> 1 PM — Craft Circle</p>	<b>28</b>	