

Eastern Synod Newsletter

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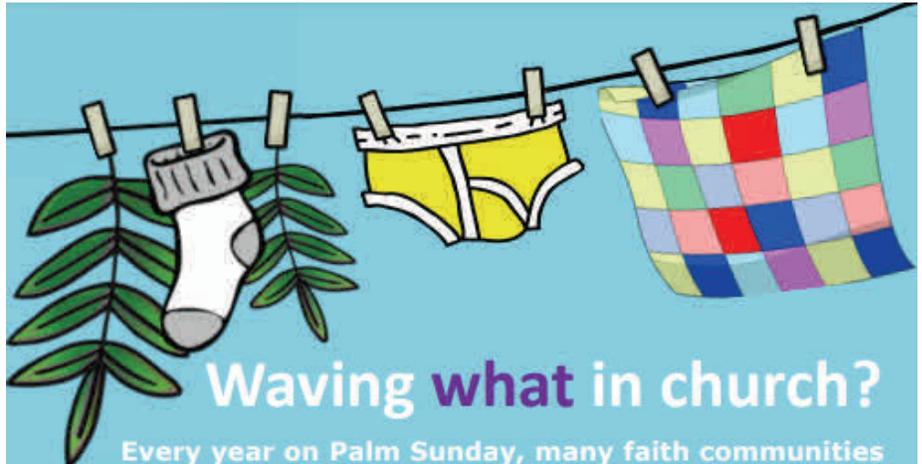
Eastern Synod Palm Sunday Worship

This year, the Eastern Synod will be partnering with St. Peter's, Kitchener to provide a Palm Sunday worship opportunity. This televised service will be available to those who may choose to participate on Sunday morning via the live broadcast, as well as to those who may wish to view the recording at a later date. Please note, that this worship opportunity will be in addition to local services (we are not asking you to cancel your local Palm Sunday services).

Leading the service will be Bishop Susan Johnson, Bishop Michael Pryse, Pastor Mark Ehlebracht, Bishop Sani Ibrahim Azar (Evangelical Lutheran Church In Jordan and the Holy Land), President Conrad Plummer (Evangelical Lutheran Church in Guyana), as well as rostered and lay participants from across our Synod.

In place of palm branches, we invite you to wave textile items which can then be donated to local agencies in your community. Wave socks...receiving blankets.....washcloths...bedsheets...towels...or even underwear! We encourage you to make arrangements for donations to a local agency in advance.

*You can PVR or tune in to this special, live, national CTV broadcast on Sunday, April 10, at 10AM ET (Bell Fibe: 201/1201 Bell Satellite: 584, 1505; Rogers Cable: 12/109/518; Shaw Direct: 67/369 *Local listings across the province and country may vary). Subscribers can also access the CTV-SWO live feed online. The service will be posted by April 12 to stpeterskw.ca and easternsynod.org.*



Waving what in church?

Every year on Palm Sunday, many faith communities will gather palm branches and wave them in remembrance of Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem. For **Palm Sunday 2022**, in place of palm branches, as congregations **In Mission for Others**, we invite you to reach out, identify, and use some much needed textiles identified by your neighbours instead. Perhaps an outreach organization needs **socks**, or a place for new mothers needs **receiving blankets** and **washcloths**, or an emergency shelter needs **bedsheets** or **towels** or even (NEW) **underwear**. The choice is yours as we connect Holy Week themes of love, hardship, and loss, recognizing that many of our neighbours are struggling with meeting basic needs and that we, as people of faith, **cannot remain idle**. This year we will endeavor to use Palm Sunday to move towards hope and action and sincerely hope that you will join in this **Synod-wide** initiative. You are invited to purchase as many of these items as you can and bring them along to your place of worship on **April 10**, and maybe take a picture or video in advance that we can include in a **National CTV broadcast**, when our procession will also be a walk with various groups and organizations as they respond with compassion to those who need help.



What a journey we have been on!

St James Lutheran Church, Renfrew ON is a small congregation in the Upper Ottawa Valley. We have been watching our membership decline and our 60-year-old building age and need expensive repairs. Just the cost of heat and electricity was straining our budget.

How do we keep going?

Years ago, we realized we could not afford full-time ministry and were very fortunate to work out a Shared Ministry agreement with our sister congregation, St John's Lutheran Church in Arnprior. We are now blessed to be able to share their minister, Pastor Norine Gullons.

This arrangement helped us survive years longer than we would have otherwise, but still we seemed to be running a deficit budget each year. This made it extremely difficult to keep our commitment to be a congregation "In Mission for Others".

We still have a strong core group of members in our congregation and after many meetings, we realized that we all want to continue worshiping together in Renfrew, so closing and going elsewhere wasn't a viable solution

– we wanted to stay together. So now what?

We sold our building and property in June 2021 and have arranged to rent the small chapel at Trinity-St Andrew's United Church in Renfrew. This is one of the first joint agreements with a United Church congregation in Eastern Synod.

Trinity-St Andrew's has been very welcoming. We have been able to bring our altar, our lectern, baptismal font, holy hardware and so many other things from our old church, that the chapel looks like "home". One of our members even used parts from our pulpit to create a beautiful wooden, wall mounted hanger for our eternal flame.

We now have "money in the bank" and can focus on being a



congregation "In Mission for Others".

We have donated our cross and bell tower to Camp Lutherlyn. Our two cornerstones are going to Rosebank Cemetery, where the majority of our departed family are at rest. And we are now working on an Outreach ministry plan.

To date we have sent donations to CLWR, ELCIC Praise Appeal, ELCIC Synod Benevolence, Renfrew Hospice, The Dementia Society and we always have supported the Renfrew Food Bank.

We have moved before.....

St James Lutheran Church was originally organized in 1889 in the small community of Northcote, 10 miles outside of Renfrew. The interesting thing is that St James and St John's Lutheran Church, Arnprior were united together as one parish back at that time. How things come around!

Occasional services were held in the town of Renfrew in the late 1940s. When St John's Church in Arnprior became capable of becoming a stand-alone parish, the Canada Synod conducted a survey & decided in 1956 that there was a need for a Lutheran congregation in Renfrew.

In December of that same year, St James, Northcote voted to disband and become the nucleus of the Lutheran congregation in Renfrew. Weekly services were first held at the Standard Church in Renfrew and later at the Christian Reformed Church.

On January 12, 1958, St James Evangelical Lutheran Church was organized. On October 16, 1960, the ground was broken for our church building. The dedication service was May 14, 1961.

And here we are, 60 years later, taking another big step, like those faithful members did in Northcote back in the 1950s.

Together with God's help, we will continue to both worship together and help others in need.

Submitted by Marilyn Kropp

The End of the Radio Golden Hour ministry at St. Matthews

As of January 1st, 2022, the 91-year Radio Golden Hour ministry at St. Matthews, Kitchener has regrettably come to a close. This difficult decision was made in large part due to Kitchener FaithFM 93.7 (our most recent radio partner) no longer being able to offer same-day broadcasts, and thus our contract with them was not renewed. We regret this decision, esp. as it impacts upon those local listeners who are not online.

It's been a good run, from our beginnings on February 23rd, 1930 up until the final broadcast on Dec. 25th, 2021. In our final year, we were, to our knowledge, the third-longest continuous radio broadcast in the world (after the Grand Ole Opry and the Mormon Tabernacle). A big thank-you to various congregations throughout the Synod who have promoted and sponsored our Radio ministry over the decades. We're so glad you have been part of the extension of our worship and ministry here in the heart of downtown Kitchener.

While our radio broadcast has ended, our 9.30 Golden Hour audio livestream via our website continues.

More information on the history of the Golden Hour can be found here: <https://stmattskw.com/worship/golden-hour-90th-anniversary/>

Submitted by Rev Sebastian Meadows-Helmer



Because of the recent aggression of Russia into Ukraine, Trinity Ayton held a prayer service on Wednesday, March 2, prior to the Ash Wednesday service at 7:00 p.m. This come and go service was open for the community to come to pray and light candles.

Pastor Heather Spencer- Stoltz began with prayer followed by music and a slide presentation about the Ukraine. A table was displayed with bread, sunflower seeds, flags and tea lights for lighting. The service ended with quiet contemplation and more prayers from pastor Heather.

Participants were invited to donate to

CLWR to assist with the great need of the refugees. Thanks to Sharon Machina who operated the new, recently installed technology, during the prayer service. People were invited to take an artificial sunflower home as a reminder of this service and its meaning.

The service can be viewed on Prayers for Ukraine - Trinity Ayton on Youtube for people unable to attend.

Submitted by MaryLou Peffer

Love messages from Trinity, Ayton

Messages of love (valentines) in all shapes and sizes were created by children and adults alike from our church and local community. Covid restrictions demanded thinking outside the box to involve children and adults in a way to create the messages and more importantly to send or deliver these messages to our older adults, sick and shut-ins who found themselves isolated because of the pandemic restrictions. We also delivered to the local fire department, places of business and a residential home to say thank you.

A call was made on a local Facebook site called *What's Up Ayton* for help informing our community of this project. Brown paper bags were filled with coloured paper, sparkly heart-shaped items, pipe cleaners and the like with instructions to create valentines for their families and give back one valentine for the church to send on to others. When these valentines were given back, the paper bags were decorated and included a stapled greeting from Trinity Ayton sending a message of love. Interested people contacted the number and made their request for the number of bags needed. Over thirty were submitted for distribution.

The Sunday School is also sponsoring a food drive for our local food bank and, on this site, have invited the community to participate along with our congregation. Pastor Heather has a large plastic tub on her front porch where people can deposit their contributions during this annual Lenten project.

During this lockdown, social media was very useful to connect with people and allowed us to send these messages of love. This method of communication has been successful in keeping our church community and local community, before and during Covid, able to support each other when needed.

Submitted by MaryLou Pfeffer



Ministry Opportunities

St. Peter's, Cambridge, ON

St. John's, Montreal, QC

First Lutheran/

St. Peter's, Anglican, Elliot Lake, ON

Lutheran & Anglican Ministries
of the Bruce, Wiarton, ON

For more information please contact
Rev Douglas Reble, Assistant to the
Bishop. dreble@elcic.ca

Our prayers are with Rev Jim Goos and his family as they mourn the death of his wife Rosemarie.



*The Lord is near to the brokenhearted,
and saves the crushed in spirit. Psalm 34:18*

Financial Stability - Even During a Pandemic!

The Synod's operating fund ended the 2021 fiscal year with a surplus of approximately \$188,000, matching, almost exactly, the budgeted amount. In light of all the challenges and uncertainties that the seemingly never-ending pandemic created, this was a most satisfying result! This surplus was attributable to several causes, the least of which was the continuing generosity that congregations demonstrated towards the Synod by continuing to remit their benevolence and other offerings throughout the year – this, in spite of financial and other challenges that many of these congregations faced and are continuing to face.

We are extremely grateful for the benevolence and other offerings that we receive from congregations, individuals and other sources. On behalf of those who carry out synodical ministries, and on behalf of those congregations, individuals and other organizations benefiting from these ministries, please accept my sincere thanks for your generous financial gifts over the past year. I, along with my synodical partners, trust that your congregation will continue to seriously consider its financial commitments to the Synod for 2022, enabling these ministries to continue into the future. Your partnership, along with your gifts, are vitally important and very much appreciated!

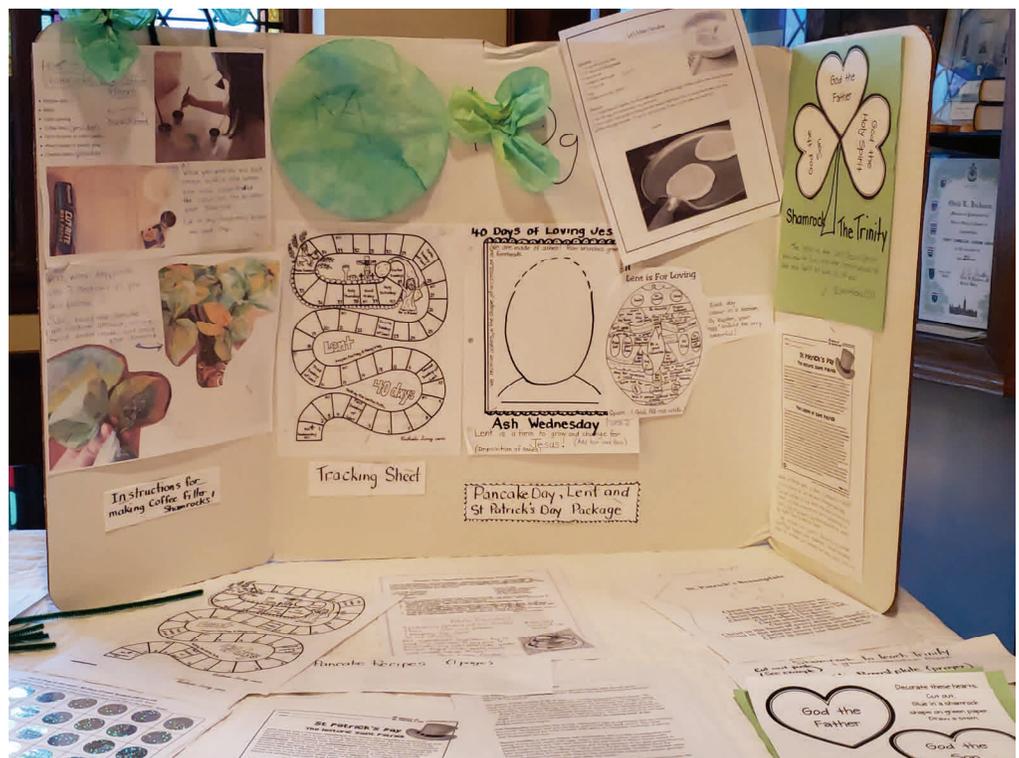
For the full story on the Synod's 2021 financial picture, including how your benevolence offerings and other sources of revenue funded a variety of synodical ministries, click on the following link:

[The Eastern Synod's 2021 Financial Story.](#)

Keith Myra, Treasurer

Lenten Package Available at Trinity

Again, material was collected for a Lenten package for children and adults which is available at church in March. The display board contains many of the activities: 3 pancake recipes for Shrove Tuesday, information about Lent and Ash Wednesday, a pictorial record of our Lenten journey, information about St. Patrick and how he used the shamrock to teach about the Trinity and a few craft ideas. Another package is being planned for Easter and Earth Day and possibly Mother's and Father's Day. Our Sunday School will not be in operation for a few months so, as a result, these activities will help retain interest until, at such time, we can resume classes. Our church must be a church of action! *Submitted by MaryLou Pfeffer*



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