

Eastern Synod of the ELCIC Newsletter



December 9, 2013

To find tools and resources for worship, missions, and ministry, visit the Eastern Synod website: www.easternsynod.org

Rev Joel Crouse
Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries

It is truly inspiring to see how excited young people get about the church, from teenagers having a sleepover at a joint Anglican-Lutheran event, to seven-year-olds running around the beach at Camp Mush-a-Mush, and the leadership skills our young adults exhibited on Parliament Hill at our national assembly. I get a front row seat to their ideas and enthusiasm, and it has certainly transformed my own vision – and optimism – for the powerful role the gospel will continue to play in society.

Every week, I put in about 20 hours toward my job as Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries. Those hours are spent finding out what is happening among our youth throughout the synod, building a network of people excited about youth ministry, assisting individuals and congregations with youth ministry initiatives, and being alert to fresh ideas that come forward. It also means encouraging existing programs to be innovative so that their ministry continues to be viable. In the area of camps and student ministry initiatives, dealing with land, compliancy and personnel issues is also a big part of the job – from long conversations with Revenue Canada to the weekend installation of new floors and drywall at the Edgewood Director's House. Much like parish ministry it never gets boring – you are always doing something interesting, something unexpected

Certainly this year, a highlight was the Eastern Synod Youth Gathering, which was extremely well organized, and led by congregations in the Kitchener-Waterloo area. We even had a group of young people come from British Columbia to attend.

One of the most transformative forward-thinking actions, I witnessed was the offering of the student house, long used by Lutheran Campus Minister Waterloo, to the re-development of the seminary for their new counseling program, which will serve young adults on campus and in the city. The Glebe Center, as it is now called, would not have been possible in the same way without that generous gift.

The Eastern Synod Youth and Young Adult Ministry Committee just had its annual funding meeting. This committee, which is comprised solely of Lutherans under the age of 30 have set a clear direction for the coming year, serving three children's camps, six student ministries, and five other youth-centred initiatives. These range from feeding kids at elementary schools through a Daily Bread program, offering grants to teenagers attending CLAY this summer in British Columbia, to training youth workers to help build up congregation ministries focused on early childhood Christian education through the new Patricia Watts endowment fund.

We are part of a synod that continues to see youth and young adult ministry as a ministry priority. Our bishop, staff, deans and other ministry directors are part of a team that works together. It is a privilege to work together with them, for the sake of Christ, in this Eastern Synod.

You can reach the Director for Youth and Young Adult Ministries at:

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skype: joelcrouse
twitter: @pastorjcrouse
facebook: Eastern-Synod-of-the-Evangelical-Lutheran-Church-in-Canada
website: easternsynod.org/ministries/youth-and-young-adult/
phone: 613.749.6953

The Eastern Synod Lutheran

This year's final issue of the Eastern Synod Lutheran has arrived into your mailbox. Once a year we send you an offering envelope hoping that we can get enough money to continue publishing the paper. The publishing cost of the paper is around \$16,000/issue.

The future of the paper is in your hands or rather in your envelope. We understand that the modern methods of communication use websites, email, social media, youtube etc. and we need to follow the new trends in order to be able to stay in touch with the younger generation. We, however, want to serve all the people, regardless of their technological means and knowledge. Please, consider supporting the paper even if you don't read it yourself. The Eastern Synod Lutheran is still read by many.

God's grace is free; sadly, newspapers are not. Please respond as generously as you can!

- Pastor Riitta Hepomaki

Sharpen Your Pencils

Many learning opportunities for lay and clergy leaders are coming in 2014 in the Eastern Synod. A workshop will be available for Congregational Treasurers/Financial Secretaries in different conferences. It will be led by Keith Myra, Treasurer of the Eastern Synod. Jeff Pym and Rev Riitta Hepomaki will be leading workshops for Congregational Councils. Dates and locations are yet to be determined but will be posted on the Eastern Synod website. Training day for Church/Office Secretaries will be May 24th, 2014 in Toronto.

New Visions by Peter Steinke will be in Ottawa September 19-20, 2014. Learn more about New Visions at www.newvisions.us

Sweaters Galore!

A few weeks ago a request went out from CLWR for sweaters. Old or new, big or small they wanted them all. The plan was to send 10,000 sweaters overseas to help keep Syrian refugees warm this winter. The response from Canadians coast to coast was astounding. Over 40,000 sweaters will soon find their way to people who desperately need them.

Your Stories Make a Synod Story

Thank you to those who have already added Pastor Riitta (rhpomaki@elcic.ca) to your electronic newsletter mailing list.

New beginnings in 2014 will pull some of your stories into our synod family chronicles.

Watch for it!

Pastoral Opportunities

The following Congregations are seeking a pastor. For more information, please contact **Rev.**

Douglas Reble,
Assistant to the Bishop
(1-877-373-5242)

Toronto Conference

St. Paul's, Richmond Hill
Christ the King, Whitby

Kitchener/Waterloo Conference

St. Stephen's, Kitchener

Atlantic Conference

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church and Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Lunenburg, NS

London Conference

Zion, Stratford

Advent Outreach Projects

Many of our congregations are finding creative ways to help those in need in their communities this holiday season. The following are a few of the ways you've found to help out:

Peace Lutheran in Pickering will support the Lutheran Bible Translators of Canada by decorating a tree with symbolic "book" decorations – one for each book of the Bible; make a donation and pick your favourite book!

St. Stephen's in Kitchener is collecting gift cards and food vouchers. They are also collecting Tim Horton's gift cards to be given to cancer patients at Grand River Hospital.

St. Paul's, Bridgwater helps INN FROM THE COLD, a community project that offers warm, safe shelters in emergency situations during the winter months.

St. John's, Hamilton will be collecting gift cards or cash donations to purchase gift cards for the youth at Living Rock Ministries.

St. James, Elmira will support the Christmas Goodwill program by collecting gifts and items for the food hampers.

Trinity, New Hamburg asks knitters to do their stuff! An Advent Mitten Tree will be decorated. They will also help with Christmas Hampers, host a Christmas breakfast and deliver Christmas Cheer Plates.

First Lutheran, Toronto is having a turkey and sock drive to aid The Gateway men's shelter and Community Support for women.

St. John's, Mahone Bay will have a Mother and Daughter Choir Concert in support of local food banks. Many of our congregations have been filling shoe boxes, Like the ones **Resurrection, Halifax** filled to be given to sailors on cargo ships who aren't always able to leave their ships and get necessities.

Thank You!

The Hepomaki family wishes to thank all the congregations and members for their prayers over the last months.

Your generous thoughts and kind wishes are much appreciated.

Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:6-7

Leadership Awards Nominations

It's time for the nominations to begin! Is there someone you would like to nominate for a 2014 Leadership Award? Awards are being presented for the following categories:

- Clergy Nomination
- Lay Person Nomination
- Outstanding Service to the Eastern Synod
- Outstanding Service to the wider community

If you would like to nominate someone in one of the four categories, please complete and mail or fax a form by March 1, 2014. To view and print the nomination form, visit the Eastern Synod website.

Forms can be sent to:

LEADERSHIP AWARD NOMINATIONS

EASTERN SYNOD – ELCIC

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