

The Morningstar

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF

EPIPHANY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

20 Old Kingston Road, Scarborough, Ontario M1E 3J5

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Pastor Peter Lisinski • 647-395-7649 • fryarpuck@hotmail.com

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Submissions 15th of the month
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Dear friends in Christ,

September has come, the CNE is closed, Labour Day is behind us, and summer is over. You know what that means: back to school – not just for students returning to the classrooms of formal education, but for us all! Education is our lifelong vocation as human beings – religious or not. Education is essential for human development – better yet, for the development of humanity.

The basic meaning of the word ‘educate’ is “to draw forth”. The common vocation of both public and private institutions of learning is to “bring out the best” of the divine image *within* each *individual* human being, and nurture our personal uniqueness to fullness of our *common* humanity. Our congregation should find some justifiable pride in our partnership with the Montessori School to whom we provide space, support and opportunity.

Of course, education that shapes the adults all children will become, for better or worse, begins at birth – even within the pre-natal womb according to some experts in cognitive development. And so, beyond the foundation laid in home and family life; and in concert with the professional teachers and public schools a truly enlightened society values, *religious* instruction is *vital* to a full and proper education. The word ‘*religion*’ comes from the same root as the word “*ligament*” – a flexible band of strong tissue binding together the bones within the human body.

The mission of the church, *the Body of Christ*, is to unite people with one another in a common pilgrimage of growth toward health, wholeness and holiness in companionship with God – revealed in the risen Jesus’ “Great Commission: “Go, make disciples (students) of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you...” (Matthew 28:19-20).

Jesus’ *epiphany* of God, in whose image all human beings are created, teaches us that God is a *community* of divine persons bound together by a ligament of mutual love! The ultimate fullness of our humanity is realized in our reconciliation with God and one another, in the mutual teaching and learning of God’s love for all God’s children – in our community, our nation, our world. In other words, Holy Communion!

Pastor Peter

SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 5

10:00-11:15 a.m. Bible Class (GoogleMeet)

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 7

13TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (GREEN)

12 noon Service of the Word

Pastor Peter Lisinski (In-person & Zoom)

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 11

7:00 p.m. Council Meeting

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 14

14TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (GREEN)

12 noon Holy Communion Service

Pastor Peter Lisinski (In-person & Zoom)

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 19

10:00-11:15 a.m. Bible Class (GoogleMeet)

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 21

15TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (GREEN)

12 noon Service of the Word

Pastor Peter Lisinski (In-person & Zoom)

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 28

16TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (GREEN)

12 noon Holy Communion Service

Pastor Peter Lisinski (In-person & Zoom)

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Zoom Link to EPIPHANY LUTHERAN

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9890800583?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9890800583?pwd=R05md05jWjZBTnNwc202SWJpSG5kZz09)

[pwd=R05md05jWjZBTnNwc202SWJpSG5kZz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9890800583?pwd=R05md05jWjZBTnNwc202SWJpSG5kZz09)

Or by phone following the prompts:

+1 647 374 4685 Canada

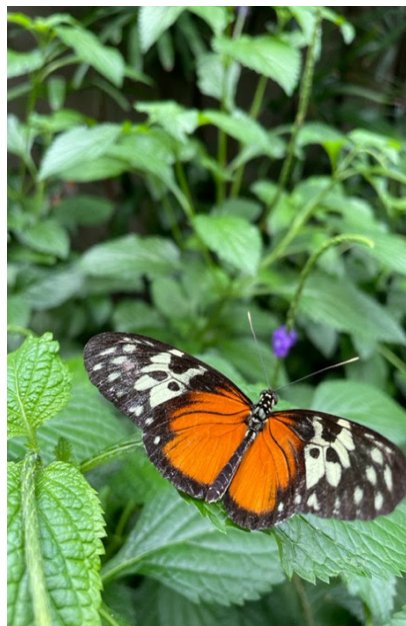
Meeting ID: 989 080 0583

Passcode: 095565

Breath Prayer

INHALE: God is here.

EXHALE: All things are held in love.



A RETREAT

It was a beautiful week-end in June. Brave women drove from all over Ontario to Niagara Falls. They came from as far away as Sault Saint-Marie, Barrie and many other places. My friend Nalini and I made the trek too, from Toronto.

At Mount Carmel Spiritual Retreat – an old monastery bordered by vineyards – we were treated to a fun-filled week-end of spiritual rejuvenation. We had daily periods of devotion, led by Pastor Jennifer Hoover, hymn singing in the beautiful chapel, offside excursions and, best of all, a presentation by our Keynote Speaker, Kimberly Wardell. The theme was “Dancing in the Rain”. Kimberly encouraged us to try it, shedding all sorrow and anything that bothers us. Her award-winning book (available to purchase) is called *Silence In The Sanctuary*.

In a large room at the monastery there was also a labyrinth. It had three stages for reflection, such as Joy Comes In Walking. I took part in the offside excursion where I joined a small group of women heading to the Butterfly Conservatory. I found that connecting with beautiful nature to be a refreshing and soulful experience.



Nalini and I met many interesting and like-minded women when we assembled for the delicious meals. Sadly, this was the last retreat offered. Started originally by ELW, there were many retreats held over the past years. But now everyone is aging and there are not enough able volunteers to organize a big event like this. *The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few.* (Matthew 9:37)

Dorothea Cameron

The following letter is sent on behalf of Bishop Carla Blakley



Eastern Synod
of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada



Rejoicing in HOPE

Dear Eastern Synod friends!

Grace and peace to you!

“Rejoicing in Hope” was the theme of the 2025 ELCIC National Church Convention.

How appropriate, for we have much in which to rejoice!! Together we discerned, celebrated and dreamt of the future God intends for God’s church. We gave thanks for Bishop Susan Johnson’s 18 years of service as our National Bishop, and we welcomed Rev. Dr. Larry Kochendorfer as our new National Bishop-Elect.

Thank you to all the Eastern Synod delegates and visitors for your participation in this hope-filled event. Likewise, thank you to everyone who carried us in your prayers over these days.

When we call on the Spirit to lead us, we never quite know what might happen. As you are already likely aware, my name appeared on the electoral list. Despite having decline pre-identification, the Spirit had other plans.

I firmly believe that we must always remain open to the Spirit’s guiding. This would be my counsel to churches at crossroads in their ministries, or Rostered Leaders contemplating a new call in a fresh setting.



*Eastern Synod Delegates to the 2025 National Church Convention.
(Epiphany’s Geoff Crewe is in the second row, fourth from the left)*

We must always be open to the Spirit’s movement.

Such a belief means that I too must be willing to open my heart when the Spirit calls. For that reason, I engaged this electoral process with prayer, discernment and thanksgiving.

I am delighted that Bishop Larry will now serve as our next National Bishop. Even moreso, I am overjoyed that we will have more time together. I love serving alongside you in

the Eastern Synod. My heart is filled to overflowing when I see the ministries you are engaged in, the communities you serve, the ways you worship, and the welcome you extend!

Let us continue to “Rejoice in Hope”. Thank you for journeying with me in the work of sharing God’s love with the world!!

Bishop Carla

“TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION”

(TEXTS: DEUTERONOMY 30:9-14; COLOSSIANS 1:1-14; LUKE 10:25-37)

Among this week's customary diatribes of derision against people considered enemies – immigrants, visible minorities, Rosie O'Donnell – the current president of the United States complained that America's *friends* have been even more hostile than its *foes* in trade negotiations with his – what's the word used in today's Psalm (25:1-10)? – oh, yes: “*treacherous*” – administration, singling out Canada as among the “*nastiest*”!

In today's Gospel Jesus also broaches the age-old subject. The parable of the Good Samaritan, portrays a person Jesus' primarily *Jewish* audience would have regarded as a religious heretic and social outcast, as a *hero* for showing compassion to a foreign stranger whom *Samaritans* would have considered an enemy unworthy of help; meanwhile, two socially privileged representatives of institutional religion failed to “do likewise” for a suffering human being of their own faith and community!

Both examples of the tension between friends and foes confirm one thing that Donald Trump has in common with Jesus, indeed with all people – including you and me. Like all human beings, Jesus was born into a particular family, of particular ethnic identity, religious creed, cultural heritage and national history which, for better or worse, had long since shaped the deeply entrenched attitudes of pride and prejudice that segregated Galileans from Samaritans, and segregated both from the Judean majority and, during his own lifetime, had subjugated all three sectors of Israel's population to the Roman Empire's political oppression and economic impoverishment enforced by military power.

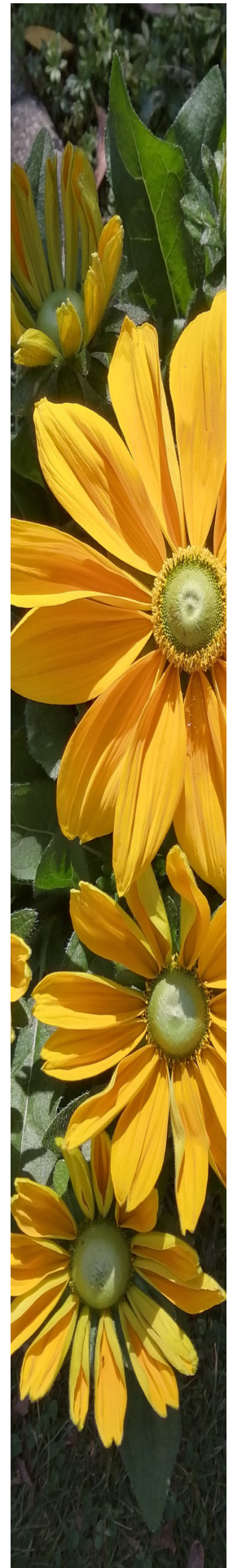
That remains the reality of the world in which you and I live, and have been called to faithful witness to the good news of God's love for all people. All of us are conditioned by our humanity's natural self-centredness, within an already functioning – often *dysfunctioning* – social order which, depending on our unique individual combination of *nature* (genetics, gender, beauty, etc.) and *nurture* (climate, diet, discipline, spirituality, etc.) determine the *limits* of our personal capacity to overcome our own experiences of trauma and tragedy which, for better or worse, shapes our attitudes and responses to the suffering of others.

The promise, purpose and power of Jesus' mission in an increasingly divided world, and our own rapidly disintegrating society, is to heal our broken humanity by healing humanity's broken relationship with God, which is the source of our broken community life – locally, nationally, globally.

Jesus of Nazareth is the Good Samaritan made flesh! In the divine humanity of Jesus, God *himself* has come into our idolatrous world of fear, greed and violence as an unwelcome social outcast and religious heretic. Jesus was crucified for proclaiming the gospel truth that there are *no outsiders* to God's love; that *no* human being is beyond redemption, that *all* human beings created in God's image are worthy of *one another's* love, respect and dignity, and *destined* for full reconciliation with God and all people, regardless of class, creed or colour.

That is the gospel truth of reconciliation *all* institutional religion – Jewish, Christian, Muslim – is *called*, but too often *fails* or *forgets*, to proclaim – the gospel truth most profoundly revealed – we might say, “*epiphany*” – when collective humanity conspired to crucify Jesus – *Emmanuel* – *God with us*. But the good news of Jesus' resurrection continues to “epiphany” *Emmanuel's unlimited* capacity to suffer with us and for us, until all fear, hatred and evil are *overcome* and all God's children, friend and foe alike, are united in the full reconciliation of God's eternal life and infinite love!

Pastor Peter Lisinski



“GOD’S WORD TO THE WISE”

(TEXT: LUKE 12:13-21)

Tonight at 9:00 pm, CNN will air the last episode of a four-part documentary about the “Live Aid” benefit concert to support famine relief in Ethiopia forty years ago. The historic event was ignited and organized by Irish musician, Bob Geldhof. Shocking television news images of starving people, many of them children and infants, inspired the outrage expressed in the haunting question to which he gave public, prophetic voice: “How can thirty-two million human beings be left to die of starvation in a world of *surplus food*?” Today’s Gospel reveals both the *answer*, as well as the *solution*.

“Someone in the crowd said to Jesus, ‘Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me.’”

The attitude is *certainly* nothing new! And we can sympathize. In a world that covets wealth as much as ours, we know the story rather well – through “true crime” television drama, even if *not* within our own circle of friends or, God forbid, *personal experience*. “Friend,” Jesus replies, “Who set me to be a judge or arbitrator over you?”

Note: Jesus addresses the plaintiff as “*Friend*”. Jesus’ response is one of generosity, even affection. Jesus is understanding of, even sympathetic, to our basic human nature. But he refuses to get involved in the sibling rivalry; he renders no verdict; pronounces no judgment. Instead, he patiently repeats the message he has been preaching persistently since the very beginning of his public mission: “Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of one’s possessions.” ...

Dear Friends in Christ,

All of us know the anxiety of trying to make ends meet – some of us more than others; and many of us have the over-drawn bank accounts or maxed-out credit-card debt to prove it – a prime example of corporate greed pursuing the elusive happiness of wealth through manipulation of financial markets, exploitative interest rates, and price-fixing. The evidence of rampant greed is as plain as the increasing gap between the increasing wealth of the world’s increasing number of billionaires, and the decreasing incomes of the decreasing middle-class – and *increasing* number of working-poor. And its social consequences are graphically reflected in increasing rates of illiteracy, child hunger, substance abuse, physical and mental health disorders, spousal assault, gun and gang violence, and car-jackings – not to mention increasing military conflicts, and the horrifying potential for nuclear warfare now threatening civilization itself! “Money makes the world go ‘round” says the familiar cultural proverb – and the idol worship of *greed* is the *axis* on which the grinding wheel of *poverty* spins!

And yet our elected government officials are now, more *bluntly* and *brazenly* than ever before, using the actual words “rich” and “richer” in explaining the goals of their public policies and project proposals intended to stabilize and strengthen our participation in our disastrously globalized economy. Like the farmer in Jesus’ parable, they seem to believe that *national* security, as well as *personal* security, depend primarily on *financial* security.

“You fool!”, God warns the wealthy farmer: “This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?”

Jesus’ parable is a call to faithful stewardship – careful cultivation, cooperative preservation and sustainable development of creation’s natural resources, and the fair and just distribution of the wealth human labour produces, *for the benefit of all God’s children*.

Jesus ends his parable with a warning that “those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God” are in danger of losing their souls. And the deafening, rhetorical silence that follows, gives thunderous voice to the truth of God’s eternally-spoken “word to the wise” – *incarnate* in the divine humanity of Jesus Christ: those who spend their life in self-giving love and self-denying service to God’s reign are “rich toward God” and “store up the treasures” of God’s grace – the *source* of God’s *justice*, the *seed* of God’s *peace*, “on earth as it is in heaven”; the very *soil* that yields the *harvest of souls* called to “eat, drink, and be merry” in the holy communion of God’s eternal life – of which the *church* is the *first fruits*.

Pastor Peter Lisinski

STEWARDSHIP: September as a “New Year”

September, to me, always feels like the beginning of a “new year.” I have felt this way about September ever since I was a child, when the “new year” was marked by getting new pencils ready for school, and deciding what to wear on the first day back. September felt like a new year when my children were preparing to return to school after the summer break, and now it is my grandchildren who will end their summer activities and exchange them for what is “new” in September.

Unlike that other “new year,” there is no change to the calendar year number; in fact, September stands at the three-quarter point on our Julian calendar of 365 days. Yet, September heralds a new season with the autumn equinox; we anticipate cooler weather, falling leaves, and shorter days. We may reminisce about summer vacations or activities as we pack away our shorts and sandals, and trade barbecued burgers for late harvest peppers and pumpkins.

In many ways, then, September acts as a good point to look back and to look forward, as we often do when that other “new year” arrives each January. From a stewardship perspective, this means giving a second thought to suggested project ideas: food bank donations; clothing for those in shelters; Christmas items for elderly residents of a local long-term care facility; homemade blankets for women and children; and volunteering with and supporting refugees. A look at this list shows that Epiphany is a force for good in the community surrounding the church. The goodwill shown to our neighbours has not diminished, even amid our plans for changing the physical footprint of Epiphany. From a stewardship perspective, then, we can continue to look forward, to continue or expand on past projects, and look for new ways to engage with our neighbours.

Let me be bold to make this September-focussed suggestion: school supplies for local children. The TDSB (Toronto District School Board) has a Backpack and School Supplies drive that goes until the end of September. You can donate new items or support the program with a cash donation. This initiative helps ease the stress on students who may not have basic supplies to start the new school year. The TDSB says, “the need is great as we face greater uncertainty around the impact of tariffs, significant costs in housing and general rising costs of living here in Toronto. Your donation can empower a student to learn with confidence, ease the burden on families who are struggling and set the tone for a positive school year.”

You can learn more and/or make a cash donation here:

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/Partnership-Opportunities/Business-Development/Backpack-and-School-Supplies-Drive>

As scripture reminds us, there is happiness in both our look back and in our plans: “His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’” (Matthew 25:21).

Let’s make September a great “new year” for us and our neighbours.

Denise Dennis



EXODUS...

These days, every morning,
 I stand at my window
 in the presence of the burning bush.
 Flame blossomed and fiery,
 she brings me to an exodus from self,
 into the lands of wonder and awe
 gifts of the fiery Dove freely given
 to all who would look up
 and see the wonders of the wayside,
 or wake at dawn to hear the angelic chorus
 of feathered flaming voices,
 announce the new beginning
 of the universe each day.
 Oh we are so easily lifted from our desert selves
 if we wake up to now.

So often, all that is necessary is to stop,
 to breathe, to be what
 we were always meant to be,
 to receive the grace of each moment as gift.
 Look, the trees know how to do it!
 To live each season with the fullness of their being;
 bare then leafed, blossomed then fruiting,
 and always blazing with glory.
 Look, the birds know how to do it!
 Singing and nesting, laying and hatching
 and always angeling the air around us
 with their flitting presence of peace.
 Look, the dawn has arrived again for you!
 The blossom blazes and the birds sing for you
 and the trees await your joining them in praise.
 Take off your shoes and go!
 Barefoot and dancing across the holy ground
 of your life.

brorichard (on Instagram)
 Brother Richard

CHURCH COUNCIL

Council Chair:	Geoff Crewe
Council Vice-Chair:	Denise Dennis
Council Secretary:	Vacant
Councillor-at-Large:	Greg Furan
Councillor-at-Large:	Gord Munro
Councillor:	Frank Dietz
Councillor:	Sigrid Engler
Treasurer:	Nalini Badley

COMMITTEE LIAISONS

Education:	Open
Finance:	Geoff Crewe
Property:	Geoff Crewe
Stewardship:	Denise Dennis
Visioning:	Gordon Vollmer
AMMS Liaison:	Geoff Crewe
Worship & Music:	Marg Crewe
Morningstar:	Sigi Sommer
Seniors Group:	Ute Wentzel
Advertising Coordinator:	Nalini Badley
ELW:	Sigrid Engler
Envelope Secretary:	Sigrid Engler
Mutual Ministry:	Open
Spiritual Society Liaison:	Open

TREASURER'S REPORT

JUNE 2025	RECEIVED	SPENT	SURPLUS(DEFICIT)
OFFERINGS	\$2,825.00		
AMMS PARSONAGE RENT	2,575.00		
AMMS FELLOWSHIP HALL RENT	1,500.00		
AMMS PARSONAGE UTILITIES	263.89		
AMMS PROPERTY TAX	1,440.00		
AMMS FELLOWSHIP HALL UTILITIES	944.32		
GST/PST RECEIVABLE	71.32		
CURRENT MONTH TOTALS	\$9,619.63	\$7,688.23	\$1,931.40
YEAR TO DATE TOTALS	\$59,456.46	\$55,008.64	\$4,447.82
CIBC BANK BALANCE AT JUNE 30, 2025			67,877.00
CIBC INVESTOR'S EDGE ACCOUNT BALANCE AT THE END OF JUNE			181,883.90
SCOTIA BANK NON REDEEMABLE GIC AT 5% MATURING AUGUST 28, 2025			30,000.00
<hr/>			
JULY 2025	RECEIVED	SPENT	SURPLUS(DEFICIT)
OFFERINGS	\$3,210.00		
AMMS PARSONAGE RENT	2,575.00		
AMMS FELLOWSHIP HALL RENT	0.00		
AMMS PARSONAGE UTILITIES	1,411.11		
AMMS PROPERTY TAX	1,252.00		
AMMS FELLOWSHIP HALL UTILITIES	234.55		
GST/PST RECEIVABLE	94.21		
CURRENT MONTH TOTALS	\$8,776.87	\$8,567.41	\$209.46
YEAR TO DATE TOTALS	\$68,233.33	\$63,576.05	\$4,657.28
CIBC BANK BALANCE AT JULY 31, 2025			68,204.02
CIBC INVESTOR'S EDGE ACCOUNT BALANCE AT THE END OF JULY			180,278.69
SCOTIA BANK NON REDEEMABLE GIC AT 5% MATURING AUGUST 28, 2025			30,000.00
INTEREST			2,160.21

Yours in Christ, Nalini Badley, Treasurer