

The Eastern Synod Lutheran

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Volume 48



When Jesus Saw Their Faith

When he (Jesus) returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. So many gathered around that there was no longer room for them, not even in front of the door; and he was speaking the word to them. Then some people came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. And when they could not bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him; and after having dug through it, they let down the mat on which the paralytic lay. (Mark. 2: 1–12)

There are four stretcher-bearers. They have come to visit Jesus with great expectations. But when they arrive, they are disappointed to find

out that the house is full and the door and maybe even windows are jammed with people peering in from the outside. What would your reaction be?

Would you say: "Oh no! We came too late. There is no way to get in, let's give up and go back home."

Or would you want to stand aside and wait for a miracle to happen; that the Lord will help you while you are standing quietly.

What would you say to your pal who suggests that you could climb up to the roof, dig a hole through it, and let your paralyzed friend down?

Would you say: "It won't work. As soon as someone realizes what we are doing, they'll call the cops and we'll all end up in jail!"

Would you cry: What about liability! We can't do that. Too big a risk!

Or maybe you would hear yourself saying: We've never done it in this way. We've always used a door and only a door to enter a house." You may even add some history of past failures saying: "We tried it once and it didn't work."

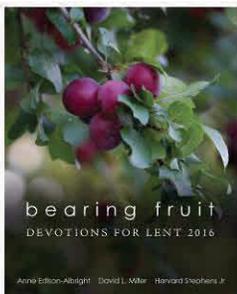
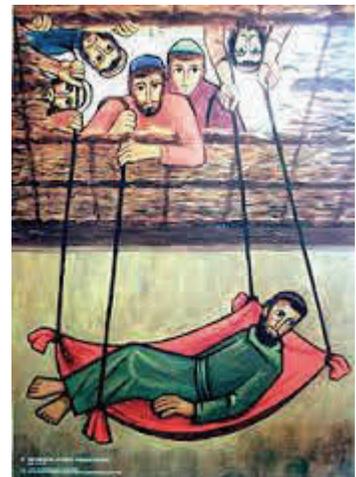
Or maybe you are the one whose crazy idea it was to lift your friend up to the roof, open up the ceiling and

let him down at the very feet of Jesus.

May this story from long ago inspire us today. Let it show us what it takes to turn losers into winners. These men had determination, courage, and a workable plan. Furthermore, they were devoted to cooperation. They worked as a team. Each one of them had to be fully committed to the mission; to hold tightly to one corner of the mat. If any one of them had let loose and walked away the mission wouldn't have been accomplished.

This determination and courage - according to Apostle Mark - is what Jesus calls faith. (Mark 2:5)

Rev. Riitta Hepomaki
Assistant to the Bishop



Bearing Fruit

Devotions for Lent 2016

This beautiful full-colour devotional take you through Lent with reading from Colossians. Each reading is accompanied by a photo, quote, reflection, and prayer.

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ISBN 9781506400624, \$6.50



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NEW

Why should you attend the Eastern Synod Assembly 2016?

To Worship....



To Work.....



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 Canadian Lutheran
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**YOUR WORLD
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www.clwr.org

All are welcome to the upcoming
Consecration Service being held for
Scott Knarr .

St. Paul's Anglican Church
1187 Sour Springs Road/ 2nd Line
Six Nations of the Grand River
(Ohsweken)

Saturday, February 27, 2016
2:00 pm



Hammond Organ Needs a New Home

Could your congregation make use of a Hammond M3 organ? It's a spinet model in good condition, circa 1958 and comes complete with bench and songbooks. The instrument may need some maintenance and minor repairs, but is available – free – to a good home in the Eastern Synod. The new owner will have to make arrangements to transport it from its current location in Toronto.

Contact msadam@sympatico.ca.

Shepherd Program aids 54 Families by Mary Golem

Putting a smile on someone else's face is, for many people, the best part about Christmas gift giving.

Volunteers involved in the Shepherd Program, based out of St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Chesley, know all about those kind of smiles.

For the past 14 years, volunteers at St. Mark's - and for the past five years, with help received from Salvation Army and other community volunteers - have ensured families in need have the toys and treats needed to make Christmas morning merry and bright.

"What we're doing is giving hope to people who for different reasons may have otherwise lost hope," Major Sterling Snelgrove of the Hanover Salvation Army said.

In its first year, church members distributed ten baskets. This year, 54 families were helped in one way or another, including 58 children.

"It is very special just being able to see the looks on the faces of the individuals as they shop, and leave with food, homemade cookies and something special for people in their lives," said Dianne Kind, chair of church council.

Long-time volunteer Yvonne Witzke agrees. "It's the joy of giving and knowing that what we're doing is really appreciated by those who need it." Families in need register through the Salvation Army and on a selected day are welcomed into the church's basement - which really looks more like a toy store - where they privately choose one large and one small, or two medium sized toys, for each of their children, which Snelgrove points out "gives them back some dignity." But that's not all. They also go home with homemade cookies, pajamas, toiletries, a family game, books, toques and mittens, a gift card for groceries and even a turkey for Christmas dinner.

"With donations received, and with the proceeds from our Harvest Dinner in the fall, we purchase items throughout the year and stockpile them," Witzke said, adding St. Mark's partnership with the Salvation Army and other community groups and

businesses in recent years "has enabled us to reach even more people." Some ladies at Geneva Presbyterian Church made 20 dozen cookies to give away, and a class at the Chesley District Community School made 20 dozen gingerbread cookies, under the direction of Amy Trelford.

One family, instead of exchanging Christmas gifts among themselves, buys toys for the Shepherd Program. Other people knit mittens and make financial donations, allowing organizers to buy the items to give to families, such as pajamas for every member of the family.

As well, this year, donations to the Shepherd Program have been received from Bluewater District School Board, the Chesley Fire Department, the Angel Tree at the Northern Credit Union, Elgin Abbey, Chesley District Community School, Helen Froom and family, Dorothy Glasser, Graham and Virginia Smith and the offering received at the Christmas Cantata of the Elmwood-Brant Lutheran Church and the Live Nativity at St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Sullivan.

One hundred per cent of all donations received go directly to the program and are distributed locally, the church's pastor Ed Wagner explained. "We are now able to reach out further and help to send children

to camp, assist with back-to-school supplies, as well as other areas where we see a need," adding he believes those who volunteer their time for the program "are really blessed for doing so. We are trying to see what the community needs are and then match those needs. We're really proud of our mission and outreach effort."

Donations to the Shepherd Program can be made any time throughout the year and can be sent to St. Mark's Lutheran Church 181 First Avenue South, Chesley Ontario NOG 1L0.

This story appeared originally in the Owen Sound Sun Times.

Used with permission.

Volunteers who make the Shepherd Program in Chesley possible include (front row-left to right) Shirley Doerr, Mae Smith and Dianne King; middle row - Yvonne Witzke, Shirley Clarke, Anne Klages, Judy Ruhl, Cathy Lund and Bonnie Sacks and in back, Major Sterling Snelgrove of the Salvation Army in Hanover and Pastor Ed Wagner of St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Chesley. This year, 54 families were helped.



Two Are Better Than One

submitted by Rev. Thomas Mertz

The Book of Ecclesiastes in the Bible is full of common sense wisdom. Here is one in praise of working as a team: "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. If they fall, one will lift up the other." (Ecclesiastes 4:9) Couples sometimes chose this brief passage as a reading for their wedding. I am sure to remind each other of the promise which lies in working hand in hand: "Each of us will be better and stronger because we are a team." It makes sense.

As memberships decline and resources become limited, churches too are beginning to look for common sense ways to support each other in their ministry. St. John's and Faith Lutheran Church have not entered into a marriage. We are still two independent congregations, with two building, two councils and each church being responsible for their own financial affairs, but it made sense for both congregations to start working together.

On Sunday, November 22 the people of St. John's and Faith voted to enter into a shared ministry at the start of the new year, 2016. This is an exciting perspective for both churches and opens doors for meaningful partnership. Our youths already attend confirmation class together and join in youth events. Let's see, where God will lead us next. We are looking forward to see more joined projects evolve over time, which bring us together to work more effectively as God's people in Hamilton. We invite you to become part of the shared ministry. Make it your own. It makes sense or as Ecclesiastes puts it: It is better and has a good reward.

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church in Sault Ste. Marie ON is looking to purchase an organ that has served your church, yet no longer required.

Please respond to
zionlutheran@bellnet.ca

Thank you,
Brenda Cochrane
Church Council Chairperson

Report of the Treasurer

We will be closing the 2015 books as of Friday, January 22.

Final reports will then be prepared and should be available next month.

Watch for the link in the February issue of TESL.

Christianity and the 'Discovery' of Canada

The Doctrine of Discovery - repudiation as an act of faith

Panelists

Kenneth Deer, Kenneth Deer,
Secretary, Mohawk Nation at
Kahnawake (Concordia
honorary doctorate 2015)
Kanien'kehá:ka



Raymond Aldred, head of the
Indigenous Studies Program,
Vancouver School of Theology, Cree.



Allen Jorgenson, Professor of
Theology and Assistant Dean,
Waterloo Lutheran Seminary,
Kitchener-Waterloo, Settler



Moderator: David Schulze,
Partner, Dionne Schulze law firm

Saturday Feb 27, 2016, 7 pm

St Johns Estonian-Finnish Church

4345 av Marciel Montreal (NDG) metro: Villa Maria



Sponsored by:

- The Montreal Lutheran Council
- The Eastern Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada
- The Department of Theological Studies, Concordia University
- St. Michael's Finnish Lutheran Church
- St. John's Estonian Lutheran Church
- Loyola College for Diversity and Sustainability, Concordia
- Waterloo Lutheran Seminary, Wilfred Laurier University





Rev. Fred Ludolph and Hilla Lahtinen, a recent grad, distribute communion during our Open Door service on Epiphany. All are welcome to our weekly Open Door services in Keffer Chapel, Wednesdays at 5 p.m.

Martin Luther University: A new name for changing times

The cry of the Reformation was **semper reformanda**: The church must constantly be re-formed by the Word of God speaking to the needs of every age. So Waterloo Lutheran Seminary is striving to be faithfully re-formed by the challenges and opportunities of our own day.

During the past year, WLS has been working on a number of initiatives to improve the quality and reach of our work. But the project that seems to pique people's curiosity the most is our plans to change the school's name to Martin Luther University. Almost everyone who hears about our plan asks, "Why?"

In short, the word "seminary" no longer adequately reflects what we have become – and are becoming as a school. Here's why: (full text: <http://ow.ly/X02Mt>) In an age when weekly church attendance continues to drop, people's interest in pursuing ordained ministry has also dropped. But interest in our longstanding pastoral counselling program (Spiritual

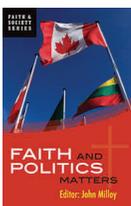
Care and Psychotherapy) grows. The majority of our students are preparing to serve as counsellors or chaplains. Seminary students represent 31 different faith traditions.

The seminary runs The Delton Glebe Counselling Centre, and practises reconciliation with Aboriginal Peoples through worship, music and academic events. We host the thirdspace_ alternative worshipping community, an incubator for innovative worship, that's supported by the Eastern Synod.

The seminary has been known by a number of names during its nearly 105-year history.

We steadfastly remain a seminary forming pastors for Lutheran congregations. But the breadth of our work shows we're also far more than that. We hope to get the name change approved by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities by 2017, the 500th commemoration of the Reformation.

[*Faith and Politics Matters*](#), a compilation of essays and papers edited by John Milloy, co-director of the seminary's Centre for Public Ethics, was published by Novalis in November. The volume includes a chapter by Milloy and a chapter by David Pfrimmer, also co-director of the Centre for Public ethics and former principal-dean who is currently on a well-deserved leave.



Waterloo Lutheran Seminary

Events

[Abrahamic Faiths Forum](#)

Wednesday, Feb. 3 from 7-9 p.m.
Theme: Eve and Creation. Featuring speakers from the Jewish, Christian and Muslim traditions.

Check Wilfrid Laurier University's [calendar](#) of events. If you would like to be on our events email list, contact dkrugerallen@wlu.ca

Inshallah

[Inshallah](#), the seminary based global-song choir of more than 120 voices, welcomes new members at the beginning of each term. All welcome. No auditions required. The last day to join this term is Tuesday, Jan. 19, from 5 - 6:20 p.m.

Friends of the seminary

Welcome to new members of the seminary's Board of Governors: Thomas Bishop, Heather Main and Kevin Tuer. Also, congratulations to Rev. Steve Hoffard (St. Mark's in Kingston) who was elected the board's vice chair. Thanks to Rev. Thomas Mertz (St. John's, Hamilton) for your service as vice-chair.

We welcome Marge Watters Knebel — a seminary alumna, former board chair and overall long-time friend of the seminary — as business and philanthropic advisor at [The Delton Glebe Counselling Centre](#).

Between issues of TESL, keep up to date on seminary news through our [Facebook page](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#) accounts and the [seminary's web page](#).

Contact us

Events: Dorinda Kruger Allen, dkrugerallen@wlu.ca
Seminary stories: Mirko Petricevic, mpetricevic@wlu.ca