



The Eastern Synod Lutheran

July 29, 2015

Volume 43



Meet Rev. Katherine Altenburg Public Policy and Service Ministries

Matthew 25: 31-45 has always been, for me, a text that speaks to my heart. It is very much “other” centered. It reminds me that if I am to look for Christ, I will find Christ in the face and circumstances of another who is not me, and will find Christ most especially in another who is in need. “Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?” Not only do we find Christ, we also, I believe, will find our truest self, in service and solidarity with another. Since February 2015, I have been privileged to take on the role as Director of Public Policy and Service Ministries for the Eastern Synod. I am also currently serving the good people and congregation of St. Matthews in Kitchener, along with my colleague Pastor David Malina.

Issues around social justice and compassionate living have always been compelling and moving for me and I have, most of my adult life, been involved one way or another in various capacities. This current position has given me the opportunity to learn more and to make wider connections throughout our synod with our area deans and with our ecumenical partners.

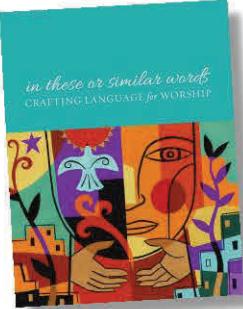
In June I was fortunate to be able to participate in some of the events around the celebrations and final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC). I heard indigenous women leaders from Canada and Central America speak to the history of colonization, its on-going realities, and ways that we can deconstruct that system of colonization for the good of all. The report of the TRC with its 94 recommendations for right relationship between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples continues to be an important matter in the life of our synod, national church, and country.

The climate has become a critical concern. World leaders will be attending the COP 21 meetings in Paris, France, this December. The push is on for legally binding and universal agreements to keep global warming below 2 degrees Celsius. Recognizing the urgency of global warming and its impact on people, our church, represented by our National Bishop, Susan Johnson, participated with the Mennonite Church Canada, the Canadian Council of

Churches, and Citizens for Public Justice in the “Justice Tour 2015 on Climate Change and Poverty.” We gathered in cities across Canada to hear, learn, pray and work for sustaining God’s good creation. Lately, I was amazed to be a part of the March for Jobs, Justice and the Climate in Toronto where my children and I joined a crowd of 10,000 strong raising concern over the narrow vision of economic austerity and its impact on people and the planet. There is so much good work happening in our communities and congregations. Prophetic voices are calling attention to poverty, promoting a living wage, urging regions to tackle affordable housing and homelessness, helping refugees come to Canada, and calling on Canadian mining companies to abide by ethical standards and practices in resource extraction. So much work is being done by you to learn, support, pray for, and help those in need.

I am truly honoured to be a part of this work with you and I would love to hear your stories; the places to which you have been called to offer compassionate responses to those in need. You can email me at kmaltenburg@gmail.com. And if you are looking for information on current issues, you can visit my blog on the Eastern Synod website, follow my twitter feed Katherine Altenburg@kmaltenburg, or like and visit the Eastern Synod’s Facebook page.

In peace and solidarity,
Pastor Katherine Altenburg



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National Convention Highlights

The ELCIC 15th Biennial National Convention wrapped up on Sunday July 12th in Edmonton. Here are a few of the highlights.

-National Bishop of the ELCIC Rev. Susan Johnson was re-elected for a third four year term;
to view all of the election results go to:
<http://www.elcic.ca/In-Convention/2015-Edmonton/ElectionResults.cfm>

-Motion that the convention adopts the ELCIC Reformation Challenge for 2015-2017. In honour of the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation we will challenge ourselves, as individuals, congregations, specialized ministries, and synods to:

- 500 new refugee sponsorships;
- 500 new bursaries for students in schools of the ELCJHL;
- 500,00 trees to be planted in Canada and around the world;
- \$500,000. to be raised for The Lutheran World Federation Endowment Fund.

Motion Carried

-TRC Commissioner, Dr. Marie Wilson asked that Lutherans continue to work towards reconciliation.

Watch Commissioner Wilson's presentation to delegates here:

<http://www.elcic.ca/In-Convention/2015-Edmonton/Friday.cfm>

For more pictures and highlights from the convention go to:

<http://www.elcic.ca/In-Convention/2015-Edmonton/default.cfm>



Rev. Dr. Rebecca Larson

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Bishops' Company Goes Global

Rev. Dr. Rebecca Larson will bring a global perspective as the guest speaker at the Bishops' Company annual dinner at Kypreos Restaurant in Kitchener on Saturday, October 17. Few people in North America know more about the church's role on the world stage than Larson. Following graduation from seminary in Waterloo and service as a parish pastor in Edmonton, she spent much of her career in Europe working for international church organizations. During her time with the Lutheran World Federation, Rebecca represented that body on the coordinating committee of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, which was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1997.

The Bishops' Company for Mission was founded in 2003 to enhance and expand the mission of the Eastern Synod. Members make an annual contribution to the Bishops' Company discretionary fund, which provides money for programs that are not included in the operating budget. In previous years these initiatives have included Back to Church Sunday, In Mission for Others and specialized leadership training for pastors.

This year's event will be a rare opportunity to hear about our church's engagement with the issues affecting people across the globe.

For more information on becoming a member of the Bishops' Company, or to attend the dinner as a guest, contact Liz Zehr at ezehr@elcic.ca or 1-877-373-5242. Everyone is welcome.

Canadian Lutheran World Relief wants your input

We live in a world where time is scarce, information is overflowing and finances are precious. To provide useful information at efficient cost Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR) is conducting a brief online survey about how it shares its news and information. Your input will help the organization more clearly focus its messages and delivery systems as good stewards of all its resources. Here's the survey link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CLWRCComm>. It should only take a few minutes for you to make a big difference!



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www.clwr.org

Call for Photographs

The Programme Committee for Worship (PCW) is asking for Photographs of Crosses from across Canada. These images would appear on the bulletin covers for 2015-2016. If you have an interesting cross in your church, your community, your back yard, we would like you to share it with the rest of the church.

Please send your cross photo in a jpeg that is at least 3 MB to Dave Solheim at ELCICcross@gmail.com. Please indicate where the photo was taken and who took it. We may not use all images that are submitted.

Camp Edgewood Fundraising

Update from St. James

New Dundee!!!!

Submitted by Rev. Bonnie Schelter-Brown

A few months ago, Kelly, a member of St. James and I had a brief conversation while shaking hands at the back of church about Edgewood and the financial burdens that Edgewood was facing and Kelly's first reaction was "We should do a fundraiser". Those five words lifted my spirit exponentially and within an hour a plan was already being hatched. Kelly called me and asked me how much Edgewood needed and I said right now - \$10,000.00 would solve a lot of problems to which she responded – okay – that's our goal.

After I choked down my initial response of doubt at such a lofty goal, we were off and running.

Kelly formed a small team to help out and of course the youth of our church were always ready to lend a hand to help Edgewood, their sacred place.

Three events were held and Faithlife Financial was a part of all three events. They provided matching grants for two of them and they were present during our third event as we are also currently raising funds to support our accessibility efforts. Thanks so much to Faithlife Financial for being a part of this effort.

The youth and the fundraising team hosted an Easter breakfast for the church community. Our second event happened during the big May 24th New Dundee Celebration Weekend where we hosted a BBQ to feed the many visitors to our town.

Our third and biggest event happened on Father's Day when Kelly invited four churches to her backyard as well as many community people for worship service followed by a silent auction and some fun and games. It was a brilliant success. There was such a good feeling, a real celebration.

The Women's Institute of New Dundee, one of the largest in Ontario, donated tons of food including Annie Cober's homemade butter tarts and many other tasty treats made with love and caring hands. Individual people donated food – one woman donated 15 pies (do you know how much work that is?)

People kept bringing in silent auction items and we ended up with over 70 items including artwork by Jan Cressman-Weiss and Robert Taylor.

The bidding came to a frenzy when we live auctioned off a large arbor bench made by a church member Brad Habel. It was a beautiful piece of outdoor artwork and it was our big ticket item raising \$700.00.

People were not afraid to give. One person came and said – "I brought my money and my cheque book and I am an Edgewood supporter so let's go". In one day we raised over \$5,500.00.

The whole community really supported

this event. You made a real difference to Edgewood and the many kids who use Edgewood.

Right now we are just shy of the \$10,000.00 goal, however, the money is still coming in and I forgot to mention that Kelly came up with an idea for an easy, 100% profit way for other churches to do a small fundraiser. We photocopied small flags that would allow people in congregations to make a \$2.00 or \$5.00 donation and put their name on a flag to support Edgewood that could be placed prominently around churches for people to see. We handed out enough of those flags to raise another \$2,000.00. If you are interested in using this fundraiser in your congregation, just email me at pastorbonnie@rogers.com and I can email a soft copy of the flags.

Kelly and her team are responsible for MORE THAN \$10,000.00 OF DONATIONS TO EDGEWOOD!!!

They have reached half of the target for the \$22,000.00 needed by August 1st for Edgewood. What a great job – I couldn't be more honored to call you family – sisters and brothers in Christ working together to further the gospel.

Photo featuring Kelly and Lukas





Glass Crosses

by Liz Zehr

Gayle Thompson has found a way to use her love of glass to benefit her congregation.

Gayle has been making stained glass for 35 years and for the last decade has also been kiln fusing glass. A few years ago she started making crosses for church fund raising. The crosses were popular at the church so this year, with Bishop Pryse's permission, she took some to the Bishop's Retreat. The response was very positive, with several people asking how they could get some for their church as confirmation gifts as well as for themselves.

Sales of the crosses have netted \$750 this spring alone. Gayle has also twice donated pieces for licensed ticket raffles with the proceeds on both exceeding \$5000. The profits went to St. Mark's, Midland Fund Raising Budget to be used for outreach, education or other operating expenses.

The crosses begin with selected pieces cut from sheets of stained glass and dichroic glass, specially formulated for moulding and fusing in glass kilns. The end result is a colourful, unique piece that can even be made to order in a colour theme of your own choosing.

To learn more about the crosses or to place an order you can contact Gayle via email at gaylesglass@xplornet.ca

60th Anniversary Celebration

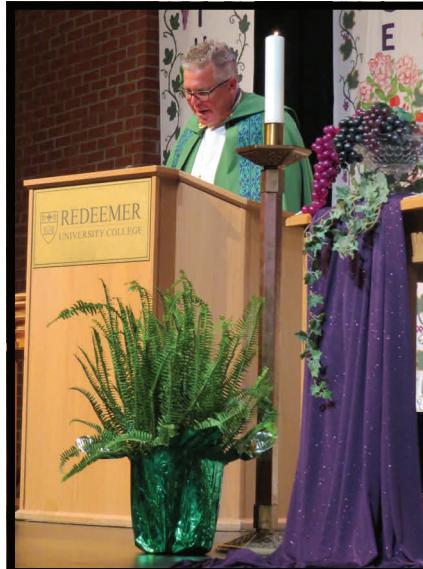
submitted by Wilma Seville

Faith, Grace and Transfiguration Lutheran churches joined in to celebrate the 60th anniversary of St. John's in Hamilton, Ontario. In order to accommodate so many people the service was held at Redeemer College University in Ancaster.

It was a very beautiful and meaningful service with the pastors of the four churches along with Bishop Michael Pryse participating. Four holy communion stations had to be set up in order to accommodate the large congregation.

A nice way to celebrate the 60th anniversary of St. John's.

Photo by Kathy Fruck



Vacancies

Mount Calvary, Ottawa
Peace Latvian, Ottawa
First Lutheran, Toronto
Agricola Finnish, Toronto
Trinity, Walkerton
Redeemer, London
St. Ansgar, London
St. Mark's, Midland
Grace, Eganville along with the parish of Augsburg/Bonnechere.

Bon Voyage Barry & Alice

submitted by Rev John Polacuk

On Sunday June 21, Pastor Barry Lang and his wife, Deaconess Alice Lang, along with their son Hans, were welcomed home by St. Matthew's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hanover. After 58 years in ministry, the Langs are permanently moving to Australia at the end of August. Barry took this chance to address the congregation, thanking the people of St. Matthew's for all their support over the years. A painting of the Lang's home in Hanover, by congregational member Al Morrow, was presented to them as a remembrance of their time in beautiful southern Grey County. This will be their last visit to Canada. We wish them God's love and God's peace.

Pictured below are Barry, Alice and Rev. John Polacuk.



Congratulations to Rev Carey Meadows-Helmer and her husband Rev Sebastian Meadows-Helmer on the birth of their son, James.



Northern Area Spring Event

submitted by Rev. Glenda Morrissette

St. Timothy's Copper Cliff was the place to be when young members of a church choir from St. Stephen's in Bloomingdale, Minnesota put on a wonderful performance of Joseph and the Technicolored Dreamcoat. On June 12, this talented group of kids from grade 7 through 12 put on a show that delighted the audience.

The talented youngsters were served supper at St. Timothy's. The group- all 76 of them- then moved to Trinity, Sudbury where they bedded down for the night. There wasn't a space in the church that didn't have a person sleeping on the floor. The ladies of Trinity fed them breakfast and then they were off to Toronto (or so they thought) a surprise detour to Niagara Falls delighted everyone.

The business of the weekend continued on Saturday when about 30 people sat in a circle to discuss what positive actions were happening in the church and what things people would like to see happen. Discussion around what ministry direction the Area would like to take led to a list of four goals that include: starting a newsletter for better communication; and holding lunches to learn about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Lutheran support on that issue. Decisions can then be made about how best to raise funds to help our aboriginal neighbours.

All in all, it was a great event and we look forward to meeting again in the fall for the Healthy Congregations workshop being given September 19 by Pastor Riitta Hepomaki and Jeff Pym.

Pictured top right is the cast of Joseph.



Report of the Treasurer

(To June 30th, 2015)

Offerings to regular benevolence continue to run slightly ahead of those received for the corresponding period in 2014. CLWR offerings have increased compared to those received in the previous year, attributable primarily to donations of ~\$36,000 that have been designated for the Nepal Earthquake Relief Appeal. Although offerings to the ELCIC Praise Appeal are tracking well below 2014 levels, this is not overly surprising since the suggested appeal Sunday for 2015 falls in November (as opposed to May for 2014).

More details about 2015 receipts, as well as the synod's 2014 audited financial statements are posted in the [Treasurer/Financial Information](#) page on the synod web site.



Our thoughts and prayers are with Rev. Claudine Carlson and her family as they mourn the death of her brother, and also with Rev. David Whynot and his family as they too, mourn the loss of his brother.

Matthew 5:4 “Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.”

Deconsecration Service

by Liz Zehr

On June 7, 2015 the congregation of St. Michael's Lutheran in Montreal gathered at their church home for the last time. Pastor Matthew Anderson had prepared a beautiful liturgy of deconsecration. He also wrote an Alleluia hymn to the tune of Finlandia. His sermon can be read online at <http://unsettledwords.com/2015/> Pastor Riitta Hepomaki, Assistant to the Bishop officiated at the deconsecration.

The congregation of St. Michael's has sold their church home and will now move to St. John Estonian, Montreal.

Pictured below is Rev. Matthew Anderson at St. Michael's .





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