

# Eastern Synod of the ELCIC Newsletter



**Eastern Synod**  
of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

**December 23, 2013**

To find tools and resources for worship, missions, and ministry, visit the Eastern Synod website: [www.easternsynod.org](http://www.easternsynod.org)

## **FROM PASTOR DOUG'S DESK**

The turning of the calendar page from one year to the next is often a time that lends itself to personal reflection. A time to reflect on where you've been and where you may be going. Personally, I often use the time to ponder on where I need to grow and change using a simple method of evaluation that I call SSC, meaning what do I need to Start, what do I need to Stop, and what do I need to Continue.

For those who serve in parish ministry, the calendar change may be a time to reflect on what lies ahead in terms of your call. Do you still feel that your present ministry setting is the best place for you and the people you serve? Perhaps it is time to move on to new challenges and new places of serving.

To that end, your synod staff, Bishop Michael, Pastor Riitta and myself, will gladly meet with you to discuss your current call situation or a possibility of a change of call. As the staff person, with responsibilities for call processes, I encourage you to contact me if you see a vacant parish on our website that is looking for a pastor. Some are reluctant to do this. Don't be. The Holy Spirit will still guide the process.

I leave this with you for your reflection. In the meantime, Happy Christmas and a Blessed New Year.

Rev. Douglas Reble, Assistant to the Bishop

## **Maternity-Pregnancy and Parental Leave Policy**

**Great News for New Parents!** Our new Maternity-Pregnancy and Parental Leave Policy is now available on our web site.

## **Benevolence Interpretation Materials 2014**

New benevolence interpretation materials are now available for download. Congregations are encouraged to print them as part of their annual report or otherwise make them available to members.

To view materials go to <http://easternsynod.org/ministries/stewardship-and-resource-development/>

## May I Introduce You To.....

### **Jeff Pym** **Director of Stewardship and Resource Development**

As the Director of Stewardship and Resource Development, I have one of the longer titles in the Eastern Synod. But even that lengthy title doesn't quite cover the variety of projects I get to work on during the one day per week my agreement calls for.

"Stewardship" is the traditional word we use to describe all aspects of giving to the church. Over the past few years I've begun to see that through the lens of generosity. My job in this area is to assist congregations to encourage their members to embrace the habits of generous giving as a response to God's generous gifts to us.

At times I've blogged extensively on this subject. More recently I've been offering a workshop called Nurturing Generous Giving to cluster groups of congregational leaders. In 2012-13 there have been 8 workshops, offered from London to Sudbury to Lunenburg and a few places in between, with a total of 166 participants. These have been tremendously rewarding, as I've watched people implement ideas they learned at the workshop back in their own congregation.

From time to time I am asked to consult with leaders from a single congregation or church camp who wonder what they can do to increase giving income. And occasionally I'm asked to speak at a congregation's Stewardship Sunday.

Resource development is the part of the job which is focused on encouraging congregations to be generous in their giving to benevolence, which is how local expressions contribute to support the work of synodical, national and international expressions of the church. My work includes producing material that helps interpret the wider church to people who understand their own congregation but don't know much about the ministry of the Eastern Synod or ELCIC.

And then there are the "other duties as assigned". They include organizing the annual banquet of the Bishop's Company for Mission, facilitating planning sessions for synod committees, coordinating materials for the Synodical Covenant, and anything else that I can do to help the bishop.

My biggest surprise of 2013 has been observing how fiercely independent some congregations are. In response to the Covenant and to ideas about reforming the benevolence system, churches have let us know that they will not readily cede control of their affairs to the Synod or anyone else. In the dance between congregations and the rest of the church, congregations lead!

In 2014 I'm looking forward to working with Pastor Riitta Hepomaki on planning and delivering a number of workshops for congregational councils. We believe that many congregations would like some suggestions on how to make council work more effective for the church and satisfying for the members.

Jeff

## **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**

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

## **Prayers and Best Wishes**

Our thoughts and  
prayers are with Rev.

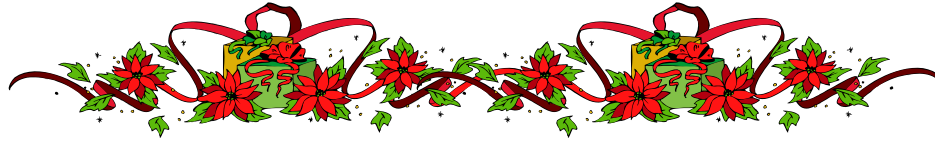
Dr. David Pfrimmer and  
his family as they gather

to celebrate the life of  
his mother who passed

away peacefully on

December 8th at 10:30

pm.



## **An Early Christmas Gift.....**

Dear Friends:

You are all probably similarly pre-occupied with worship preparation, visits, etc. however attached is an early Christmas gift. I am not a poet, but when need be, we drag everything out of our toolbox and get cracking. This year, we had chosen a beautiful Paul Gerhardt choral, *Ich steh an deiner Krippe hier* to sing on Christmas Eve, only to find there was no English translation. So, rather than change the hymn, an English version had to be concocted! I hope you enjoy the sentiment behind it; our care for one another. Blessing upon blessing to you all; peace, goodwill to all!

Rev. Ilze Kuplens-Ewart  
Pastor, St. Andrew's Lutheran Latvian Church, Toronto.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>1. Now by your cradle here I stand<br/>O Jesus, my life-giver;<br/>I come, I give you from my hand<br/>what you have long delivered.<br/>So take this heart, and soul, and mind,<br/>my very self by you designed,<br/>and may this all delight you.</p> <p>3. Why must a star from heav'n be found<br/>asleep in such privation?<br/>For such an image does confound<br/>our sense of expectation.<br/>Silk, velvet, down, a feather-bed<br/>are surely for a noble meant,<br/>instead - a lowly manger.</p> | <p>2. Yet long before I came to be<br/>within me you were living.<br/>You chose me so that I might see<br/>in you a new beginning.<br/>And as you shaped this form of mine,<br/>you thought: forever we entwined:<br/>the bonds of sin thus shattered.</p> <p>4. Not wealth, not pow'r are what you seek,<br/>nor well-intended gestures,<br/>instead from us the truth to speak:<br/>God's love for all his creatures.<br/>So, come, our brother, welcome us,<br/>"Your kingdom come" may we express<br/>and be your living cradle!</p> |
|--|--|

For a copy of the music go to [http://www.kantorei-noten.de/pdf/gcac/bwv469\\_ichstehandeinerkrippen149.pdf](http://www.kantorei-noten.de/pdf/gcac/bwv469_ichstehandeinerkrippen149.pdf)

**Thank you Pastor Ilze for sharing your talents with us!**

## **Merry Christmas to All!**

All of us here at the Eastern Synod office want to wish you and yours all the wondrous blessings of the season.

*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.*

Romans 15:13

**Merry Christmas Everyone!**

*Eastern Synod Office Staff*

## **Ministry Changes**

Rev. Anna Runesson resigned from Swedish Lutheran Church in Toronto effective Jan. 1, 2013 and will begin a call in Oslo, Norway July 1, 2014.

Rev. Tim Hegedus retires from Waterloo Lutheran Seminary Dec. 31, 2013.

Rev. William Shafer has announced his intention to retire from St. Stephen's, Kitchener effective March 31, 2014.

## **Prayers and Best Wishes**

Our thoughts and prayers are with Rev. Dr. David Pfrimmer and his family as they gather to celebrate the life of his mother who passed away peacefully on December 8th at 10:30 pm.

We include Rev. Cal Diegel and his wife Betty in our prayers as they continue to face ongoing medical challenges.

## **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**  
74 Weber Street West  
Kitchener ON N2H 3Z3  
Fax: (519) 743-4291