



The Eastern Synod Lutheran

www.easternsynod.org



Aug 20, 2018
Volume 76



Gratitude to Mother Earth

Debbie Lou Ludolph
Eastern Synod Worship Ministries
Director

This summer our three-year old granddaughter Sonja was having a sleepover in the bunkie with me and she said, once we settled into bed, “We have to say our prayers!” And I said, “Yes, of course, we do!” Then she insisted, “We have to get up!” So, she stood in front of me and showed me how to first bend low to the earth and say, “We give thanks to Mother Earth” and after that proceeded to give thanks to God for all that is part of her world. Then she said, “Let’s do it together now, Mama.” So, we did.

At assembly this year, the gap in our relationship with the earth surfaced in several motions, including the motion that asks us “to pray for the Earth, our common home.”¹ I saw this motion as an invitation to look again at the liturgy and see where and how the prayers not only express our

relationship with creation, but also re-orient us to interdependence and deep connectedness.

Here are some of the questions my reflection raised: Do we call out our praise with local resonance, as in this Eucharistic prayer: “with lodge pole pine and grizzly bear; with the Grand River and the grand prairies”?² Do we open to the wonder of God’s good creation by using creation-inspired metaphors in our prayers, like Living Water, Sun of Justice, or Radiant Dawn and thereby enrich our language for God?³ Do our weekly petitions cry out the needs of the earth and the creatures in concrete here-and-now ways, so that we speak our shared story before God and the awareness of “our common home” deepens?

What about our songs and our preaching – are they about human dominance over creation or about interdependence? I know that the regular singing of this Inshallah song that we sang together at Assembly has shaped me to pray differently: *The Earth does not belong to us, but we belong to Earth; this radiant sphere of green and blue, our home and place of birth. The web of life connects us all, each strand its vital role, for what affects a single one, affects the living whole.*⁴

Often we pass motions and then

forget about them! The adopted Assembly motions – to use less plastics and paper, to make clean energy initiatives, to advocate for phasing out fossil fuel subsidies, and to continue to reduce our carbon footprint – remind me that prayer and action need to support each other. A practice of praying for/with the Earth⁵ shapes worldview, opening us up to our interdependence, and challenging us to live in ways that support the systemic changes that we have asked our Synod and National Church to pursue.

How will you respond to this motion to pray for our common home? For starters, along with critically reflecting on the prayers and songs in worship, and using less paper and plastic, I will take my lead from Sonja and end my day bending low in gratitude to Mother Earth. Maybe you want to join us!

1. [Motion 1.3](#)
2. [Allen Jorgenson, from Opening Worship, Assembly 2018.](#)
3. Joyce Rupp, *Fragments of Your Ancient Name* (Notre Dame, IN: Sorin Books, 2011).
4. Eric Lindquist, *Sing the Circle Wide* (Waterloo, ON: Kanata Centre, 2016).
5. “with”: consider Isaiah 55 where trees clap their hands or Romans 8 where creation groans.

A Successful and Honest Completion to a Meaningful Piece of Our History

by Rev Joel Crouse, Director of Property Transformation

The property of Camp Edgewood is a land steeped with memory. It echoes with the voices of seven decades of beloved ministry – camp-outs, late-night cabin confessions, closing candlelight services.

So when it came to making the difficult but necessary decision to sell Edgewood, the guiding question above all else was this: how do we honour all those years of Lutherans cherishing this land?

For starters, accepting the decision to sell was not easy. But after nine years of dealing with issues concerning land title, personnel, drinking and waste water, the future of Edgewood was clear. Despite the best efforts of numerous management boards, synod involvement, countless volunteers hours and donor contributions the options for continuing ministry on this property had come to an end for us.

And so, on a Sunday in early October last year, five months after the members of the Edgewood Camp and Conference Centre passed a resolution to cease operations and dissolve the corporation, a leave-taking ceremony took place. It resonated, like the land itself, with songs, laughter and ministry. In his sermon at the event, Bishop Michael Pryse spoke of how, despite the faithful



efforts of so many people, the combination of time, circumstances and a changing context had led Camp Edgewood to this “gracious conclusion.” But as he told the people gathered, “There should be no shame in this. We are in the dying and rising business and we should expect to experience such necessary transitions in our institutional life together.”

And in that transformational moment, came the time for brainstorming. First, the management board reviewed its financial and legal obligations to its debtors and donors of unspent designated funds. In November, Nathan Mantey, a Lutheran in the area, led the charge at a Synod Council meeting to talk about the synod’s willingness to donate a portion of

the land to a conservation authority. The voices were heard and the synod responded positively.

In the coming weeks, 17 different parties pronounced their interest in purchasing the property. While some would have paid more than the appraised value of the property, the Synod Council felt strongly that respecting the views to safeguard the property should be the first priority.

Careful and caring conversations began with the Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries to help bring some of the interested Eden Mills parties together. These were people who wanted to be able to preserve the land as a natural setting and minimize the development of the property.

Over the course of nine months, negotiations took place. The Bishop and Synod leadership blessed every step along the way, and they were vetted by our lawyer. With the assistance of the Director of Property Transformation, we paid no real estate fees for this transaction, saving the church \$40,000 in the sale. Our only cost for the sale was the price of legal advice for a complicated property with encumbrances and title issues.

In the end, the land was sold for \$800,000, somewhat below the appraised value. The net proceeds from the sale after legal fees were \$776,678.00. This is a significant sum that will allow a new opportunity to emerge from Camp Edgewood. Those discussions are already underway. Our Youth and Young Adult





conserved. Indeed, the final decision also respects the Reformation Goal - 'Creation Is Not For Sale' – in a serious and intentional way, giving due honour to a meaningful piece of our Lutheran history.

As we say goodbye to over 70 years of ministry, it is only fitting to quote the last words shared by our Camp Edgewood Management Board Chair, Rev Fred Ludolph, at Edgewood's final annual meeting: "Let us thank God for every summer of camp ministry, for every term of school and every weekend retreat that happened at Edgewood. Let us thank God for every camper, student, or adult who played, sought the grace of God, and grew in faith and maturity at Edgewood."

Let us thank God for the young people and adults who volunteered or worked at Edgewood, offering and honing their skills and passion for ministry through Edgewood's programs. Let us thank God for the beauty of Edgewood - its waters, trees, meadows and creatures, the oxygen its forests provide and the carbon they hold, and every gift of creation that is sheltered there.

And having given thanks, let us rededicate ourselves to discipleship and ministry to which God will surely call us."

Ministry Committee have made a recommendation to Synod Council concerning the proceeds of the sale. A second suggestion was made by a group of delegates at Assembly 2018. Both will be considered at the next Synod Council meeting.

But this sale has accomplished more than dollar figures. By focusing on protecting the land, we have made it possible for all Canadians to still enjoy its beauty. The people of Eden Mills plan to donate a large portion of the land to a conservation

authority as required in the sale agreement. As Edgewood's closest neighbors, we expect the residents group to be invested custodians of the property's next phase.

This sale did not come easy for anyone. But it is an example of responsible stewardship – cost-effective, environmentally friendly, and collaborative. This process balanced bottom dollar against our forward-thinking, big-picture mission. It was truthful to the will of the people who signed the petition brought forward to Synod Council, wanting to ensure that the land was



Grand River Area Sunday Picnic

June 3, 2018, St. Luke's, Kitchener

The day started out with brilliant sunshine, birds chirping and airplanes swooping by as we were entertained by the melodious rhythms of "The Rock" band; but, as we headed towards mid-day dark clouds threatened rain however God was with us and allowed the Service to go on without any precipitation!

We don't have an accurate account of how many actually attended but believe it was well over the 400 mark with at least four times more children than last year... the bouncy castle might have had something to do with that... it was truly successful.

It was a "spiritual" event for all of us attending we believe... being in one with nature, sitting in our comfortable lawn chairs and sporting our favourite hat while participating in the liturgy, the songs and the prayers. Participating in our wonderful unrehearsed, mass choir and enjoying the efforts of many of the Pastors and lay people leading us, listening to Bishop Michael Pryse's inspiring sermon and communing together, outdoors, with our Grand River brothers and sisters was an amazing experience.

After the service those in attendance enjoyed a satisfying lunch of grilled sausages and all the trimmings and for dessert a freshly made apple fritter...yum! We think most of us ended up meeting a person or two from one of "the other" congregations and already are looking forward to meeting up with them again be it at the picnic or another event, in the Grand River Ministry Area.

For any event it is the people that make it successful...we say thank you to our Grand River Ministry Area Leadership, our picnic committee, Bishop Pryse, all the Pastors and The Rock Band, all those generous people and business's who donated to us and to all the volunteers... all those folks from every congregation who came out, participated and contributed in some way to making the day a super success! Thank you!

Pastor Stephen Weber,
Dean, Grand River Area Ministry



St. John's Lutheran Arnprior Hikes for Hospice



"I was really pleased to walk with my whole family in the big fundraising event for Renfrew Hospice in early May." recounts Zach Zimmerling. "Even my new baby sister got to participate! She wore one of our St. John's T-shirts, on top of mom's belly, where she was still curled up for a little longer."

Zach and fourteen other members and friends of St. John's walked 3 km or ran 5km in the May 6 'Hike for Hospice' in Renfrew. This small hospice, the first rural residential hospice in the province of Ontario, provides palliative care, free of charge, to all of Ren-

frew County and the nearby area. The Hike for Hospice raises over 100 thousand dollars annually, and St. John's small, growing, active group was pleased that their individual and joint efforts raised close to \$800 in this community event.

Submitted by Enid Blackwell

The Blanket Exercise

On Thursday, May 24th, the Learning Committee of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church hosted the Blanket Exercise, an interactive educational experience to share the historical and cultural relationship between the indigenous and non-indigenous people in Canada. About 46 people attended from St. Paul's, the Bridgewater Day Care staff and the community. The evening began with a soup supper. Following the meal we went outside where Ellen Hunt led the Smudging with help from Peggy Wentzell.

We then returned to the Hall where everyone took part in the Blanket exercise. Participants played the roles related to specific events where indigenous people died from disease or were taken from their homes and put in residential schools; as well as, being forced from their land and relocated on Reservations to list a few.

The last activity of the evening was the Talking Stick where a special stick is passed around the circle from person to person. When you had the stick you were the only one allowed to speak about whatever you wanted to, including how you were feeling.

We all felt a deep connection to each other at the end of the evening. I highly recommend the exercise to all people in our country.

Submitted by Virginia Oickle, on behalf of the Learning Committee of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Bridgewater.



Above: The Blanket Exercise in Bridgewater, NS

Our thoughts and prayers are with the family of the late Rev Arnold Conrad as they mourn the loss of his wife, Ilse and with the family of Rev Arthur Conrad who passed away August 8, 2018.

Vacancies

Kitchener, St. Paul's (Bridgeport)
Richmond Hill, St. Paul's
Toronto, Redeemer
Toronto, St. Ansgar

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

Transitions

Rev Bill McIntyre to Grace, Dartmouth

Rev Peter Lisinski to Thornhill, Thornhill

Rev Thomas Arth to Trinity, Sudbury

Ordinand Jason Ashby to Faith, Port Elgin

Rev Jim Koellner retired

Interim Appointments

Rev Eric Schultz to Zion, Maple

To find out about upcoming events around the synod check the [synod calendar](#) on our website <http://www.easternsynod.org/calendar>.



In the latest issue of Canada Lutheran, Eastern Synod stories are on pages 28-30.

Read the Report from Guyana at

<http://www.easternsynod.org/faith-in-action/global>

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LUTHER

August 2018



Open house

We are delighted to be among the architectural gems featured in this year's [Doors Open Waterloo Region](#) event. Join us any time from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. for tours throughout the renewed building. Terry Montgomery, the architect who worked on this much-needed modernization project, plans to present an illustrated talk beginning at 1:30 p.m.

Glebe breakfast

The [Delton Glebe Counselling Centre](#)'s annual breakfast is scheduled for Thursday, Oct. 18. This year's speaker will be David Maginley, author of *Beyond Surviving: Cancer and Your Spiritual Journey*, speaking on the wisdom of grief. Click [here](#) for details.

Vol. 1 Issue 1 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

A new name, a new look

Implementing the school's name-change to Martin Luther University College required us to rethink our visual identity. After extensive research and consultation with many of our community members, Mark Harris, principal-dean, revealed the logo on June 23, 2018, to delegates at the Eastern Synod Assembly. The Ringing Rose icon is the heart of the school's visual identity.



Martin
LUTHER
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

Designed by the creative firm Studio Locale, it combines elements of our school's bell tower and the five-petal Luther Rose.

The symbol honours our Lutheran traditions and rings hope as our school, students

and alumni continue to make positive contributions in God's world. Our students have used the words "fresh" and "modern" to describe the new colour scheme.

Report of the Treasurer

(To July 31st, 2018)

Now that we've completed seven months of 2018, there is both positive and negative news to report from a financial perspective. It is encouraging to see that congregational benevolence offerings are showing a modest increase compared to the previous year. However, offerings to Canadian Lutheran World Relief and the ELCIC Praise Appeal continue to run significantly behind. For details refer to [Report of the Treasurer](#) or go to <http://www.easternsynod.org/> and click the orange Treasurers/Financial Info button.

You may also be interested in browsing through the following two presentations that Treasurer Keith Myra made to delegates at Assembly 2018 that took place in Toronto in late June: [Treasurer's Presentation](#) (a financial review of the past biennium), and the 2018 – 2021 [Budget Presentation](#) (these Synod Council recommendations were ultimately adopted by assembly delegates).

Time for an Update

If someone looked up your congregation's information on



our website what would they find? If they wanted to know what time you worship or whether or not you have childcare would they find the correct answer? Please take the time to check it out.

Go to easternsynod.org scroll to the bottom of the homepage and click on Find a Church you might be surprised at what you find.

To update your profile just send the correct information to Liz at ezehr@elcic.ca.

Thanks for your help with this!

We are Reformation

submitted by Bill Brubacher
Witness Team Chairperson

On June 17, 2018, the members of The Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Reformation in Kitchener, Ontario received the outcome of our final project commemorating the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation.

The book is a history of our congregation's sixty-two years. There are historical documents and related articles, pictures and stories. The stories are from our people. They are stories about how they came to Reformation, about what happened during their time here and about people they knew, some of whom are no longer with us.

Gladys Cormier spearheaded this project, prodding as many people as she could to write their stories. She received technical assistance from Susan Gross. A great big thank you to both of you, and to the many others who helped behind the scenes.

In the end, it has become a life memory for our congregation, as we move toward a new venture with two other congregations as Trillium Lutheran Church.



On behalf of the



Eastern Synod
of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

*Bishop Michael J. Pryse
cordially invites you to attend the
Synod Ordination Service of*

**Jason Dwayne Ashby
Leena Birgitta Jensen**

to be held at

**Mount Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church
29 Westmount Road S, Waterloo, Ontario**

**on Friday, September 28, 2018
at 7:00 p.m.**

*Clergy are asked to vest
(Liturgical colour is red)*

Vesting Clergy please RSVP by September 21, 2018
to
Cathy Caron
<ccaron@elcic.ca> or (519) 743-1461

Reception to Follow