



# Eastern Synod Newsletter

[www.easternsynod.org](http://www.easternsynod.org)



Feb 18, 2021  
Volume 104

The synod's Task Force for the Resumption of In-Person Worship has been working since June, 2020. Our initial mandate was to provide resources to enable congregations to assess their own situation and to develop protocols so that they could safely resume worship in-person. For some congregations, that meant coming to the difficult decision



Peace, Chatham, ON

not to resume in-person worship. For others, in-person worship resumed and then had to



Trinity, New Hamburg, ON

pause due to lockdowns in Quebec and Ontario. Public Health guidelines and regulations vary, not just provincially, but also by region.

Over the last 11 months, we have learned that we can worship by using Facebook, Zoom, podcasts, TV ministry and doing devotions provided to us either via email or in hard copy.

To support these various forms of worship, the task force gathered resources from rostered and lay leaders from across the synod. Liturgies and prayers were written, musical pieces shared and children's activities provided. So many of us have been blessed by the use of these resources during our worship. Thank you to all those who have contributed these gifts to the wider synod community! Our worship has been greatly enriched.

As public health restrictions are now being loosened across the synod, each congregation must consider what does this mean for them. For some it will mean resuming in-person worship, for others, the waiting continues.

There is no right answer. We must all consider our ability to meet public health regulations and more importantly, ensure the wellbeing of all those who might attend worship in-person. We do this for the love of our neighbour. That is discipleship.

While we may not be able to worship as we would like, we are bound together as we lift up our prayers together in gratitude and hope.

*Laurie Knott  
Chair, Task Force for the Resumption of In-Person Worship.*



### Climate Justice - Call to Action!

If you are a youth (children and families are welcome!) or young adult who is passionate about the environment and climate change, please see the infographic below and click the link to participate in a brief survey. The Eastern Synod Youth and Young Adult Ministry Committee is helping to build a network of youth and young adults who would like to engage the church in some climate discussions and assist the ELCIC in working towards the goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2050.

Come and join the conversation! You can find the brief survey here:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NDT8VPM>

If you have any questions, please be in touch with Rev. Christie Morrow-Wolfe, Assistant to the Bishop ([cmorrow-wolfe@elcic.ca](mailto:cmorrow-wolfe@elcic.ca)) or Sophos Slessor ([skslessor@gmail.com](mailto:skslessor@gmail.com)), YAYA member and a representative on the ELCIC's Task Force for Carbon Neutrality.



# Calling all youth age 30 and under!



## The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada needs **YOU!**

The YAYA Committee is putting together a group of youth to help inform the Church on climate action to reach our goal of being carbon-neutral by 2050!

**Are you passionate about  
the world around you?**

**Do you see yourself as someone  
who wants to make change?**

**Is being creative an  
important part of your life?**

If you answered **YES** to the above questions, check out the Survey Monkey linked in the description!



June 25-26, 2021

(Virtual Meeting Format)

Visit the Assembly Page

### Assembly Registration is now open!

[Click here for delegate registration.](#)

If you would like to view the proceedings via Livestream you can register as a visitor— you will be able to watch and listen but you not be able to interact with the proceedings.

[Click here for visitor registration.](#)

### Revised Documents

Congregational Meetings amid Extraordinary Times - Absentee Balloting—a revised document which replaces Special Congregational Meetings Amid Extraordinary Times is now available for download at [easternsynod.org](http://easternsynod.org)

Congregations looking for some guidelines in considering an absentee ballot for congregational meetings during pandemic times will find some help here.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Rev Mei Sum Lai and her family as they mourn the loss of her father.



*My flesh and my heart may fail,  
but God is the strength of my  
heart and my portion forever.*

### Ministry Opportunities

Redeemer, North Bay, ON

All Saints, Guelph, ON

Trinity, Walkerton, ON

Zion, Pembroke, ON

St. Matthew, Welland ON &  
First, Port Colborne, ON

St. Paul's, Magnetawan, ON

For more information contact Rev Douglas Reble, Assistant to the Bishop  
[dreble@elcic.ca](mailto:dreble@elcic.ca)

### DIACONAL SUNDAY - FEBRUARY 28, 2021

*Celebrating witness expressed through service (diakonia) and leadership offered by the ELCIC's diaconal ministers.*

Sunday, February 28 is Diaconal Sunday, the day the ELCIC celebrates the witness expressed through service (diakonia). Through our baptism all Christians are called to share God's word and to serve our neighbours in Christ's name. It is also a day to recognize and give thanks to God for the men and women who serve in official calls as deacons in our church.

Diaconal Sunday Sermon and Additional Resources are available here: <https://elcic.ca/Leadership/For-Ministers/DiaconalSunday.cfm>

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## Summary of Eastern Synod Offerings (pre-audit) 2020, A Year Like No Other

This past year has been a wild ride to say the least. While the year began like any other, the emergence of Covid-19 quickly upended our lives, and the world, as we know it. The year was one of heartbreak and loss. Due to Covid-19, we have grieved over the loss of lives, the loss of our social interactions and the loss of businesses and employment. As with anything bad that happens to us there is always the flip side, where there is also something good. This year has also brought us great examples of compassion, support and recognition of those who are sometimes overlooked or taken for granted. This year has seen many stepping up to be compassionate and concerned about strangers. Neighbours have been helping neighbours with the little things and ensuring their safety. Many people are making an extra effort to connect regularly with those who are isolated and have little interaction with others. One of the most outstanding things to happen in 2020 is that people recognized how important our health is, both physical and mental, and truly appreciating those health care workers who have *always* been working tirelessly to ensure our health is championed. It is only when one needs these social supports that we truly realize how important it is to always give to others, even in moments when it may not seem to be needed. 2020 has been a wake up call that compassion, support and recognition of others is fundamental to sustaining humanity and our future together.

This past year has definitely had an impact within the Eastern Synod world as well. We have experienced the closing of our church doors and have quickly (surprisingly!) pivoted to learn how to operate in an online world, with virtual worship and meetings. As we rallied together to find ways to maintain the support the Synod provides to congregations, we have been grateful that, we too, have received an outpouring of reciprocated support. Those of us who work out of the Eastern Synod office are very thankful for the generous financial support and gifts that have been provided this past year.

### **Benevolence Offerings**

General Benevolence represents the primary source of funding for the Synod's operating budget. The first quarter of the year saw benevolence increase over 2019 by almost 3%. With the emergence of Covid-19, the level of benevolence began to decrease with the year ending at 4% under last year. Overall, the resulting reduction in benevolence offerings was not as drastic as might have been predicted midway through 2020. This is due to the amazing support of those individuals and congregations who continued providing to the Synod in such an uncertain time. The vast majority of offerings were remitted by congregations, but the benevolence total also included approximately \$50,000 that was received directly from individuals and from the windup of a private foundation. We feel truly blessed!

### **Canadian Lutheran World Relief Offerings**

Offerings to the Canadian Lutheran World Relief organization consist of gifts for general/undesignated causes and gifts for special appeals/projects. The first quarter of the year saw a 10% increase in CLWR offerings over 2019. Not surprisingly, most likely due to Covid-19, the year end results showed a decrease of 25%.

*Cont'd on page 5*

## Offerings to Other Eastern Synod and ELCIC Ministries

As is shown in the table below, remittances to the remaining ministries also decreased in 2020.

### Summary of Total Offerings Received in 2020

Overall, considering the challenges of the past year, we are pleasantly surprised by such a generous response:

	2019	2020	% Change
Regular Benevolence	\$ 1,430,418	\$ 1,369,044	-4%
CLWR Undesignated	\$ 202,383	\$ 166,342	-18%
CLWR Special Appeals	\$ 34,088	\$ 9,382	-72%
ELCIC Global Mission	\$ 9,028	\$ 6,231	-31%
ELCIC Other	\$ 2,890	\$ 410	-86%
Outdoor Ministries -Camps	\$ 10,720	\$ 10,571	-1%
Lutheran Campus Ministry	\$ 4,585	\$ 300	-93%
Martin Luther University College	\$ 19,790	\$ 13,240	-33%
Other Misc. Designated Gifts	\$ 44,151	\$ 39,797	-10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,758,053</b>	<b>\$ 1,615,317</b>	<b>-8%</b>

A detailed listing, [2020 Congregational Remittance Report](#), showing the breakdown of each congregation's remittances is posted on the Eastern Synod website.

Thank you for your generous support of the Synod. We are truly grateful! Without you, we would not be able to maintain and grow our ministries. We pray that everyone stays safe and realizes that we will get through this challenging time together as a team.

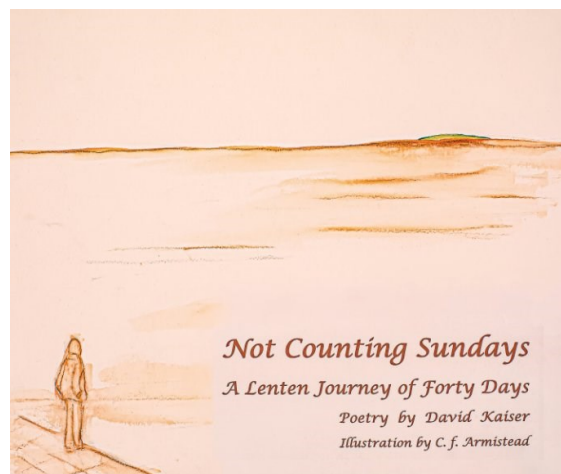
Kim Marcy,  
Director, Finance and Administration

New Book: "Not Counting Sundays – A Lenten Journey of 40 Days". David Kaiser who is a retired ELCIC pastor began to write poems for each day in Lent while working at the Lutheran Seminary in Hong Kong in 2002. A few years later, he asked Frank Armistead, also an ELCIC pastor and an artist to create illustrations. This book combines Frank's artwork and David's poetry in a meditative journey through the 40 days of Lent, reflecting the 40 year journey of the Israelites through the wilderness. It is a rather unique resource for the Lenten season.

While the book is for sale, David would like as many people as possible to have access to it. Attached here is a PDF copy of the book for you. If others might appreciate this, please feel free to send the PDF on to them.

When you open the PDF in a PDF reader such as Adobe Acrobat, the book will display best if you set the View -> Page View to Two-Page View and turn on Show Cover Page in Two-Page View.

Printed copies are available through [Blurb.ca](http://Blurb.ca) at these links: [softcover NCS](#) or [hardcover NCS](#). They can also be ordered for reduced cost by sending an email to [David.Solheim@sasktel.net](mailto:David.Solheim@sasktel.net), or [DavidKaiser@hotmail.com](mailto:DavidKaiser@hotmail.com) but shipping time might be longer.





## **Beyond Bequests: Exploring Giving Vehicle Options**

ELFEC (Evangelical Lutheran Foundation) and the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa are pleased to present a FREE webinar on Legacy Giving.

We will be answering:

- What are some of the options for leaving a gift to a charity?
- Can I leave the proceeds of a life insurance policy to a charity?
- What is a Donor Advised Fund and how does it work?
- Can I name my church as a beneficiary on my RRSP or RRIF?
- What is a Charitable Remainder Trust?
- Who do I speak with?

Life Insurance, Annuities, proceeds from an RRSP or RRIF, Charitable Remainder Trust, Donor Advised Funds - these are all options available to people who wish to meet their philanthropic goal by leaving a gift to their local congregation, the wider church, or another charity. While each person's situation is unique, these are some of the common ways people provide a charitable gift beyond a bequest in a Will.

After the presentation, there will be a time for people to ask questions. As well, anyone who registers will receive a recorded copy of the presentation.

**Register Here:** <https://beyondbequests.eventbrite.ca>

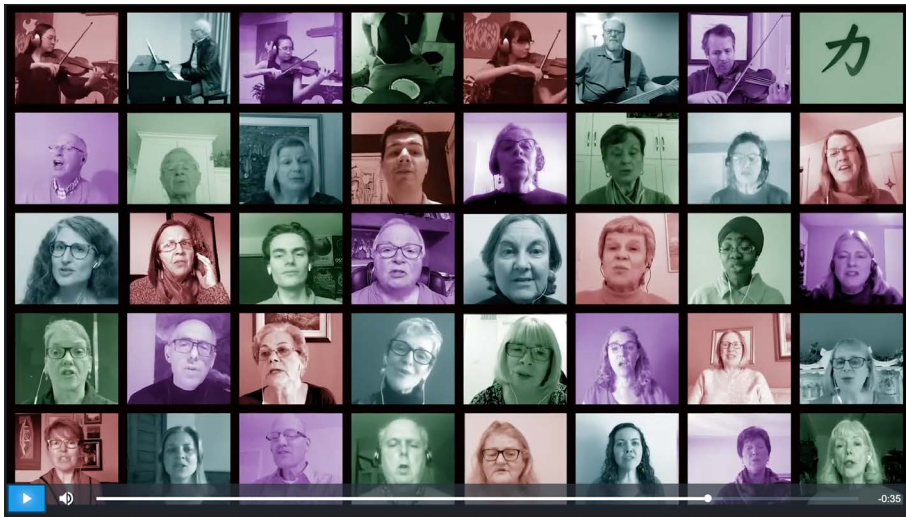
For further information, contact Kathryn Smith, Giving Advisor at [ksmith@elfec.ca](mailto:ksmith@elfec.ca) or 1-888-308-9461



# LUTHER

FEBRUARY 2021

## We Resist



### Prayer Chant

A huge thanks to Rev. Ronnie Smith — #LutherWaterlooAlumni and pastor at [Peace Lutheran Church](#) in Pickering, ON — for crafting such a splendid rendition of Prayer Chant (We Resist) by the Inshallah singing community. Made possible by funding from the CLWR and permission from artist/composer Mark Miller. [inshallah.ca](#)

## The View From Here: African Heritage Month

Join us for The View From Here: Songs and stories of Black resilience, triumph and innovation. Multidisciplinary artist Andrew Craig presents a program of music and stories chronicling the past, present and future of the Black



Andrew Craig

experience in Canada. Followed by Q&A. Friday, Feb. 26 at 7 p.m. Free. [Register here](#) for the Zoom webinar. Presented by Luther, [The Eastern Synod](#) of the ELCIC; [St. John's-Kilmarnock School](#), and [Culchahworks Arts Collective](#).

### About @LutherWaterloo

Welcome to the first instalment in a regular feature for those who would like to explore a bit more about our school. Our **Board of Governors** consists of 13 community members plus three ex-officio (non-voting) members including Bishop Michael Pryse. For photos and details, check out the [governance page](#) on our website.

### Stay connected

In addition to following us on social media (@LutherWaterloo) there are many ways to stay connected with us! You can subscribe to this monthly newsletter; to our occasional Donor Update, or our quarterly alumni newsletter. Learn how to subscribe to any of our publications by visiting the [Stay Connected](#) web page.

## The doctorate is in!

Congratulations to our friend and faculty colleague Dr. Debbie Lou Ludolph on successfully defending her dissertation. Her work is titled [Singing Difference Amid Relational Connectedness: A Narrative Study of How Singing Together Shapes Worldview](#) Debbie Lou is scheduled to receive her degree during convocation this spring.



## Workshop for couples

Join us for Hold Me Tight: Conversations for a Lifetime of Love. Presented by [The Delton Glebe Counselling Centre](#). It takes place March 21, 22, 27, 28. Early bird deadline: Feb. 28. [Register here](#).

## Research

[Consensus: A Canadian Journal of Public Theology](#) is now online.

This edition explores Effective Community Engagement through Ministry Projects. In addition to research articles, the edition includes a sermon by Bishop Michael Pryse on "Black History Month 2020."



## We're hiring

We are hiring an associate professional faculty member with a focus on Indigenous wisdom and methodologies. Deadline: March 15. Details: [bit.ly/LutherWaterlooAPF](#)

Vol. 4 Issue 2 *Luther* is a collection of news from Martin Luther University College in Waterloo, Ontario, Canada. **Website:** [luther.wlu.ca](#) **Events:** Dorinda Kruger Allen [dkrugerallen@luther.wlu.ca](#) **Stories:** Mirko Petricevic [mpetricevic@luther.wlu.ca](#)



*The Second in the series of Mount Zion Lutheran Church's series on rarely discussed subjects...*

# **Demystifying Dying and Death**

*Conversations we need to have*

**Thursday**

**March 4 2021 on Zoom**

**1:30 - 3:00 p.m.**

***With***

***John Lougheed***

*United Church Minister, and retired Hospital Chaplain who works part-time at Erb & Good Family Funeral Home.*

***Jamie Foley***

*Registered psychotherapist with the Spiritual Care team at Grand River Hospital*

***Christine Ramseyer RN***

*Parish Nurse, Mount Zion Lutheran Church*

**Explore:**

- ♦ ***grief & ritual before and after death***
- ♦ ***how we die***
- ♦ ***recognizing our fears***
- ♦ ***advanced care planning***
- ♦ ***MAID***
- ♦ ***Q&A***

**Register in advance for this meeting:**

<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwkc-CqrjItH9WrS33JBQjRDQbOuE-OES4nO>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

***Hosted by  
Mount Zion  
Lutheran Church***

***519 886 5820***

***mtzion@mzlc.ca***

***More info:***

***www.mzlc.ca***