



Eastern Synod Newsletter

www.easternsynod.org



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Volume 105

Virtual Camino de Santiago Walk

In this time of Covid-19 virus restrictions and lockdowns, where religious and social gatherings have been curtailed or cancelled, it has been difficult for churches to maintain a “sense of community” that is so important to the well-being of parishioners and those they serve. At St. John’s Lutheran Church in Petawawa, Ontario, Pastor Albert Romkema recently invited parishioners, their friends and family to join him on a 774-kilometre Virtual Camino de Santiago walk.



Christian pilgrimages to the city of Santiago de Compostela in northern Spain have been taking place since the 1400’s and recently more than a quarter of a million walkers have made pilgrimages on various routes each year. The cathedral there is said to be the burial place of St. James, the dis-

ciple of Jesus and the patron Saint of Spain.

Pastor Albert and his wife, Anne, are veteran Camino walkers and it was on one of these walks in 2013 that Pastor Albert received his call to become a Lutheran pastor. Over the last few years, parishioners at St. John’s have heard about his experiences “walking the Camino” during his sermons.

The Virtual Camino is described as a “pandemic pilgrimage”, where you can walk a few kilometres anywhere and record the distance travelled on your Camino journey map on your phone, computer or tablet. The “French Way” has been chosen as the virtual route, the same as Pastor Albert’s 2013 journey. The starting point is St.-Jean-Pied-de-Port in France, 774 km from Santiago de Compostela.

There are 27 members and friends walking in the St. John’s group, ranging in age from seven to 87 years—clearly a multi-generational event. The group even has a three-generation family participating. Everyone travels at their own pace. Walking is not the only way to progress along the virtual Camino. There are a multitude of activities that can be converted to a distance travelled—skiing, yoga, skating, yard work, dancing, etc. Given that we started our jour-



neys in January, snowshoeing is a popular method of racking up kilometres. One couple who usually spend their winters in Florida were given snowshoes by their children who knew travel restrictions would keep their parents home this winter.

Progress along the route map is recorded and followed on the walker’s smartphone, tablet or computer. The locations of the other members of the St. John’s group can be seen, along with what activities they are doing.





Pictures are posted and comments and messages of support can be sent from and received by members of the group. The StreetView function on the map can be used to see the surroundings in Spain through which you are virtually traveling. While some may think that the virtual nature of this Camino is a poor substitute for the real thing, several of our participants have remarked that there would be no way for them to participate in the real thing and they feel happy to participate virtually. No air fares or hotel bills were seen as a big advantage.



A veteran Camino walker has remarked how much the virtual Camino resembles the actual pilgrimage in Spain. There is a sharing of each participant's walk for the day, similar to conversations at rest stops, dinner or accommodations at the day's end and talk of sore muscles and blisters.

And, while the physical exercise is important in this time of Covid-19, there is much value garnered in emotional and spiritual aspects of group participation. There is a wonderful feeling of belonging, being part of a community and a part of something bigger than oneself. There is nothing like a quiet walk on a path through the woods to lift your spirits. Indeed, it has been said by some of our older walkers that they are truly thankful to be able to enjoy the outdoors at their age and enjoy the beauty of God's creation. More importantly, it also provides a time for personal reflection without distraction. Many are using their walk to pray for those on the St. John's prayer list. One young mother uses her walks to think of ways to do more for others; to bring joy or peace. She makes a plan to reach out to a friend or family member and thinks about ways to encourage her children to show their love for others. As Christians, any opportunity that encourages us to spend more time communing with God and opening ourselves to hear his direction so we can better do his will in the world is time well spent.

When participants complete the walk, they will receive a



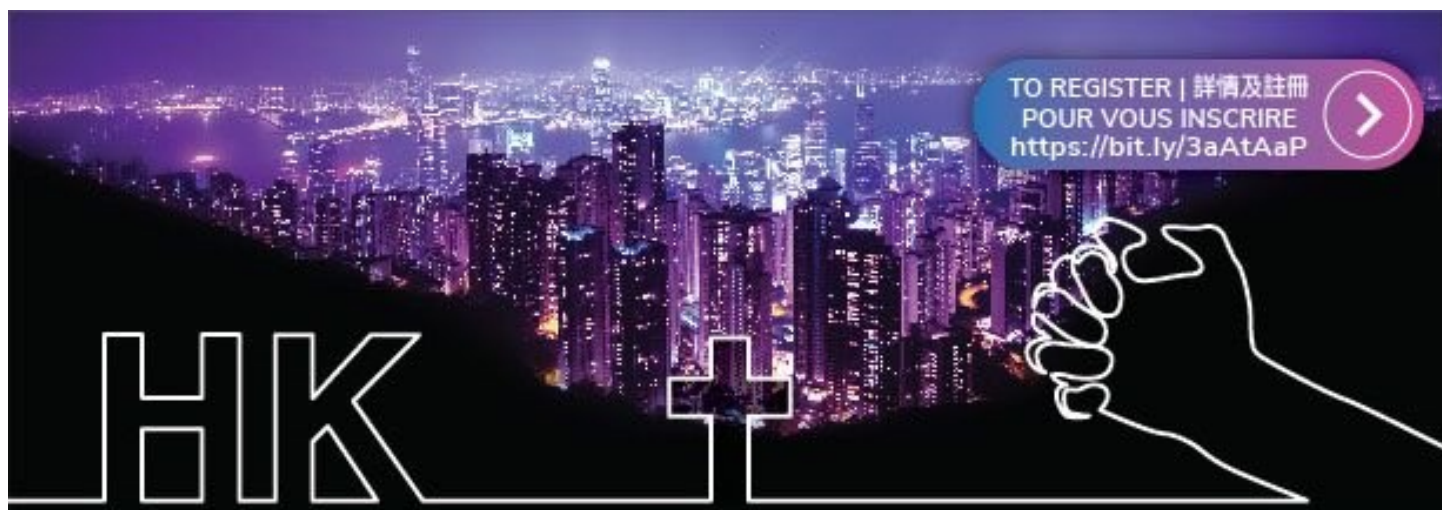
certificate and medal acknowledging their achievement. In addition, Pastor Albert hopes to celebrate this achievement with a "medalling ceremony" later in the year. As of March 1, 2021, St. John's is about six weeks in on the Virtual Camino and Pastor Albert has received inquiries from other local churches who are considering starting Camino events for their own congregations. One young couple in our group has decided to repeat the walk along the real route in Spain when the pandemic is over.

For more information on the Virtual Camino go to:

<https://www.theconqueror.events/camino/>.

Submitted by Bruce Gillies, member of St. John's Lutheran Church, Petawawa.





Save the Date! A Cross-Canada Day of Prayer for Hong Kong

March 21, 2021 | 7-8 PM EST

We invite churches to participate in this day of prayer to pray in their Sunday services for peace and justice for Hong Kong and to join others across Canada in an evening prayer gathering conducted virtually.

Réservez la date!

Une journée de prière pancanadienne pour Hong Kong

le 21 mars 2021, de 19 h à 20 h (HNE)

Nous invitons les églises à participer à cette journée de prière dans le cadre de leurs célébrations dominicales, et à prier pour la paix et la justice à Hong Kong en s'unissant à d'autres fidèles de partout au Canada lors d'une soirée de prière animée virtuellement.

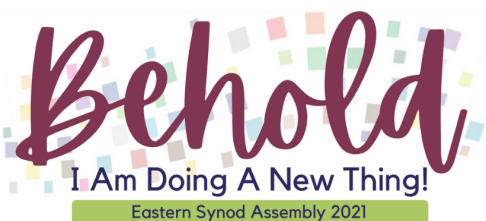
相約這一天！橫跨加國的「香港祈禱日」

2021 年 3 月 21 日 晚上 7-8 點（加東時間）

我們誠邀各教會參與這次的祈禱日：在主日崇拜中祈求香港能得享和平及公義，以致教會、社會及民眾能得以更新；並參加晚上舉行的跨加拿大祈禱會。



Initiated by the Mustard Seeds Hong Kong Concern Group and organized in collaboration with The Canadian Council of Churches. This event will be accessible in English, French, Cantonese, and Mandarin. | Lancé par le collectif « Mustard Seeds Hong Kong » et organisé en collaboration avec le Conseil canadien des Églises, cet événement sera accessible en anglais, en français, en cantonnais et en mandarin. 祈禱會由芥菜種香港關注組發起，並與 The Canadian Council of Churches 合作舉辦。是次活動將以英語、法語、粵語及普通話進行。



June 25-26, 2021

(Virtual Meeting Format)

Visit the Assembly Page

**Assembly Registration Deadline March 31st
Register Today!**

[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.](#)

Ministry Opportunities

Redeemer, North Bay, ON

All Saints, Guelph, ON

Trinity, Walkerton, 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

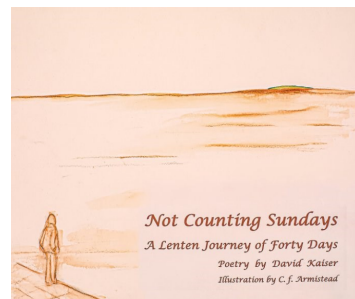
**The Eastern Synod's 2020 Financial Story
Generosity in Unprecedented Times!**

In light of the many challenges that the Synod, its 181 congregations and individual members faced over the past year, when the Synod's financial books closed at the end of 2020, the bottom line was unexpected, but most welcome! For further details click on this link: [The Synod's 2020 Financial Story.](#)

**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](#) 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, or DavidKaiser@hotmail.com but shipping time might be longer.

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) or Sophos Slessor (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!



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 or 1-888-308-9461



LUTHER

MARCH 2021

Lund appointed new principal-dean

Skilled educator, first woman to serve as top administrator

Heather Main, chair of the Board of Governors of Martin Luther University College (Luther), is pleased to announce that Rev. Dr. Kristine Lund, the school's interim principal-dean, has accepted the full-time role of principal-dean. Her five-year term begins May 1, 2021. Lund becomes the first woman to serve in the top-administrator's role at Luther, which is the founding institution of Wilfrid Laurier University.

She is a skilled and experienced educator who has a vision for moving Luther's mission forward at this critical time in the institution's history, Main said. "I am delighted that Kristine has agreed to continue leading Luther through these challenging times," said Main. "The board is extremely grateful to have the benefits of her experience and her dedication. "Also, Kristine is a caring person,"



Main added. "She has a huge heart for students."

Lund said she deeply appreciates the Board's confidence and will continue to lean into the huge challenge that the pandemic has posed for post-secondary education. "I look forward to working with faculty, staff and all of the friends of Luther to continue serving the broader community now and into the future," Lund said.

David Schnarr, the board's vice-chair and leader of the principal-dean search committee, said Lund was an outstanding candidate. She joined Luther's faculty in 2005; took on the role of assistant principal in 2008; and in 2013, founded The Delton Glebe Counselling Centre. Read the full [announcement](#) on our website.

Synod gifts home to Luther

The Eastern Synod has gifted the Synod-owned, century old home in Waterloo, Ont., to Luther.

"We are deeply grateful to the Synod for this generous gift," said Rev. Dr. Kristine Lund, the school's interim principal-dean. "The home, which houses [The Delton Glebe Counselling Centre](#), is an instrumental part of our work to provide mental health services to students and the broader Waterloo Region community."

The centre, named after the late Rev. Dr. Delton Glebe, an esteemed former principal-dean, delivered more than 9,700 client sessions in 2020.

Rev. Michael Pryse, bishop of the Eastern Synod, said that he and the Synod Council are delighted to help strengthen Luther's community service through this gift. "The Glebe Centre, in addition to providing important training for students in Luther's Spiritual Care and Psychotherapy programmes, has also become a vital service ministry to the community," said Bishop Pryse. To read the full announcement, please [click here](#).

Sing Fires of Justice

Join us for a special springtime edition of Sing Fires of Justice still@home on Sunday, March 21 at 7 p.m. Music, insight and discussion featuring Father Toby Collins and Nadine Green presenting "Lot 42: A Better Tent City."

Also with Kay Brown, Janelle Lightbourne, Dawud Wharnsby, Gerard Yun, Sebastian Meadows-Helmer and more. No registration required. Zoom [link](#). Meeting ID: 957 2563 4618 Passcode: 777141

Indigenous Health

What has COVID-19 taught us about the determinants of health for First Nations, Inuit and Metis communities and how are we called to respond? Join us for this free virtual event Saturday, March 27 from 10-11:45 a.m. Keynote by Dr. Angela Mashford-Pringle, assistant professor and associate director for the Waakebiness-Bryce Institute for Indigenous Health, Dalla Lana School of Public Health at the University of Toronto. [Details here](#). Register at [bit.ly/HealthDeterminants](#)

Canada Lutheran

Our thanks to Canada Lutheran for its feature story on Black History Month including a photo of Janelle (Sharlene Lightbourne), one of our MDiv-MA students!



Vol. 4 Issue 3 *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](#)