



THE EASTERN SYNOD

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Reality check – Does our welcome reflect God's love?

By Pastor Mark Van House

Eastern Synod Director of Witness & Evangelism

¹ "Do not judge, so that you may not be judged. ² For with the judgment you make you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get. ³ Why do you see the speck in your neighbor's eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye? ¹² "In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets."

Matt 7:1-3 & 12 (NRSV)

These are instructive Biblical passages for Lent. Jesus reminds us that we are all prone to judging others. Our human self divulges our frailties. Often we believe we know best and are in a good position to judge others. Scripture has different news for us. The only one fit to judge is God. How we treat one another is a reflection of how faithfully we heed the words of Jesus in the "golden rule." This is important to keep in perspective – not only within the life of our congregations but with those who visit us and worship with us.

In the Fargo-Moorhead, Minnesota, area there are 45,000 young adults (late 20s to late 30s), about a quarter of the population, who are not

connected to the numerous Lutheran or other mainline churches [The Christian Century, Feb. 8, 2012]. These adults, many of them Lutheran, are searching for but not finding churches where they won't be judged by the congregation.

This can also be said of Canadians, both young and old.

We ought to be mindful of how we feel when people are judgmental toward us. When we step through the doors of the church, would we want people to judge us based on how we dress, how we speak, our economic status, political views, ethnicity, etc.?

In worship, in all of the programs and activities in our parish, are we building up the body of Christ? Is this a congregation where people will feel welcomed and included?

Consider what it takes a person, single or married, to come through the doors of our congregations. What will they meet with once inside? Will they be valued the first time they visit, and will this goodwill continue through the years, whether they become members or remain friends with our family of faith? You



can appreciate the daunting task before us of building up the body of Christ with each generation.

On Easter Sunday, many of our churches will be filled to capacity or beyond. Will we be welcoming and inviting, with both members and visitors, as we share the Good News? It is our hope that everyone who gathers to worship with us this Easter will find Lutherans who live and love, and both

speak and act, according to the golden rule.

Pastor Mark Van House is the new Eastern Synod Director of Ministry for Witness & Evangelism. Beginning in 1987, he served as a parish pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), four years in northeastern Montana and then 13 years in Colorado. He has been pastor of Peace, Pickering, Ont., since 2005. For six years he served

as board member and chairperson of Lutheran Campus Ministry (Rocky Mountain Synod) and as a "Healthy Congregations" facilitator. He currently serves on GSI (ELCIC Pension Board), the "Seeing with Fresh Eyes" Task Force and is a Leadership Development Coach.

Volunteers make the Assembly go round

Planning is already well underway for the 2012 Eastern Synod Assembly taking place this summer at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ont. Space is rented, the agenda is being finalized, the banquet menu is being selected and congregations around the synod are choosing their delegates. But as every

Assembly Manager will tell you, one of the most important tasks is finding the hundreds of volunteers that will make the assembly work. Volunteers are needed to drive, host and greet. More are needed to count ballots, act as stewards and serve at the hospitality desk.

Congregational Volunteer Co-ordinators needed

The Local Arrangements Committee is also looking for congregational Volunteer Co-ordinators to receive the names of the volunteers and share Assembly updates as information becomes available. Please speak to your pastor for more information, or

contact Carolin Heinze at cpheinze@auracom.com.

Do you have three hours to spare?

Volunteer Co-ordinator Carolin Heinze, a member of the Local Arrangements Committee, estimates that she will need to fill an astounding 230 shifts of volunteers. Each

shift is approximately three hours. The majority of these shifts are needed to assist on the Assembly floor. If you have an interest in how our church operates, acting as a ballot counter or steward would be a good fit for you. If you love to meet new people, why not consider a shift at the hospitality desk or acting as a host or

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Letters to the Editor

January 30, 2012

Dear Editor,

Former members and friends of St. Mark's, Middle LaHave, Nova Scotia, which closed in 2005 may be interested to know that the Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia (www.htns.ca) is presenting Jim Lindner with their Places of Worship Award for his work in restoration of the building. This is a new award and Jim is the first recipient. The presentation will be at their Annual Dinner in May – Jim will be the guest speaker. See news link at www.stmark2005.com.

Roderick Corkum
Former member of St. Mark's, Middle LaHave, N.S.
Timberlea, NS

February 27, 2012

Dear Editor,

I wish to respond to your article "Readership - taking the pulse" which was printed in the Winter 2012 issue. Firstly, yes folks, this is yet another article from K-W.

Your challenge for every issue is to strike a balance for a diverse readership. It is my understanding that you work with what is submitted – you can't broaden *The Eastern Synod Lutheran's* scope without the tools to do the job. Respondents asking for such variety – get writing! Also expressed were concerns that article information may not be current. Perhaps this again depends on the content submitted in conjunction with the issue's publication deadlines.

I am delighted by the interest for more of God's Word to be included beyond "The Bishop's Journal." In this particular issue, there are two worship resources advertised. A book report on either (or both) teaching about selected topics could be a starting point.

My disappointment focuses on respondents who prefer to see less content about the past. Our synod congregations are bound together by a shared history. Rose Bay, Nova Scotia, mission developers and former Synod Presidents like Drs. Maurer and Jacobi are prime examples. What a joy it can be to share life stories and historic events that many generations can discover in resources like *The Eastern Synod Lutheran*. There is much to learn from our forebears: beloved clergy, leaders, family and friends.

Think for a moment about anniversaries or funerals: the past takes centre stage – life shared and celebrated. As brothers and sisters in Christ, our destinies are in every tomorrow only to become our yesterdays.

Diane Bonfont
St. Mark's, Kitchener, Ont.



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invites our readers to send articles, news stories, letters and rebuttals to:

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The Bishop's Journal

Restructuring and renewal

For most of us, talk of restructuring is about as exciting as watching bread rise, paint dry or grass grow. You choose the idiom! Yet we all do it constantly and care a great deal about the outcome. Downsizing from a house to a condo, changing crops, refinancing a mortgage or making a career change. It's all a restructuring of some kind. And we do all those things as a means of seeking renewal. Sometimes it's by free choice and sometimes by forced choice. Regardless, the intent is the same. We are seeking to make something new ... to re-new. Likewise for the church. Circumstances change. Goals, resources and priorities change. If we are attentive, we restructure – and hopefully, wisely.

I've heard people say, "the Eastern Synod doesn't have to change under the present restructuring proposals." I would vigorously disagree! Although the geographic bounds of our synod will not change under the current proposals, the whole church –

our synod included – is being called into a new realization. We are being called to advance Christ's mission in a more intentional way at the regional, instead of at the synodical or specifically congregational, level. This realization will make us change both in structure and in essence.

Regardless of geography, this whole exercise is about helping us all to see our mission as transcending – going beyond – the maintenance of our present congregational and church-wide expressions.

Yesterday afternoon I spoke with a leader in the life of our church. The previous night he had met with a group of congregational leaders. This congregation's average worshipping attendance is about 25 people. This group and its ministry is almost solely sustained by hundreds of thousands of dollars of investments, and their capital is being depleted at a steady rate, year after year. His sense was that their primary mission plan was to continue as they were

currently doing until the funds were eventually depleted. That's as far as it went! Do you think that our Lord would be pleased?

I estimate that this same story is being played out in about one third of our synod's congregations. Under-utilized church buildings, dispirited pastors and over-utilized financial resources. Is this what



Jesus calls us to do? I think not! Restructuring is much needed: if not for the sake of the church, certainly, for the sake

of our souls and for the sake of the gospel!

I will forever recall the words of the remnant leaders of a congregation – now closed – whose lovely church once hosted hundreds of weekly worshippers. Over time, they were eventually reduced to fewer than a dozen. When asked what they would have done differently, in retrospect, this person said they "would have either closed or merged with another partnership much earlier." When asked why, they said, "So we would have had some of our legacy to pass on." Alas, an opportunity to advance our Lord's mission had been lost.

Hats off to the folks in Sudbury, Ont., London, Ont., Lunenburg County, N.S., and Mildmay/Neustadt, Ont., who are beginning to think of ministry in regional, rather than purely congregational terms. Times, circumstances, population patterns, economics, work habits, faith perspectives, etc., have changed a lot since the days when most of our congrega-



+ Michael

tions were established. It's time to restructure and renew – for the sake of the Gospel, without reference to our own particular and often selfish perspectives. The ELCIC and our Eastern Synod have shown great courage in challenging us to consider these questions from a church-wide perspective. Do we have the same measure of faith and courage to do likewise in our congregations?

Ford Canada provides charitable funds for church and community programs

Innovative test-drive event raises money for student ministry

In April 2010, Ford Motor Company of Canada launched two successful charitable initiatives called Drive One 4 UR School and Drive One 4 UR Community to help raise funds for schools and community organizations – including churches! The program has since raised more than \$1 million benefiting more than 375 worthy causes in Canada.

On February 9, Mark Pouteaux, Director of Student Ministries for Lutheran Church of Our Saviour in Calgary was presented with a \$1,440 cheque by Travis Eade, general manager of the local Ford dealership. The money was raised through their partnership in hosting a Ford Drive One 4 UR Community event in October.

Lutheran Church of Our

Saviour is using the funds to help send students on a mission trip to help build homes for families in need in Mexico.

Ford wants to spread the word about their program so that more churches, schools and community organizations can benefit.

The program supports local organizations by donating \$20 for each test-drive conducted at fundraising events using vehicles from the Ford and Lincoln line-up.

Organizations that have participated in Ford's "Drive One" program have incorporated elements like a BBQ, carwash, sports celebrities, bands, dance squads and more to add to the excitement and encourage community support.

In addition to mission trips,

funds raised have been used for housing projects, food for the hungry, mentorship for youth at risk and more.

Since the beginning of the program, more than 25,000 test-drives at approximately 160 events have generated more than \$1 million for organizations in Canada.

Mark Pouteaux (left) of Lutheran Church of Our Saviour, Calgary, is all smiles as he displays a \$1,440 cheque presented by Travis Eade of Ford Canada to support the church's student mission trip. Ford provided \$20 for each test drive taken at a youth ministry fundraiser.

Eastern Synod churches can take advantage of this program too.





Congregational Life

Journey 2012 – sharing hope

By Cathy Wilke

St. Luke's, Kitchener, Ont.

This past February, members of St. Luke's, Kitchener, Ont., joined "Journey 2012," a mission trip to the Dominican Republic (DR) organized by Dominican Journeys. This non-profit, volunteer organization focuses on humanitarian work and making a positive difference in the lives of people living on this Caribbean island. Team members pay their own costs and raise funds for the work we do while in the DR.

We spent the week working on construction in the village of Esperanza, visiting the public hospital, running a craft program for village women, helping with the children's feeding program in Ascension Village and distributing food packages to the people of Vaillant Pass. This is just a short summary of our itinerary.

Prior to leaving Canada, team members collect financial donations and goods that are distributed in the Dominican Republic. The ladies of St. Peter's, Kitchener, Ont., knit hats for the baby program in Ascension Village. Members of St. John's, Waterloo, Ont. have joined us as team members on the past few "journeys."



Members of St. Luke's, Kitchener, Ont., in front of the house the congregation sponsored in the Dominican Republic.

St. Luke's sponsored the cost of a semi-detached home which was donated to two men. After the house dedica-

tion, presided over by Pastor Jim Koellner and Pastor Dale Finch, we helped the men move into their new home.

Our involvement in these Journey trips has expanded our congregation's mission experience. All are welcome to

get involved to share hope and improve the lives of people living in poverty.



Stepping into the next century

By Maria Featherston

St. Luke's, Ridgeway, Ont.

It was with bittersweet emotions that St. Luke's, Ridgeway, Ont., recently celebrated 100 years of ministry. The surroundings were sparkling new; only the Good Shepherd painting, the Holy Spirit window, two chancel chairs, the eternal flame and our communion vessels reminded us of the physical past. These sentimental treasures survived a devastating fire in 2009. We were also blessed that the names of the early families were still among us: Smith, Claus, and Johnston.

Rev. Kevin Baglole led the celebration service and

Assistant to the Bishop Rev. Riitta Hepomaki provided the message. We celebrated the lives and service of our members aged 80 and older, including Gladys Johnston, our eldest member at 93; Robert Ruch, who was baptised at St. Luke's in 1923, our longest active member; and 11 others.

We celebrated the witness of the people of St. Luke's past and present – for as the children sing, "The church is the people."

Anniversary Chairperson, Harold Hampel, reminisced about former pastors, our many dinners, plays, church

groups, and our participation in the community. A life well lived and still being lived!

The New Year brought a new pastor to lead us into the next century. Karen Jenkins was installed on January 22 by the Dean of the Hamilton Niagara Conference, Rev. Colin Cameron, in a joyous service. Rev. Stephen Gross urged the congregation to discipleship, to try new paths and to move forward together with Pastor Karen in God's service. An excellent mission for the next 100 years!

Representing the multi-generations worshipping at St. Luke's, Gladys Johnston, 93, and Brielle Bosak, four years old, cut the anniversary cake.

Around the synod

St. John's, Waterloo launches 175th Anniversary Celebration Year

By Jim Armitage
St. John's, Waterloo, Ont.

St. John's, Waterloo, Ont., launched its 175th Anniversary celebrations February 19 with a special musical event titled playing at the three-manual Wicks organ along with a combined St. John's and Mount Zion, Waterloo, choir Christian Education House and Lay Academy by contributing to their Music School Project. Fundraisers are



"Hymns Through History: A Celebration of Christian Hymnody."

Visitors from local congregations and the community joined St. John's members to sing their way through hymns from 10th and 13th century plainsong and subsequent centuries, closing with a 20th century hymn titled, "Shine Like Stars" by Carl Schalk. Director of Music, Cedric Abday, accompanied by a brass quintet, closed with a magnificent postlude: "Lift High the Cross."

From beginning to end, narrator and host pastor, Rev. Dr. Donald Neville, provided an interesting and well researched background to this music that has evolved through the centuries. Cedric,

and an outstanding brass quintet led the congregation on this trip through history to give a most enjoyable, edifying and spiritual experience.

Many celebration events are planned for the coming year including a bus trip to see a Biblical play in Lancaster, Penn.; participation in Waterloo Region's annual "Doors Open 2012"; and a Seminary Sunday with Waterloo Lutheran Seminary (WLS) Principal-Dean Rev. Dr. David Pfrimmer. Ordained sons and daughters of the congregation will be invited and recognized.

An outreach project has been adopted as well. The congregation will assist the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Guyana to refurbish their

planned, including a performance by WLS's Inshallah Choir on April 14, a Community Barbecue on June 9 and a performance by the Gloryland Choir on November 18. Also, a professionally produced CD titled "Seasons of Worship" containing music by Cedric and the voice and bell choirs is now available and can be purchased at St. John's for \$20. Proceeds go to the Guyana project.

The year-long celebrations will climax with a Congregational Dinner on October 26 and a Celebration Service on October 28. Former pastors will be invited to the dinner as congregational guests and Bishop Michael Pryse will preach at the Reformation Day Service.

Congregational Classifieds

Help Wanted

St. Ansgar in North Toronto seeks a Vacation Bible School Co-ordinator for the Summer 2012 program. Job includes planning, organizing and executing a one-week, half-day program. Please send your resume to admin@stansgar.ca by April 7, 2012. See our website for the detailed job description: <http://stansgar.ca/>.

St Luke's Music Jams – Rhodes Corner, Lun. Co., N.S.

St Luke's Music Jams – Rhodes Corner, Lun. Co., N.S. Music Jams will be held in the Church Hall, 12713 Rhodes Corner, Hwy 3 on Saturday, April 21, May 19 and June 16 from 2 – 5 p.m. Come and sing, play an instrument or listen. Everyone welcome. Admission: \$2. For info, call 902-543-5871.

Good Shepherd, Brockville, Ont. – 50th Anniversary – April 28 & 29

The congregation is preparing to celebrate Good Shepherd's 50th Anniversary with a dinner on April 28 and a special church service on April 29. An invitation is extended to all who were part of the congregation in the past, and would like to join in the festivities. Please contact us by email: or send a note to Good Shepherd, 374 Stewart Blvd, Brockville ON K6V 4X1. We look forward to hearing from you.

St Peter's , Neustadt, Ont. – Special Performance

The Hill Top Male Chorus from Fergus will be singing spiritual Gospel songs at St. Peter's on Sunday, April 29, at 3 p.m. Free will offering. A FaithLife sponsored event. Proceeds to be divided between Operation Christmas Child and the Saugeen Valley Children's Safety Village. Everyone welcome. Contact Elaine Chalmers - 519-799-5914 or e-mail cosynook@wightman.ca.

St. John's, Waterloo, Ont. – 175th Anniversary in 2012

For this year of celebration, we invite you to attend services and special events which will be published in *The Eastern Synod Lutheran*. Anyone wishing to contribute to a Book of Memories should submit articles or photos by April. 15, 2012 to the following email address: anniv.175@stjohnslutheran.on.ca. You may also mail memories to St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, 22 Willow St., Waterloo, ON N2J 1V5 Contact: Uli Kuebler and the Anniversary Committee of St. John's.

Trinity Lutheran Women, Walkerton, Ont. – 100th Anniversary

We invite you to join us in celebration on Sunday, May 6 at 10:30 a.m. for worship. Turkey dinner and fellowship to follow at 12:30 p.m. Dinner tickets by advance sale only until April 22. Contact Eleanor McLeod at 519-881-0812 or email (emmcLeod@eastlink.ca).

First, Port Colborne, Ont. – 150th Anniversary

The congregation is holding events to celebrate our 150th Anniversary throughout 2012 and details can be found at www.firstlutheranpc.ca. We extend an invitation to our Open House of memories on Saturday, May 26 from 2 – 4 p.m. and to our Anniversary worship with Bishop Michael Pryse on Sunday, May 27 at 10:30 a.m. followed by a potluck lunch.

Email Congregational Classifieds to beverley@cunninghamcommunications.ca by May 1 for the Summer issue, delivered to homes in early June. Include your name and phone number.

A Valentine's challenge

By Pamela D. Harrington
Diaconal Minister/Deacon
St. David's Anglican Lutheran Church, Orillia, Ont.

St. David's Anglican Lutheran Church in Orillia, Ont., recently held our third Annual Valentine's Sunday – a day when we recall how we are challenged by God to love one another and care for creation.

Each year we highlight an injustice in our world. In the past two years we participated in the "Advent Conspiracy" to

raise money to purchase three wells through Canadian Lutheran World Relief. In our February 12 worship service, we examined the problem of clean water on the reserves in Northern Ontario. We had guest speakers and drummers and watched a clip from the movie "Third World Canada."

This year, we challenge all

Lutheran and Anglican Churches to join us in our project to help provide clean water for our aboriginal brothers and sisters in Canada. For more information on our "Clean Water Initiative," contact Bob Donald, project chair, at 705-325-7888.

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Volunteers make the Assembly go round... *continued from page 1*



The Local Arrangements Committee for the upcoming Synod Assembly is already hard at work. Pictured here following a meeting are (left to right): Front row: Rev. Jeffrey Smith, Rev. Susan Climo, Carolin Heinze, Verneda Prentice, Karen Gastmeier, Back row: Tim Wilke, Cathy Wilke, Kathryn Smith, Linda Zytner, Rev. Guenter Dahle, Missing from photo: Rev. James Koellner.

greeter. Carolin is also looking for some good strong folks who can help tear down and help pack up at the end of the Assembly.

Have you got three hours to spare? Contact your congregational Volunteer Co-ordinator

and learn how you can best put your talents to work. The Assembly takes place July 5 – 8, 2012.

Has your congregation selected your Lay Delegate?

Congregations are reminded to complete their Lay Delegate

form so that information, such as the Registration Form and Assembly Delegate bulletin updates, can be sent directly to them.

WLS Women's Auxiliary: Save the dates

By Brenda Stockman,
Waterloo Lutheran Seminary Women's Auxiliary President

Come help us celebrate! The 99th annual meeting of Waterloo Lutheran Seminary's Women's Auxiliary will be held on Sept. 26, 2012 and our 100th annual meeting will be held Sept. 25, 2013 – both at St. John's, Waterloo, Ont.

We are so excited! The Women's Auxiliary was formed just two years after the seminary was established in 1911 and has an outstanding tradition of helping WLS students.

With that in mind and aspiring to keep those

traditions alive and functioning, we have developed our slogan for our upcoming 100th anniversary:

"HELPING STUDENTS FOR 100 YEARS: WOMEN'S AUXILIARY OF WLS-1913-2013."

More information will be e-mailed and mailed to your church. You can also visit our website at www.seminary.wlu.ca. Click on "Our Community" and then "Women's Auxiliary." Or contact Brenda Stockman at 519-747-5840 or Ruth Jones at 519-662-4603.



No where to call home but at the churches

By Margaret-Anne Tannassee

Out of the Cold Program Co-ordinator at St. John's, Waterloo, Ont.

Homelessness is a fact and it does exist in Kitchener-Waterloo. In 1986, a homeless man named George died on the street in Toronto. The knowledge that someone could die of cold on a street brought people together to take action. Staff and students at St. Michael's High School made arrangements to provide for a location, food and volunteers to help the homeless. A small storefront on St. Clair Avenue was opened in January 1987. From this humble beginning, the Out Of the Cold program spread throughout Toronto and many other cities across Canada.

In February/March of 1999, Kitchener-Waterloo began a pilot project at First United Church, Waterloo. By the year 2000, there was a church open for homeless "guests" every night of the week.

Out of the Cold's mission is to provide shelter, food, warm clothing and basic necessities to the homeless during the winter months. Eight K-W churches are involved in this



outreach ministry from November to April. There are also two secondary sites that absorb any overflow of guests. Without this support from churches, our guests would have nowhere to go. People in need are offered friendship and support, and will not be judged. The program is based solely on donations – and without the generous support

of the community and other congregations, we would not be able to operate.

Who are our guests? They are men and women of all ages who suffer from mental illness, addictions, loneliness and sometimes just plain bad luck, or they are confronted with circumstances beyond their control and have ended up on the street. We also serve the

working poor.

St. John's, Waterloo, has been part of this important ministry for 13 years and we are the host church on Thursday nights all winter long. We have 100 volunteers who dedicate their time and energy to covering seven different shifts, starting at 2:30 p.m. to 7 a.m. the next morning. The shifts include

meal preparation, set-up, serving, hospitality, overnight supervision and clean-up.

This season, the need at all sites has increased significantly. Our feed counts have increased by 14% and our sleep counts have risen by 40%. St. John's has seen an increase of 31.7% in feed counts and 38.7% in overnight counts.

Working with Out of the Cold is truly a humbling and rewarding experience. We have found that opening our hearts and minds to help the homeless has richly blessed us in ways we never thought possible. We never know how many lives we will affect, but if we don't work together to make that difference, we will never know.

In closing, I would leave you with a thought from Mother Teresa. She says, "We should not serve the poor like they were Jesus. We should serve the poor because *they are* Jesus."

Not your average Day Camp: RCCO to host unique hands-on summer experience with the “King of Instruments”

By Pauline Finch

Regular worshipper, chorister and “friend” of Mount Zion, Waterloo, Ont.



A solo recital by special guest artist Sarah Svendsen will be a highlight of the Waterloo Pipe Organ Week (W-POW) day camp.

The Waterloo-Wellington Centre of the Royal Canadian College of Organists (RCCO) is offering its first-ever musical “day camp” this summer.

Waterloo Pipe Organ Week (W-POW), running July 23 – 27, is aimed especially at pianists aged 12 through 18 who have reached at least Royal Conservatory of Music Grade 6 (or equivalent) proficiency and are curious to try their hands – and feet! – at the console of a real organ.

At the end of their five-day adventure in the world of pipes, pedals, stops and manuals, participants will showcase their accomplishments at a public afternoon recital at Mount Zion, Waterloo, Ont., at a state-of-the-art Canadian instrument by Guilbault-Thérien.

Following on the success of similar organ-encounter events held in other Canadian cities, the local RCCO organizing group (all volunteers) felt it was time to offer area teens an affordable and imaginative experience of their own. The result is **W-POW**, whose

“command central” will be First United Church in Uptown Waterloo; from there, participants will be introduced to a variety of unique area organs under the guidance of local RCCO teachers.

A varied and busy schedule between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. each day includes both individual and group instruction, demonstrations of playing techniques, explorations of how a pipe organ works, tours of local instruments, history and background of music created for the organ, preparation for the closing camp recital, a faculty concert and recreational activities.

Highlighting the several public events of the week will be a solo recital by special guest artist **Sarah Svendsen**, an award-winning young Canadian organist on the brink of an international career, who discovered the instrument through the RCCO as a young teen in her hometown of New Glasgow, N.S.

Sarah is currently a fourth-year Organ Performance major at the University of Toronto

and an Organ Scholar at Metropolitan United Church in Toronto. Her July 25 recital will take place in Kitchener, on the superb four-manual Casavant in St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church.

The \$200 fee for **W-POW** includes all teaching and instruction materials, daily lunch and refreshments, and a fair-trade camp T-shirt. Grand River Transit (GRT) has generously provided free local bus transportation for the week.

Applications should be received by June 1, 2012 and a \$50 deposit must accompany registration. To download a detailed brochure please visit the **W-POW** webpage at <http://www.opus-two.com/waterloopow.html> or contact registrar Kathleen King Martin at waterloopow@hotmail.com.

Report of the Treasurer

Regular Benevolence Offerings, Feb. 29, 2012

	Total	Per Household
Offerings received to date in 2012	104,070	\$3.99
Offerings received last year same period	121,972	\$4.67
Change from 2011 to 2012	-15%	
Minimum Goal for 2012	1,580,500	\$60.56
Challenge Goal for 2012	1,730,500	\$66.30

Note to Congregational Treasurers: Please ensure that congregational benevolence offerings are remitted monthly. Thank you.

Pastoral opportunities

The following congregations are seeking a pastor. For more information, please contact Rev. Riitta Hepomaki, Assistant to the Bishop. Tel: 519-743-1461 Toll-free: 1-877-373-5242 Email: rhepomaki@elcic.ca.

Atlantic Conference:
 St. Peter’s and Bethany, New Denmark, NB
 St. Paul’s, Trinity and St. Matthew’s, New Germany, NS

Hamilton/Niagara Conference:
 Redeemer, Fisherville, ON

Ottawa-St. Lawrence Conference:
 Faith, Ottawa, ON
 Good Shepherd, Brockville, ON
 Latvian Trinity Evangelical, Montreal, QC and Peace Latvian Evangelical, Ottawa, ON (Latvian-English bilingual shared call)
 St. Mark’s, Kingston, ON

Toronto Conference:
 Christ, Peterborough, ON
 Epiphany, Toronto, ON (bilingual: English-German)

Please visit the synod website www.easternsynod.org for more information and regular updates on pastoral opportunities.

Ministry changes

Rev. Heather Spencer from St Mark’s, Kingston, ON, to St Ansgar and Redeemer, London, ON.

Rev. David Wirt from Sullivan-Williamsford Parish, ON, to St Ansgar and Redeemer, London, ON.

Rev. Kristin Luana and Rev. Olaf Baumann to St Matthews, Sudbury and St Timothy’s, Copper Cliff, ON.

“I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. The life I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

Galations 2: 20



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Restructuring unveils hidden blessings

By National Bishop Susan Johnson

This is the year that all five synods will meet in convention and consider next steps in the structural renewal process. Last summer, the National Convention approved in principle the outline for structural renewal. Now we will be seeing specifics in terms of implications for synods and congregations.

I have a confession to make to you. This process of restructuring began by being finance-driven. There were concerns as we looked at the projections of declining membership, an increasingly aging church and decreasing financial resources that we were not going to be able to sustain our church's structure for much longer without change. But as we started the renewal process, the Holy Spirit took control, and it has ended up being driven by mission.

As we have asked, "How can we be a church In Mission for Others?" we realized that the majority of the ministry of our church happens at the congregational level. The proposed changes create a structure to encourage and support mission at the congregational and area levels. It provides an opportunity for a new way of working together to reach out in witness and service to our local communities.

Will there be financial savings? Yes there will – by having a reduced governance

structure including fewer synods, fewer councils and committees, fewer offices, etc, there will be cost savings. But that money will be used to invest in supporting congregations and areas in ministry. We believe that by saving money to invest in mission, we will expand our capacity for mission and outreach across the church.

But there's more! Structural renewal, even if it's Spirit-led and mission-driven will not make a difference in our church unless it goes hand in hand with spiritual renewal. The call to deeper discipleship as we pray, read, worship, study, serve, give and tell has to be answered alongside the call to structural renewal. These two strands must be interwoven if we are to grow as a church In Mission for Others.

In the next while, you will be seeing further exciting announcements about the upcoming proposals for structural renewal that are coming to your synod convention. Please watch for them, read them, talk about them, and pray for our church and for the upcoming synod conventions.

God bless you all as we commit ourselves to renewal!

Watch Bishop Johnson's video message about structural renewal on You Tube. Visit: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o9MrYIJ2GmQ>.



National Bishop Susan Johnson



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