The Morningstar

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF

EPIPHANY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Dear Morningstar Gazers...

At the beginning

of a new calendar year, it is natural to reflect on the year gone by and to wonder about the year ahead: What is the world coming to? What is the church coming to? What is my life, and the life of the people I love, coming to? The glimmer of hope that the rising tide of change (political and economic, as well as climate) might turn toward a more humane future, initiated by the global COVID 19 pandemic of recent memory, has quickly faded as our little blue planet becomes ever more deeply engulfed in eruptions of inner and inter-personal conflict, social disintegration and military violence, all rooted in mortal humanity's basic instinct of fear.

Yet, in the very midst of chaos in the *macro* world around us, as well as the *micro* world within us, Christmas proclaims the presence of God *among* us. On January 1st – the eighth day of Christmas – the western church remembers the "Naming of Jesus", when the newborn Christ Child was circumcised in accord with Jewish custom. The name "Jesus" means "God will save"; and the name "Emmanuel", by which his pending birth was announced to fearful Joseph in a dream (Matthew 1:23), means "God is with us".

I don't know who discovered it first, or where I first heard or read about it; but someone has actually counted, and concluded, that the admonition, "Fear not!" or "Do not be afraid!" – whether spoken by an angel (as in the case of Joseph, and Mary, too!) or spoken by a prophet, by God in dream or vision, or even by Jesus himself – is spoken in the Bible exactly 365 times! What more appropriate New Year's resolution might any of us make, than to take that scriptural advice to heart each and every day: Fear not! Do not be afraid! God has come to be with us – in thick and thin, come hell or high water, in the year ahead!

Merry Christmas! Happy New Year!

Pastor Peter

JANUARY CALENDAR 2026

SUNDAY JANUARY 4
THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD (WHITE)
12 noon Holy Communion Service
Pastor Peter Lisinski (In-person & Zoom)

FRIDAY JANUARY 9
10:00-11:15 a.m. Bible Class (GoogleMeet)

SUNDAY JANUARY 11
THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD (WHITE)
12 noon Service of the Word
Pastor Peter Lisinski (In-person & Zoom)

THURSDAY JANUARY 15
7:00 p.m. Council Meeting

SUNDAY JANUARY 18
SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY (GREEN)
12 noon Holy Communion Service
Pastor Peter Lisinski (In-person & Zoom)

FRIDAY JANUARY 23
10:00-11:15 a.m. Bible Class (GoogleMeet)

SUNDAY JANUARY 25
THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY (GREEN)
12 noon Service of the Word
Pastor Peter Lisinski (In-person & Zoom)

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

Door Flinging!!

STEWARDSHIP, simply put, is taking care of something. What most immediately comes to mind is taking care of property or finances. At Epiphany, these broad categories can be expanded to include the maintenance of our failing building, the care of maturing trees, and wise investing or expending of congregational contributions.

Being good stewards of the finances offers opportunities to increase income through rental agreements; being good stewards of the property offers environmental benefits of mature trees that contribute to air quality, significant shade, and animal habitats.

Thoughts on stewardship may sometimes be limited to these important, but concrete conditions. Yet, I want to suggest our perspective be extended to include the stewardship of people! Yes, certainly, over the last year, the family of Epiphany has conscientiously extended a charitable hand into the community surrounding the church, giving in kindness to food banks, clothing banks, and shelters; supporting children who need school supplies, seniors alone in residences, or providing blankets for comfort. We have consciously looked into the community and responded in faithful generosity.

Now, as we begin a new calendar year, let me invite you to consider the stewardship of people: their bodies, yes, but also their hearts, minds, and spirits. In so many important ways, that is what happens when we consider all the needs of our neighbours. Let's continue to actively engage with our neighbours, yes, but let's also find ways to engage their hearts, minds, and spirits! Let's find ways to "fling wide the door" of Epiphany, and with the grace of God and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, be stewards of people!

Your suggestions for "door flinging" are welcome!

I wish you every good blessing in the new year.

Your sister in stewarding, Denise Dennis
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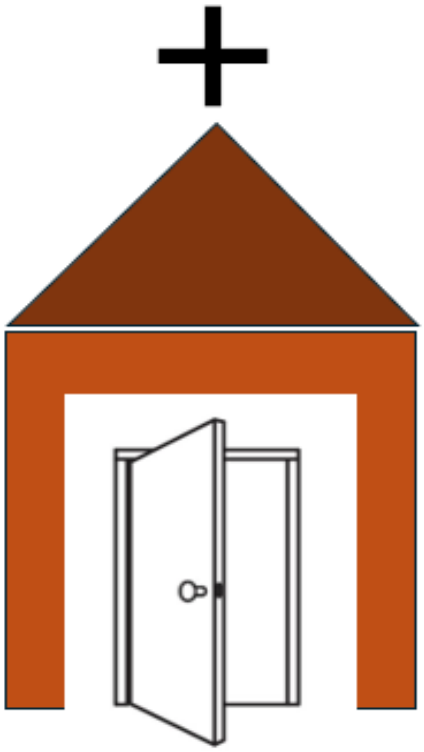


FLING WIDE THE DOOR

(ELW 259)

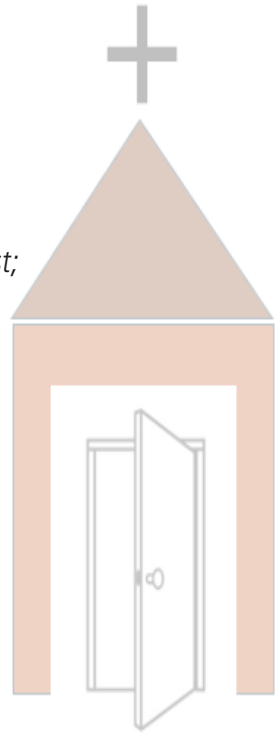
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=90glBmqgplQ

Fling wide the door, unbar the gate;
the King of glory comes in state;
the Lord of lords and King of kings,
the Saviour of the world who brings
his great salvation to the earth.
So raise a shout of holy mirth,
praise our God and Lord,
Creator, Spirit, Word.

He is the rock of our belief,
the heart of mercy's gentle self.
His kingly crown is holiness;
His scepter is his loveliness;
he brings our sorrows to an end.
Now gladly praise our king and friend,
Worship him with song for saving us from wrong.

Oh, happy towns and blessed lands
that live by their true king's commands.
And blessed be the hearts he rules,
the humble places where he dwells.
He is the rightful Son of bliss
who fills our lives and makes us his,
Creator of the world,
our only strength for good.

Come, Lord, our Saviour, Jesus Christ;
Our hearts are open wide in trust.
Oh, show us now your lovely grace,
Upon our sorrows shine your face,
and let your Holy Spirit guide
our journey in your grace so wide.
We praise your holy name,
and from age to age the same!

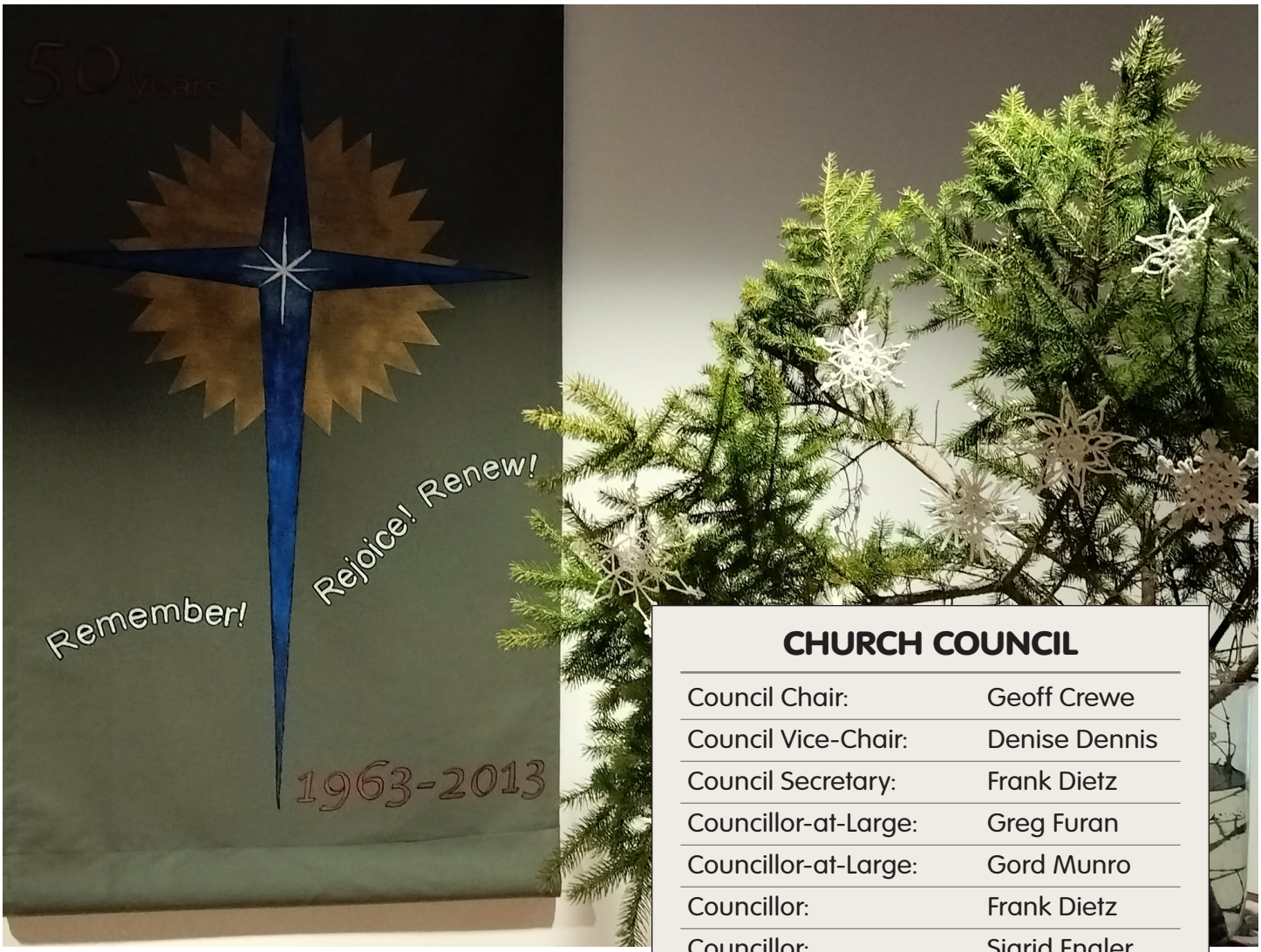


In Memory of Heidi Horsch — Many Epiphany members will remember Gislinde Adelheid Horsch, lovingly known as Heidi, who passed away peacefully on December 15, 2025 at Kristus Darzs Latvian Home, surrounded by care and kindness. A funeral service took place at Zion Lutheran Church in Maple on December 22.

Born in 1936 in Günzberg, Germany, Heidi was a devoted and beloved wife to Rev. Hartmut Horsch, a former pastor of Epiphany for many years. She was a cherished mother to Monika, Mike, Steve and Andrea, and proud grandmother to Angelika, Katerina, Megan, and Max. Epiphany extends heartfelt condolences to Heidi"s family.

2025 Christmas Tree Trimming at Epiphany

With lights, paper stars and crocheted snowflakes, the Christmas Tree with Nativity are complete.



TREASURER'S REPORT

NOVEMBER 2025	Received	Spent	Surplus (Deficit)
Offerings	$3,550.00		
AMMS Parsonage Rent	2,575.00		
AMMS Fellowship Hall Rent	1,500.00		
AMMS Parsonage Utilities	222.78		
AMMS Property Tax	1,252.00		
GST/PST Receivable	192.53		
Current Month Totals	**$9,292.31**	**$9,671.92**	**($379.61)**
Year to Date Totals	**$104, 048.78**	**$94,939.75**	**$9,109.03**
CIBC Bank Balance at November 30, 2025			23,248.44
CIBC Investor's Edge Account Balance at the end of November			213,803.07
Scotia Bank Non Redeemable GIC at 3.04% maturing October 26, 2026			30,000.00
CIBC Non Redeemable GIC at 2.80% maturing October 19, 2026			30,000.00
CIBC Flexible GIC at 2.154% maturing October 19, 2026			20,000.00

Yours in Christ, Nalini Badley, Treasurer

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

Dear Extended Family of Epiphany Lutheran Church:

The Lord be with you!

No doubt most people around the world would agree that the best Christmas gift of all would be the gift of peace on earth, as promised in the first Christmas carol ever sung: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to all people on earth…” (Luke 2:14).

The song of the heavenly angels that first Christmas teaches us that glorifying God - humanity’s primary purpose and highest privilege - is the surest way to peace on earth.

Glorifying God is the church’s primary vocation in worship. Inspiring mutual good will among people is worship’s primary fruit! Worshiping God in communion with others is humanity’s most effective method for sowing the seeds and nurturing the soil of peace: in our hearts, in our homes, in our community, in our nation, and between all people: friends, neighbours and strangers, even those we are taught to regard as enemies! *Global* peace, indeed *cosmic, universal* peace, as well as *personal* peace is God’s promise in the gift of the Christ Child, the very promise of Christmas, the “Christ mass.”

The world’s need for peace is urgent! Therefore, the church’s renewal in worship is vital! The global rise in military violence and inter-personal hostility, even within our Canadian society, is directly proportionate to the massive decline in worship attendance across our nation, indeed throughout western civilization. Accordingly, I can think of no more crucial New Year’s resolution than faithful presence in the public worship of God’s holy house, of whatever religion or denomination! It’s the simplest and best thing any of us can do, not only for the future of the world, but for the well being of ourselves, the people most precious to us, and the neighbourhood in which we live.

In keeping with the spirit of “the reason for the season,” I wish you all a “Merry” - in the fullest sense and original meaning of the word: comfort and joy, courage and faith, health and wholeness, faith, hope and love - a truly “Merry Christmas!”

Pax tecum! Pax Vobiscum!!

Pastor Peter Lisinski

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