



The Courier 2020/2 Summer (June - August)

The English Language Newsletter
of Martin Luther Church Ottawa

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► Divine Service

Dear Parishioners,

if you place a call to the church, no one answers, not even during office hours. The answering machine will pop into action and you will hear this: "All our worship services are cancelled until further notice...." One might react to such an announcement in anger or sadness, perhaps with a mixture of both. Earlier today I called our church number, just to check that everything was as intended. It's been such a long time since I recorded the message that I was unsure if it was really there.

I assume that you might feel as I do. We miss our church service, yes. But after that differences will register. Can you say what it is that you miss concerning our Sunday service? One might say, a sense of community is missing, that one likes to be with familiar people at service. I then look at what we currently have as a weak substitute. There just isn't that

genuine element of community.

Some congregations offer only live services in which one participates by video connection. My two pastoral colleagues in Washington, D.C., with whom I spoke recently, engage in this practice. They have noticed that a whole slew of congregants attend this virtual offering that are not normally in attendance on Sunday.



To be honest, I have some concerns in this context that it might not work technically. Then those who tried are disappointed and this I don't like at all. For this reason we prerecord our service. We film and record elements and our son Paul then does the editing and creates the full package. That might still leave some of us without direct access

to the video link. On other Sundays, there is only a sound file. Then you can only

listen to me and nothing is seen. Is what we see and hear in this fashion a worship service?

A strange word this. Who exactly is serving whom at that moment? Do we serve God if we go to church or view this video? Do we serve God by congregating? Does God serve us, if we gather as Christians? – Today, I would like to share a thought or two with you on this topic.

I look at the Bible and allow myself a quick jump in the New Testament, specifically the book of Acts. In Acts 24 the Apostle Luke puts down what Paul said.

“But this I confess unto thee, that I do give worship to the God of our fathers after that way... believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets: And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.”

We hear the words of Paul, that for him divine service is faith and trust in Gods’ word. We believe in God, we trust God and thus we honor him. This clearly is a very personal matter. It’s about our relationship with God. That doesn’t just apply in the case of Paul. Comparable wording is also found in the Letter to the Hebrews (Heb. 11). There is a long list of the professing, beginning in the Old Testament, of all of them it is said: They all trusted God, they believed his word.

Worship service is thus not just the celebration with its pre-determined order (Old Greek: *Leiturgia* = Service) but a very personal matter, which not only applies to Christian beings. Nowhere in the Bible is there a specific guide on

how our services are conducted, but we do know that at the very outset people gathered to hear Gods’ word and to celebrate communion.

Divine service begins in terms of our understanding of the bible at the door of the church, as we leave, to be precise. Our service at its core is a communal expression of gratitude and the joint praise of God. We are strengthened and if it goes well, we also hear something concerning our Gods’ service in the world. Very clearly, our Roman Catholic siblings have chosen a more fitting term to describe their meeting as a ‘Mass.’ This derives from the Latin ‘*Ite missa est*’ (“Go, it is sent”) These words are spoken at the end of the service of communion. Expressions of gratitude and mission into the world are the core of what we call divine service. Concerning the precise way in which this happens there is no biblical pronouncement. We are at liberty in this regard, but also guided by our tradition.

I think that in these days, where we can not yet again praise and give thanks communally, it is well to remember that we can serve God wherever we find ourselves. God is sending us. Whether whatever your congregation currently offers (by way of provision in the form of music, of prayer and biblical exegesis) meets your needs, you yourself must assess and judge. On indications from you as to what in your current experience strengthens you or challenges you I would be grateful to hear from you and would, to the extent possible, respond to it.

Your Pastor Friedrich Demke

► Report of the Co-Presidents

Dear Parishioners,

These are strange times. Our church is closed, we cannot worship together, we cannot meet in person, we have only met by telephone or ZOOM videoconference. Yet life goes on and the church has not stopped to exist.

Our pastor does his best to provide sermons via the web each Sunday and of course, is available by telephone or email.

Your church council has met the last two times via ZOOM. So let us bring you up to date.

The church is closed to us and our tenants. However the work on the kitchen renovation is proceeding and hopefully will be concluded in June. The storage cupboards for the tenants will be completed by mid-May.

The framing of the last two glazed coloured windows which we brought from Preston Street has stopped and will resume once the corona crisis is over. At the Annual General Meeting we will decide where to place them.

Speaking of AGM, it has been postponed to September and hopefully by then we can meet again.

Given that the church is closed our income has been sharply reduced. Thanks for all of you who have donated by sending checks or donating via the "donate" button on our website. We have applied to the government for help with the pastor's salary and that of the two Kindergarten teachers. We hope we will get a partial subsidy.

We have no idea when social distancing mandated by the corona virus will end nor when we will be able to open the church and under what conditions. However it looks like the worst is over and we may reopen sometime this summer.

Of course the major event occurring this summer will be the change of pastorship. On the assumption that life will be back to normal soon, these are the key dates for the changeover.

- Pastor Demke and family will leave as of July 1.

- the last service by Pastor Demke will be on June 21. The day before, Saturday afternoon we will have a goodbye party for Pastor Demke and Alexandra, depending on the weather in the church or in a tent outside.

- Pastor Ted Heinze (a member of our congregation) will conduct the Joint Worship service on July 5

- on July 12, 19 and 26 all services will be 'Services of the Word' held in English and German by members of the congregation who kindly volunteered to do the same.

- Pastor Kirschke will hold her first service on August 2.

It is only appropriate to take the opportunity of this last Ruf edited by Alexandra to reflect on the last nine years with Pastor Demke and to thank him and his wife Alexandra for their guidance and support.

During these nine years our church underwent many changes, some of the most notable ones are:

We changed our premises from Preston Street to Smyth Road.

We took in all the members of Mount Calvary Lutheran Church.

We became a bilingual church.

We hold service each Sunday in German and English.

Our congregation more than doubled in membership.

We have a wonderful organ, an organist, a cantor and a choir.

We now have a professional website that fully reflects the activities of our congregation.

We have a Facebook site.

Our Newsletter is now available in bilingual format, Ruf and Courier, both in print and on the web.

We have many active groups in our church such as the book circle, the theatre group, Wheels to Meals besides having our own Kindergarten, unfortunately off premises for the time being.

We are in the process of restoring our church building to its past glory and planning for an onsite bilingual full time Kindergarten.

All this could not have been possible without the leadership, initiative, drive, flexibility,

adaptability and tremendous effort of both Pastor Demke and Alexandra. They work as a seamless team.

Let's face it without the Demkes the Martin Luther Church on Preston Street would now be covered in construction dust and slowly be dying on the vine while Mount Calvary church would probably have declared insolvency. Thanks to Friedrich's willingness to run a bilingual church and hold services in both languages and Alexandra's unique journalistic abilities, digital skills and charm the coming together of Mount Calvary and Martin Luther churches would not have been possible, let alone be as successful as it has been.

We owe them a tremendous thanks and wish them all the best for their future endeavours in Germany. We count ourselves truly blessed for having had this tremendous couple as our guide for the last nine years.

Our sincerest Thanks Friedrich and Alexandra.
May God be with you on your future adventure.

Konrad and Sonny



► Church garden and labyrinth - Spring 2020

Thank you to all those who planted bulbs last fall – they are now evident above ground! Take a trip past the church sometime to see their progress. Special thanks to Heather Bent.

The forest floor garden (one closest to Smyth Road) has some lovely spring flowers appearing. A friendly reminder that this special bed is intended to take the form of a natural forest floor, and is to be enjoyed, but not cleaned up or pruned. The other beds all have a theme as well and special plants that are primarily native plants, ones that are drought tolerant, hardy and suitable to our climate.

Take note of the peace pole and the benches. Individually, spend some time when there is a nice warm day. The labyrinth is a place to meditate and walk, to pray and reflect. It is still available for individual use during this time of social distancing. If you have the inclination and can make your way to the church, take a journey and pray for our world, our church and for all people.

We would like to make a special request for someone who is good with wood working to make some signs for the forest floor and other beds. Speak to Marianne Thornton if you have this gift to offer or would like to contribute.

Our current needs include:

- turning the compost pile over to aerate it, spreading some on the garden

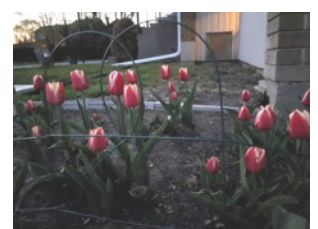
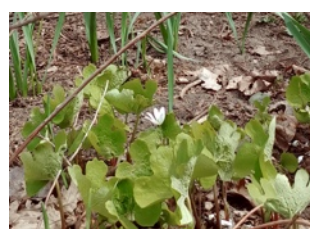
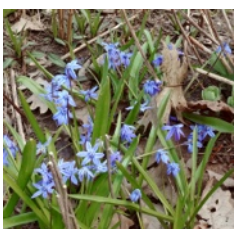
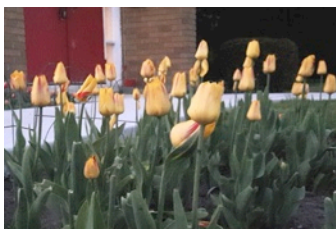
- digging the far end bed (closest to the composter) and deciding what to plant this year. Is there a vegetable or some herbs that we should plant to share? Keep in mind that they would need regular watering - we can share the responsibility.
- There is some restorative spring maintenance that could be done to ensure the labyrinth path stays in good condition.

Hopefully in the near future we will also add:

- a wayside library where you can leave a book and take a book home to enjoy.
- a new sign for the garden to invite visitors from the community, a place to share some information about the church, the labyrinth and the garden.
- bird feeders filled and a bird bath added (again)

If one of the projects above interests you, or you have other ideas, please send an email to [marthorntonpt\(AT\)gmail.com](mailto:marthorntonpt(AT)gmail.com) or speak to a member of the team.

Marianne Thornton, on behalf of the Gardeners of Martin Luther church, including Heather Bent, Martin Damus, Steve Thornton, Pastor Demke, Jonathan Ladouceur and others.



► Renovation of the kitchen

The kitchen renovation is progressing. By the time you are reading this the cabinets should all be installed.



On the serving counter in Mount Calvary Hall there will be another sink.

The electric (cable, outlets, electrical panel) has been overhauled. The planning has all been upgraded and now meets current building code.



The new door opens into the store room instead of the kitchen. In the next few weeks the counter and backsplash should be installed. Under the new window in the kitchen there will be three full size sinks for proper washing.



My apologies for the quality of the photos. The ceiling lights in the kitchen had not been installed yet. The cabinets are light grey, not white as they appear in the photographs.

Heather Ladouceur

► Confirmands

The two confirmands from our congregation couldn't celebrate their confirmation as planned. The worship service we had prepared for April 19 with Rev. Martin Malina and the two confirmands from Faith Lutheran Church could not take place. That's when we decided to meet on the internet. The youth is so familiar with online learning from their school, that we were able to continue our confirmation classes virtually without any problems.

As long as we don't know when we can go back to church, there is of course no new date for confirmation. The confirmands and their families

want to plan this day ahead of time, so that I will likely be in Germany when the time comes.

If it works out, Pastor Judith Kierschke will be present at the next virtual meeting with our confirmands in June. So everyone can get to know each other. We want to keep up the hope for the celebration of confirmation with all confirmands and Rev. Martin Malina present after the summer.

Wishing you God's Blessing,
Your
Pastor Friedrich

► Kindergarten

The kindergarten is freshly painted. Wiard Bauer, Ricardo Reyes and I have given the kindergarten a new coat of paint. A big thank you to both of them for their efforts. It saved us a lot of money, which is particularly scarce in these times without income from parental contributions. Everything looks bright and nice, only the children are missing. Vasylyna and Anglika, our two kindergarten teachers, can't wait to get started again. Vasylyna has now completed her education and is registered as an ECE (Early Childhood Education) teacher with the College of Early Childhood Educators in Ontario. We congratulate again very warmly on finishing the program.

kindergarten. At least, the contact between children and parents and with our two employees remains. In this way, there are also tips for activities for the children such as songs, stories and games that are suitable for this age group.

At the same time, we continue to work on the project of having the kindergarten on the site of our church. Not an easy undertaking at the moment, since we have now worked out the necessary papers, but we cannot hold a meeting with architects on the site to discuss our ideas with them and then let us work out two cost estimates. In this, as in so many other issues, there is the only option to have patience.



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LICENSED BY THE ONTARIO MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

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KINDERGARTEN@GLCO.ORG
<https://glco.org/en/programs-and-services/german-speaking-preschool-ottawa/>

In the meantime, parents and children meet online with the two once per week. This is fun for everyone, but it is not a substitute for proper

Your Pastor Friedrich

► A meditation by Pastor Ted Heinze

Prayer

Almighty and ever-living God, you hold together all things in heaven and on earth. In your great mercy receive the prayers of all your children, and give to all the world the Spirit of your truth and peace, through Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

From the Gospel of John, Chapter 14, 16-18a

[Jesus said to the disciples:] “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth....You know him, because he abides in you, and he will be in you....I will not leave you orphaned.”

My Dear Friends:

I simply cannot begin without sharing a few thoughts about what began for me at dinner on Sunday evening, March 22—when I realized the normally delicious food my friends prepared had no taste—except for the salt on the prosciutto-wrapped chicken breast! At home I soon developed a fever and lost all my energy. By Thursday I was weak and confused enough that they decided to take me to the ER at Ottawa Hospital. My memories are unclear; but within a few hours I'd been admitted. I was diagnosed with Covid-19, and spent a week in a ward, totally isolated. I was given various tests, some of them daily oxygen by nasal tubing; medications, and absolutely wonderful care by nurses, doctors and staff—all of them rotating tirelessly but cheerfully and confidently, totally committed to their patient—me. After two days I had a phone, and it rang regularly as family and friends far and wide learned of my sickness, and wanted to encourage me. Bishop Pryse called and told me I was the first pastor in the Eastern Synod to contract the dread disease—and that I would be the first to beat it! It turned out to be so! Mine was apparently a mild case, with no respiratory distress.

I was released on Maundy Thursday, April 8, when, finally, the oxygen level in my blood returned to normal. At home I was in quarantine for two weeks. A friend called to wish me Happy Easter, and soon more people had heard about my situation. The phones have almost stopped ringing now, and I thank you and so many for your prayers. I even dare to say it: I feel normally healthy again. Maybe even healthier than before, since I have been “blessed” to lose fifteen pounds! And now, of course, I must obey all the protocols for defeating the spread of the Covid virus—the ones you have all been following longer than I!

But that was just my Covid-19 time. Millions of others, including thousands in our land, have not had such positive experiences. Remembering how fearful I was through those weeks, my heart goes out to so many now. And to the leaders of governments; the unemployed; the first responders and medical personnel who face both danger and exhaustion daily; owners of businesses facing bankruptcies; children cooped up at home, and their beleaguered parents; those in added danger because of age and/or other health disorders. The list is very long. Besides all that, we all have so much time on our hands that we can't help but fret and worry over what the future may hold, for us, for others, for the entire world and the global order.

I, too have more than enough time to fret, to pray, too, and to ponder it all. Our Saviour's words in today's Gospel caught my attention. He said them to his remaining eleven disciples at the Last Supper. Just before his arrest, you remember. What should strike us all is how eerily similar the situation and mood of the disciples that night was to where we find ourselves in this Covid-19 time. Jesus had told them many times that soon he was leaving them. It was not to be a happy departure, either. “You know the way I am going,” he'd said. To which one of them said, “Lord, we have no idea where you're going. How can we know the

way?" We too: fearful of the future, afraid even to read or listen to each day's depressing news, we are as much in the dark about next month, next year, as the disciples were about their tomorrow, and all the days to follow.

How did the Lord respond to those fears? "If you love me, keep my commandments....Love one another as I have loved you." But...but...how? So the disciples must have wondered, and we certainly do, wonder. They had a hard time loving even while Jesus was with them. How now that he was departing? And we and our communities, our nation, our world: loving each other was rare enough before Covid-19 struck. How can love survive, or grow, among us now?

So how did Jesus reply to that? To summarize, he promised he will not leave them orphaned. He will ask the Father, who will give them an "Advocate," the "Spirit of truth."

This, let me underline, is the really good, great! news for us, as it was for the disciples. We will not be orphans, we will not be alone. The Spirit of our Saviour is in us and loves through us!

Do you see? There is nothing in Jesus' words to suggest either that he's promising an end to problems (including the cross, for the disciples; Covid-19, and more, for you and me). Nor is Jesus asking us to try to ignore them. Rather, he's promising us peace (the word he uses again and again in the Gospel!). And "peace" means not the end of troubles and disturbances, but hope and courage to face them. The ability to stand! The peace the world cannot give!

I must add this: think about all the heartwarming stories we watch daily in the news of ordinary folks finding new courage, vision, and, yes, love as they go above and beyond what anyone can expect in their concern to reach out, embrace, support those in any kind of turmoil, Covid-19 related or otherwise! It seems to me many people are discovering anew the meaning of the peace brought alive in us and through us by the Spirit of our Saviour. He has not, never will, leave us orphaned.

Praise the Lord! Alleluia!

► Marilyn Donison is moving to Kelowna

A note to say Goodby

We are on the move! It will be hard to leave my church family here after so many years and unfortunately I won't be able to say goodbye personally due to the current Pandemic. However, I have many fond memories of my time at Martin Luther (formerly Mt. Calvary) and will cherish them in my heart.

Most of my time here has been spent corralling our children! I have seen so many of my Sunday school children grow and mature into such amazing young women and men over the years. You have truly been a blessing to me. I wish you all well. Our end of the year picnics were such a blast! Pie anyone?!!!

I've also been happy to begin a Women's Ministry (through RSVP Video/discussions) over the last few years. I don't know if it will continue but I encourage you to try to keep it going as it is a great Outreach opportunity. I will provide contact information to our new Chairperson at RSVP.

As yet we don't have a new church home in Kelowna but I'll keep in touch and let you know how things are going. I'll miss you all!

Blessings from,
Marilyn Donison

► A goodbye letter

Ottawa, 21 May 2020

Dear Alexandra, dear Friedrich,

given current circumstances and with ever so many things not quite working as they should and as planned right now this Thank You note too is a bit out of whack.

In these circumstances then, what are the rules?

This we do know: these days, these weeks and probably months, possibly even years will in all probability, perhaps even ineradicably be marked by two terms. Speaking of 'farewell' and 'new beginning' will take on new meaning, both in their direct sense and metaphorically.

How, we wonder, how do we deal with this puzzling challenge? We are, almost certainly, somewhat intimidated at the moment. And perhaps we take a deep breath to assess where we are right now and what may lie ahead.

Most immediately, right here, right now in our Martin Luther congregation in Ottawa we can reflect on the years in your company with much joy and certainly with gratitude. These have been years of comparably carefree companionship, of comfortable dependance on your seemingly inexhaustible readiness to engage. On good years of relaxed mutuality, an unsparing readiness to listen, matched by an ever present readiness to accept risks, yet retaining much liberating spontaneity.

As we take stock right now, the term 'farewell' certainly has new and also quite clearly enhanced metaphorical weight. Let's face it, our all too familiar social and economic global order doesn't appear all that dependable right now. Not as we would like it. And there are probably no guarantees of a return to the safe norms that served us well in the decades since World War II, allowing us to be perhaps a little selfish in terms of dealing with our environment and wide segments of humanity.

That we are fairly well armed to tackle the 'new global beginning' is – certainly in part – owed to your unstinting efforts. Your energetic approach and ever constructive dialogue with us.

In that light we can be fairly confident facing what lies ahead and we can be positively excited about the continuity we expect as Pastor Judith Kierschke is awaited this summer in our then presumably somewhat changed world.

What can we expect? We can almost certainly bank on a solid foundation of great communal solidarity. This on the basis of the very simple conclusion that we are, all of us, sitting in one boat.

This understanding will almost certainly enhance our individual and communal self confidence, thus cementing our readiness to tackle looming challenges jointly. At the basic level of family cohesion, with an upward jump to wherever communal needs are understood and determined. In the hopefully widest sense we can also work together to regain stable societal economic and social conditions. Depending more on cooperation and less on selfish egotism.

Right now, uncertainties pre-dominate. Whether we find the right paths, as individuals and communities, whether we find ways to cope with seemingly insurmountable barriers.

I am reminded of a story, which I would have wanted to witness but for which I have to depend on the reliability of journalistic colleagues of mine. A few years ago, not long after assuming his high office, Pope Francis found himself confronted with a very testing challenge in an exchange with journalists. What is to be done, he was asked, about the ordination of women? Somewhat stunned the Holy Father evaded with a long statement about the enormous chances for women to broaden their fields of activities within the church. The journalist testing him would not let go. What

about the ordination of women? Now, seemingly forced into an awkward corner the pope sought refuge in the statement of his recent predecessor Pope John Paul II. "That door is closed," Francis quoted John Paul II as saying. – At that very moment Francis may not have considered fully what he was saying. A door has one and only one function, otherwise a wall will do. A door serves solely to be opened and shut, nothing more, nothing less.

► All Good Things Must Come to an End...

GUNTHER BAUER

Unfortunately, this saying also affects our congregation, or rather, the imminent return of our pastor family to Germany. Pastor Demke started his service abroad in Martin Luther Congregation on July 15, 2011. The contract was originally limited to six years, but at the mutual request and to the delight of the congregation, the agreement was extended for another three years. As a result, pastor's two children, Paul and Clara, were able to graduate from high school in Canada. The Demke family is the seventh clergy family to come to our congregation from the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD). In 1975 Pastor Niemeyer came to the congregation for six years as its first EKD pastor. The first three EKD pastors are especially dear to our family, because our three daughters were not only confirmed by them, but also married.

In retrospect, the congregation made an excellent choice with Pastor Demke, since his wife Alexandra also tirelessly immersed herself the many tasks of the congregation. The publication of the congregational newsletter RUF and the constant updates for the various websites and address lists is full employment for one person. In addition, there are the children's services, participation in the book circle and film club and many other undertakings of the congregation. These events, which often involve children, such as story nights, Christmas, Easter and the St. Martin's Lantern Parade, have always been a

And so, we might argue, is the enormous and certainly bewildering wealth of challenges of the present moment. Right now we are confronted with seemingly almost insurmountable questions and challenges. Somewhere, to be sure, there is a door. We just have to find it.

Joachim

great success. 150 children took part in a St. Martin's parade, and St. Martin even came on horseback.

The past two years have been somewhat exciting for the congregation by merging with Mount Calvary and selling the Preston Church. Some larger items were taken to the "new" church, such as the bell, electronic organ, piano, chairs, and five stained glass windows. The bell and the coloured glass windows have not yet found a permanent place. Pastor Demke was very supportive of the merger, although this meant more and difficult work for him. He had to prepare for two services each Sunday with different liturgies and languages. To make the merger seamless, there is a joint service every first Sunday of the month, followed by a coffee and cake gathering. The proceeds from the sale of the Preston Church will be used for renovation work in the former Mt. Calvary building. It is very fortunate for us that Pastor Demke did a practical apprenticeship before his theological studies. He has a clear overview of the construction work. However, the Corona virus crisis has delayed some of the planned work.

On Sunday, January 26, the congregation unanimously elected Pastor Judith Kierschke to succeed Pastor Demke. She will take office on August 1st. It seems that all good things are not coming to an end, at least not for the next six years.

► Trust the new ways...

„...to whom God has sent us!
He himself comes towards us.
The future is his country...”

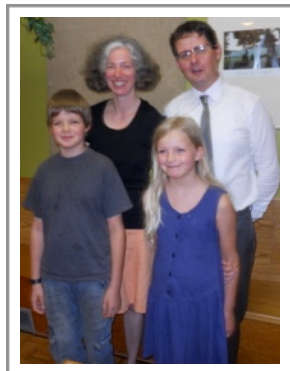
We sang this song (a German hymn by Klaus Peter Hertzsch) for our wedding 23 years ago, and it has been with us ever since: in Russia, Germany, Canada and now again when we go back to Germany, to an old monastery in Lehnin, where Friedrich will be the pastor and Chaplain in the Ev. Deaconess house. At the moment we are still looking for an apartment, but our e-mail address will definitely remain:

pfade(at)gmx.de

In this time of crisis, we can directly experience the biblical word of being awake and ready. We thought we would still have a lot of time together in these last few months here...

In February, we already took our personal family “farewell photo” in front of the parsonage before our son Paul, who visited us for Christmas, went back to Germany. That would be the last winter with so much snow ...

A farewell after nine years in Canada. It is so huge. Such a long and shaping time. If we look at the photo of when we arrived, we can measure the time that has passed in centimeters...



Nine years we have been with you, have lived with you—we have celebrated so many festivals, but we have also seen so many goodbyes, so many fates of so many people, and we have also seen so many children grow so tall. There was the farewell to Preston St., there is the new growing together on Smyth Rd. It is a moving experience to be on the way with you!

This will also be the case with Judith, Olaf, Emma, and Jakob, and we think back a little melancholically—with the pain of a farewell—to the summer nine years ago when we arrived here joyful and excited. We wish the Kierschkes an equally wonderful time with you in Canada. We are grateful from the bottom of our hearts that we were allowed to be here—and wish us and you the song of our wedding as a good companion:

„Whoever sets out can hope
in time and eternity.
The gates are open.
The land is bright and wide.“

Wishing God's blessing,

Alexandra und Friedrich

► The Kierschke family says hello!

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

Some of you have already met my husband and me personally at the service in Ottawa in January this year. We are very happy that we were elected and that I will be your pastor from August on.

The current situation is not easy for any of us. We all feel the effects of Covid 19 in different ways, and the uncertainty of the future..

This doesn't make our move easy, so we are busy with the preparations at the moment, but sooner or later (hopefully sooner) we will be in Ottawa, and will be able to celebrate worship together. Until then we would like to introduce ourselves to you:

We have lived in Storkow for the last 6 years (Storkow is located about an hour south-east of Berlin), where I was a pastor. We, that is my husband Olaf and I (Judith), our children Emma (14 years old) and Jakob (12 years old) as well as our dog, a Labrador named Happy, and our two cats, Hermione and Philine.

Storkow is a small village in the middle of a beautiful landscape full of forests and lakes for swimming. My parish included 5 churches and 1400 parishioners. We enjoyed life in the country. It was quiet, the children were both in the soccer club and Olaf, my husband was even the coach of Jakob's team.

Jakob hopes to quickly find a soccer club in Ottawa. Emma likes to draw and both children are excited to make new friends and connections when schools will (hopefully) reopen in September.

Our children were both born in Berlin. We lived there until 2013.

Olaf's work was in Berlin (a power plant manager in a coal-fired power plant) where he was born and grew up.

Originally, this was East Berlin, and when the wall fell, Olaf was just 17 years old, and doing his apprenticeship..

I come from another part of Germany, from Westphalia. I grew up in Bethel / Bielefeld. Bethel is a diaconal institution run by von Bodelschwinghsche Anstalten. My father worked as a deacon in Bethel, so we were able to live there.

You can imagine Bethel as a small village whose church is on top of a mountain surrounded by small

houses, hospitals, apartment buildings, a theological faculty and people with and without disabilities. There are schools and homes for disabled people and all houses have biblical names.

I grew up here and of course it shaped me. Early on, I attended the children's church service which I later led, and enjoyed singing in church choirs. I have two brothers and one of them also studied theology and is now a pastor



in Hannover. I began to study theology in Bethel before continuing my studies at the Humboldt University in Berlin in 1999.

We are all looking forward to Canada, to seeing you as a congregation, and to everything that comes...

Olaf is particularly looking forward to nature, hiking and fishing. Jakob is excited to see if he discovers exciting animals in Canada. Emma is curious about everyday school life in a high school and I am particularly looking forward to church services with you. In Germany worship is now allowed again after 2 months. It is strange that something so apparently normal every Sunday like the worship services all over the world, has become something so special and valuable.

So at the moment we can only hope and pray that - as at Pentecost 2000 years ago - we will soon be saying:

"And they were unanimous in the temple every day, breaking bread here and there in houses, eating meals with joy and pure heart, and praising God and finding goodwill among all the people." Acts 2: 46-47

Your Pastor Judith Kierschke, Olaf, Emma, and Jakob

► Review of special events and occasions

Augenblick!-Theater Absurda Comica or Mr. Peter Squentz February 28th and 29th

We almost postponed the performances because the renovation work in the church had not yet been completed, so there was no toilet for the disabled and there was no reception possible. But because of scheduling difficulties, we stuck to the two performances at the end of February. One of the last events in our church, which had to close its doors on March 22nd.

An absurd comedy from the 17th century that was loud and colourful, sometimes coarse and vulgar. It is not for nothing that the piece is called "lampoon", directly translated it would even be „a swear game". And then it was full of "asses", which the gaffes were called that the craftworker made when they tried to perform "Pyramus and Thisbe" for the royal court.

In the end, we let the workers triumph. "It's time for us to resign," said the king - and the workers cheered.

With this third production - after "Nathan the Wise" and "The Visit" the theater group Augenblick! has all but established itself in Ottawa - and so it now has its own website:

www.augenblick.ca.

There you will find everything about the previous performances, including photos of the productions. And if you feel like taking part yourself, you will also find all the contact details there.

Many thanks to Jörg Esleben, who directed the play, who developed the performance script, who did the translations, who built (and dismantled) the stage, who cleared half his living room to equip the stage and who inspires the performers and enthusiastically promotes the theatre happily.



Of course, we also have to thank the many, many, many others who support the theatre work - be it actors, assistant director, technicians, program writers, poster designers,

lighting technicians, prompters, organizers of all kinds and of course spectators, critics, donors, friends.

Many thanks to everyone!

Open Table on March 1st

STEVE THORNTON

“Our full humanity is contingent on our hospitality; we can be complete only when we are giving something away; when we sit at the table and pass the peas to the person next to us we see that person in a whole new way.” – Alice Waters



The Open Table is a ministry of hospitality by and for young adults in the city of Ottawa. On the last Sunday of every month, Open Table hosts a community meal in close proximity to the University of Ottawa, welcoming all who come to their doors.

The Open Table provides young adults and students in the greater Ottawa region with a place to gather together once a month over food and discussion. This community meets young adults of all walks of life, provided in the name of Jesus Christ. Every person who participates in an Open Table event is to be treated with the same level of respect, dignity and love, so no matter what the ethnicity, nationality, economic status, ability, sexual orientation, or gender, all are welcome.

On March 1 2020 a group of volunteers from Martin Luther Church, along with a Christian Young Adult group hosted a packed open Table dinner. This turned out to be the final such event for the season. Over 70 hungry people showed up, the largest turnout of the 2019-2020 season, to eat and hang out. The food was plentiful, smiles abounded, and in the end, no one went home hungry or without food for the next week. This event is dependent upon volunteers, both to prepare food ahead of time and to show up on the day, and volunteers from MLK and the wider community came through in spades. It was a lot of work, and a lot of fun!



Thank you to all who contributed to this event, it feels like it made a difference to those who came out.

World Day of Prayer from Zimbabwe

Friday, March 6, 7 p.m. St. Albertus Church

This year everything turned out differently, and that had nothing to do with the virus. In mid-February, almost three weeks before World Day of Prayer, I called Marlies Kathmann, the president of the St. Albertuskirche women's association. Could we celebrate World Prayer Day at their church? It should have taken place in the Martin Luther Church, but the kitchen had not yet been renovated and there was no washroom for the disabled. Ms. Kathmann took it in stride and only asked if we could contribute something for the Potluck after the service.

We have been celebrating the World Day of Prayer together with St. Albertus for 45 years. Marlies Kathmann and Marianne Gärtner have many stories to tell about the obstacles that have been overcome over the years. Above all in terms of weather: freezing rain, snowstorm or even a broken heating system... Many thanks to the St. Albertus congregation for having so easily removed this year's obstacle.

The Quodlibet Choir has again taken over the musical arrangement of the World Prayer Day Service. Such a joy, such a pleasure, such a



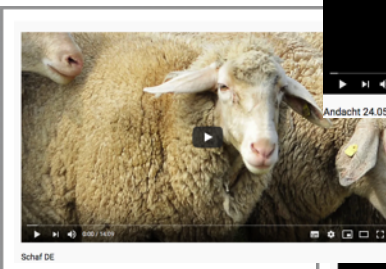
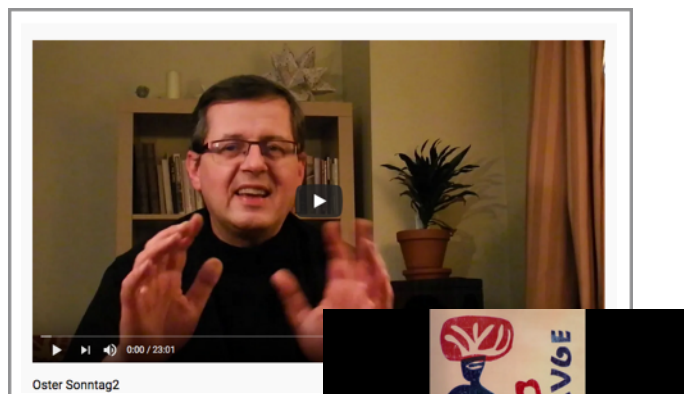
swing. With the rhythms of the songs, a hint of Zimbabwe was felt in the church. Thank you very much. Celebrating World Day of Prayer lives decisively in music, and we are always very grateful that the Quodlibet Choir takes on the musical part of the proclamation. \$ 330 went to the collection. Many thanks to all



donors. The World Day of Prayer is the largest ecumenical grassroots movement for women. "Informed Prayer and Prayerful Action" is the motto of the World Day of Prayer. The collection supports women's projects worldwide.

And then the virus came...

Our church has been closed since March 22nd. Our congregational life has been taking place digitally ever since. We experience worship services as video or audio recordings, meditative with pictures or filmed in the church. MaryAnn Foley, Signhild Damus and Martin Damus provide music for these devotions and



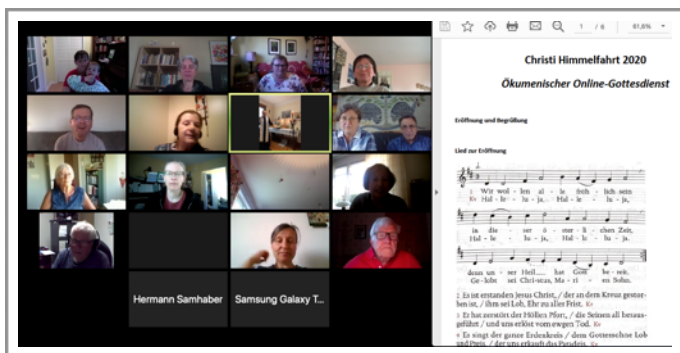
meet safely with social distancing in the church, recording sound and image!

We also met with the congregation through the ZOOM platform. Pastor Friedrich Demke spoke about his life as a Christian in the GDR on the subject of 30 years of German unity, 30 participants were involved, and in the end there was still the opportunity to ask a few questions. We also used Zoom to meet for coffee hour, everyone with their coffee mug...



The church council also meets via ZOOM.

Together with the St. Albertus church, we celebrated Ascension Day on May 21. Traditionally we celebrate this ecumenical service alternately in the St. Albertus church and the Martin Luther church. Last year it took place at Smyth Rd., this year Monsignor Feichtinger invited us all through Zoom.



Everyone was sent the service bulletin so that we could sing together - which is easier with the time delay at Zoom when only one person can be heard and everyone else turns off their microphones and simply sings along from home.

Unusual ways. But we have all noticed how important it is to be with each other, to see each other, and how important it is to celebrate services together.

A parishioner commented as follows:

"After all these weeks you can say that the Sunday service in the church has a new quality for me. Maybe you have to miss something first to really appreciate it. The "new normal" will take on a new dimension for me. I can say that with certainty. "

Letter to the congregation, March 26, 2020

Donations while the church is closed

Dear members of Martin Luther Church,

I write to you in a time of challenge, fear, and uncertainty. Our lives have been turned upside down by the events of the last number of days and weeks. A closure of this magnitude has never occurred in the history of this church or any other church in this area.

It is unknown how long this period of closure will last. It could be several weeks or several months. COVID-19 will have a long-lasting and far-reaching effect on the economy. All churches will feel this impact and we are no exception. Unlike some sectors of the business community, as a registered charity we cannot expect to be rescued by a government bailout. While the church is closed, the fixed cost keep running. We severely feel loss of weekly income coming from donations given during the service.

As ministry will continue the best way possible, I cannot stress enough how important it will be to continue to make our offerings. We will someday open again, and when we do, we must ensure that church is prepared and ready to resume normal operations. Currently, there are numerous ways to give:

1. Visit our website and click the donate button

- Search for our website: www.glco.org
- Click on menu, then
- Click on "[Donations](#)", then
- scroll down to and click on "[donate now](#)"
- then follow the prompts to add amount and personal details. That's it.

2. Mail envelopes to the church

- If Canada Post is running, you can mail envelopes directly to the church office.

Mailing address:

Martin Luther Church
933 Smyth Rd
Ottawa, Ontario
K1G1P5

3. Drop envelopes off at church

a. If the church building is locked, you can drop off envelopes into church mailbox. Someone will be checking the mailbox regularly.

4. Secure Online Credit Card option through the ELCIC National Office.

- a. To use this option at <https://secure.elcic.ca/>.
- b. Select the ELCIC General Fund
- c. In the "Personal Message", type; "for the Martin Luther Church, 933 Smyth Rd, Ottawa, Ontario, K1G1P5 "
- d. Fill in the remaining fields
- e. The National Office will assume all processing costs and pass on 100% of money received at this time to our congregation.

► Upcoming events

REGULAR EVENTS

The announcements are largely cancelled. Because of the Corona crisis, it is unclear what church life will be possible in future.

Children's services, Family services and Sunday services in general all have a big question mark, likewise the **Film Club** and **Wheels to Meals**.

The **Visiting Circle** last met via Zoom and is now "visiting" the parishioners by phone.

The **Book Circle** has planned preliminary dates for the next meetings but will remain flexible to the situation.

The future of the **RSVP Ministries (Christian Women), Film & Discussions** is still open because Marilyn Donison has unfortunately moved to Kelowna (see p. 9).

Our Visiting service

The Visiting Circle of our congregation currently consists of 6 members. We meet once a month with Ulla Robitschek, who has thankfully taken

If you need assistance with these options or have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to reach out and call the Pastor at 613 7489745. The days, weeks, and months ahead will be a challenging time for us, but I know when we pray, work, and give in GOD's name, we can make it through the darkness.

Yours
Konrad von Finckenstein
Co-President
Martin Luther Church

over the coordination for this group. We report on our experiences, discuss where we see special needs, and coordinate visits for the coming month.

We are very happy if more church members want to participate in this ministry. There is no obligation on how many visits you should make, what counts is the willingness to share some of your time with others. Please contact Pastor Demke or Ulla Robitschek if you are interested.

We depend on knowing who is sick, who needs special support, so please share if you know of people we should visit.

Your Pastor Friedrich

Contact: Ulla Robitschek, ph. 613-828 6182 (please call only between 9 a.m. und 5 p.m.).

German book circle

(every 6 weeks on Mondays, 7:30 pm)
Martin Luther Church, 933 Smyth Road

We have moved our book circle meetings in April and June to autumn - and hope that they can actually take place "in person".

September 7

Brigitte Kronauer:

„Frau Mühlenbeck im Gehäus“
(*Ms Mühlenbeck in the ,shell-house“*)

Moderation: Barbara Zabel

Ms. Mühlenbeck is a great "master" in telling her life story. A young teacher listens to her, fascinated by the self-confidence and energy with which Ms. Mühlenbeck created her "house", and comes across ever more questions in her own life.

November 23

Michael Blum: „Oranienstraße. Ausgrabungen.
Eine Verschronik“

Moderation: Sonja Finck

The exemplary history of a house in Berlin-Kreuzberger Oranienstrasse 10/11 and at the same time the life panorama of the Baum family from the middle of the 19th century to the present day. Everything starts like in a fairy tale: a man and a woman, born on the same day, fall in love and have five sons. We follow the different lives of their descendants stretching from Berlin to Rome, Haifa, Buenos Aires and Washington DC throughout the course of the 20th century.

SPECIAL DATES

Installation of pastor Judith Kierschke

Sunday, September 13th in the afternoon

Pastor Judith Kierschke's official installation in Martin Luther Church in Ottawa is scheduled for Sunday afternoon on September 13th. The dean of the Ottawa Region will make the introduction, Claudia Ostarek, Oberkirchenrätin from the EKD, will take part in the service - according to the planning before Corona times

Annual General Meeting in September

The annual meeting planned for April 19 had to be postponed due to the Corona crisis and is now scheduled to take place in September, the preliminary expected date is September 27.

On that Sunday we want to celebrate a joint church service at 9:30 a.m. Afterwards there will be a short break with coffee, cake and snacks in the entrance hall - and then the annual meeting begins.

Invitations with the agenda will be sent out beforehand. We are looking forward to a large attendance and fellowship - and hope that the annual meeting can actually take place as it is now planned.

► Donate on-line made easy

Of course, we very much like to see you all in the church and at the service! Not everyone can or wants to visit Smyth Rd regularly, but that does not mean he or she does not want to support our work. We want to keep it the same way the church still functions in Germany: we do not complain about those who seldom or never come to church, but we are also very happy about those who support their church "only financially".

Since the Canadian system has no church tax like Germany where the government collects it from church members and passes it on to the church, we

have developed ways to make it as easy as possible for you to finance the work of the congregation.

In addition to the classic cheque and cash transactions, which still accounts for a large part of our donations, there are two complementary ways to help our congregation. We hope that this will appeal to younger people in particular, and you can help by pointing out these possibilities to your adult children:

1. **If you are a CIBC customer and already have a three-digit donation number from our church**, then you can add our church online as Payee to the institutions where you pay your other bills (in the search box "German Martin Luther Church"). At the end of the year, as

usual, you will receive your donation receipt from our finance secretary. Heather Bent (613 248-0600, heatherbent(AT)bell.net) can also give you a three-digit donation number at any time if you do not already have one.

2. If 1. does not apply to you then you can instead of by cheque or cash, donate online via our **website** www.glco.org,. On the website under the menu item "donations" there is a "donate-now" - button of the organization Canada-Helps. Please click on it. If you're not yet registered with CanadaHelps, you'll need to create a short profile (it's faster than writing a cheque!) But you need

to do this only once. After that you can help your congregation by credit card over a secure connection. You will not receive the donation receipt from the church, but directly from CanadaHelps. This system works very well and enjoys increasing popularity.



Please note the Corona information on our website and on the answering machine in the church (613 733-5804):

We do not yet know when we will be able to celebrate services in our church again, and if so, with what restrictions, for example, whether we can sing, celebrate Communion, if we need to limit the number of worshipers. Please pay attention to updates on the website and e-mail notices and/or on the answering machine of the church telephone, and please keep informed those who do not have Internet. The dates for the services from June to August so far are tentative.

► Events in the Martin Luther Congregation

(Please pay attention to additions and changes that are announced in the worship services and communicated by email, as well as on our website and on Facebook and on the answering machine on the phone of our church office.)

REGULAR MEETINGS

**1st Monday
in the month** 7:00 pm Church council

**usually every second
Sunday of the month** 11 am meeting of the German-speaking playgroup in the Sunday School -
followed by a coffeetable and other activities
Contact: Esther Shoemaker (estershoe(AT)gmail.com)
(no Sunday School during the Holidays)

The German Senior Club „**Frohe Runde**“ meets on Thursdays in the St. Albertus Church.
(Contact: Linda Kiesewalter, kiesewalterlinda(AT)yahoo.ca, Ph. 613-224 7467)

WORSHIP SERVICES AND SPECIAL EVENTS

**All dates subject to the current situation,
please pay attention to the Corona information!**

Bible text for the month of June

You, and you only, have knowledge of the hearts of all the children of men
I Kings 8:39

► June

- Sunday, June 7:** Trinity
9.30 a.m. Joint Worship service (Demke) (probably online)
- Sunday, June 14:** Time after Pentecost
9.30 a.m. English Worship service (Demke) (probably online)
11 a.m. German Worship service (Demke) (probably online)
- Sunday, June 21:** Time after Pentecost
9.30 a.m. English Worship service (Demke) (probably online)
11 a.m. German Worship service (Demke) (probably online)
- Sunday, June 28:** Time after Pentecost
9.30 a.m. English Worship service
11 a.m. German Worship service

Bible text for the month of July

And the angel of the Lord came again a second time, and touching him said,
Get up and have some food, or the journey will be overmuch for your strength.
I Kings 19:7

► July

- Sunday, July 5:** Time after Pentecost
9:30 a.m Joint Worship service (Ted Heinze) (probably no Communion)
- Sunday, July 7:** Time after Pentecost
9.30 a.m. English Service of the Word
11 a.m. German Service of the Word
- Sunday, July 14:** Time after Pentecost
9.30 a.m. English Service of the Word
11 a.m. German Service of the Word
- Sunday, July 21:** Time after Pentecost
9.30 a.m. English Service of the Word
11 a.m. German Service of the Word

Sunday, July 28: **Time after Pentecost**
 9.30 a.m. English Service of the Word
 11 a.m. German Service of the Word

Bible text for the month of August

I will give you praise, for I am strangely and delicately formed;
your works are great wonders, and of this my soul is fully conscious.
Psalms 139:14

► **August**

Sunday, August 2: **Time after Pentecost**
 9.30 a.m Joint Worship service (Kierschke) with Communion

Sunday, August 9: **Time after Pentecost**
 9.30 a.m. English Worship service (Kierschke) with Communion
 11 a.m. German Worship service (Kierschke)

Sunday, August 16: **Time after Pentecost**
 9.30 a.m. English Worship service (Kierschke) with Communion
 11 a.m. German Worship service (Kierschke)

Sunday, August 23: **Time after Pentecost**
 9.30 a.m. English Worship service (Kierschke) with Communion
 11 a.m. German Worship service (Kierschke)

Sunday, August 30: **Time after Pentecost**
 9.30 a.m. English Worship service (Kierschke) with Communion
 11 a.m. German Worship service (Kierschke) with Communion

► **Event invitations by email**

For our special events, we invite you again by e-mail. If you also want to be reminded this way, please send an email to [lutherinfo\(AT\)gmail.com](mailto:lutherinfo(AT)gmail.com) .

► **Joy and sorrow**

From our congregation has died:

Helga Neumann, 85 years



► Belong - become a member of our congregation!

We welcome you to join our congregation – even if you live in Ottawa only temporarily. Our church is and stays alive through those who belong to it and support it.

Yes, I want to belong to Martin Luther Church Ottawa:

Last name, first name:

Address:

Phone, Email:

Place and date of birth:

Place and date of baptism:

Place and date of confirmation (if applicable)

I am interested to participate in the following:

I would like to receive further information about:

Date and signature:

We are here for you:

Contact: 933 Smyth Road, Ottawa ON K1G 1P5, (613) 733 5804 / [info\(AT\)glco.org](mailto:info(AT)glco.org) / www.glco.org / Facebook: Martin Luther Gemeinde Ottawa
Parking at the Church

Pastor: Rev. Friedrich Demke, (613) 748-9745

Confidential Email: [pastor\(AT\)glco.org](mailto:pastor(AT)glco.org) Please call or send an Email if you would like a personal conversation.

Church musician: MaryAnn Foley 613-225-2522 / [macfoley\(AT\)rogers.com](mailto:macfoley(AT)rogers.com)

Council Co-Chairs: Konrad von Finckenstein, (613) 744-5856 / [finckenstein\(AT\)gmail.com](mailto:finckenstein(AT)gmail.com)
Rolland Lapointe, (613) 692-5506 / [rolland.lapointe\(AT\)sympatico.ca](mailto:rolland.lapointe(AT)sympatico.ca)

Secretary: Heidi Rausch, (613) 247-9102 / [hrausch\(AT\)hotmail.ca](mailto:hrausch(AT)hotmail.ca)

Treasurer: Klaus Edenhoffer, (613) 252 4325 / [kedenhof\(AT\)gmail.com](mailto:kedenhof(AT)gmail.com)

Building Committee: Gunther Bauer, (613) 730 3495 / [guntherbauer\(AT\)hotmail.com](mailto:guntherbauer(AT)hotmail.com)
Klaus Moritz, (613) 254 9893 / [klausmoritz5\(AT\)gmail.com](mailto:klausmoritz5(AT)gmail.com)

Representative for the Martin Luther Kindergarten: Esther Shoemaker, (613) 366 8000 / [esther\(AT\)shoemaker.ca](mailto:esther(AT)shoemaker.ca);
Sven List, (613) 569-9135 / [svenlist\(AT\)sympatico.ca](mailto:svenlist(AT)sympatico.ca)

Other members of the Church Council:

Ute Davis, (613) 236 3736 / [muted\(AT\)rogers.com](mailto:muted(AT)rogers.com)
Jonathan Ladouceur, (613) 983-1812 / [jonathan.r.ladouceur\(AT\)gmail.com](mailto:jonathan.r.ladouceur(AT)gmail.com)
Heather Ladouceur, (613) 263-1812 / [heather.ladouceur\(AT\)gmail.com](mailto:heather.ladouceur(AT)gmail.com)
Sheri Pendlebury, (613) 523-5262 / [bsp_sheri\(AT\)hotmail.com](mailto:bsp_sheri(AT)hotmail.com)
Alfred Popp, (613) 729-4650 / [alfpopp\(AT\)gmail.com](mailto:alfpopp(AT)gmail.com)
Steve Thornton, (613) 526-5414 / [shthornton\(AT\)gmail.com](mailto:shthornton(AT)gmail.com)
Christina Wendorff, (613) 489 3438 / [christina.wendorff\(AT\)gmail.com](mailto:christina.wendorff(AT)gmail.com)

Financial secretary: Heather Bent, (613) 248-0600 / [heatherbent\(AT\)bell.net](mailto:heatherbent(AT)bell.net)

Accountant: Marion Fraser, [mdfraser\(AT\)bell.net](mailto:mdfraser(AT)bell.net)

Church secretary: Gail Smith; (613) 220-2264 / [Smithga98\(AT\)gmail.com](mailto:Smithga98(AT)gmail.com)

English Worship service: Sunday 9:30 am, every Sunday with Communion

German Worship service: Sunday 11 am, on the last Sunday of the month with Communion

Joint Worship service: First Sunday of the month 9:30 am, with Communion (English/German) (there is no other worship service on this Sunday)

German Sunday School: Second Sunday of the month 11 am (no Sunday School during the Holidays).

Our two newsletters, the German "Ruf" and the English "Courier" are issued four times a year in March, June, September and December by German Evangelical Martin Luther Church of Ottawa Inc. If you would like to receive the newsletter by e-mail, please let us know sending an e-mail to [lutherinfo\(AT\)gmail.com](mailto:lutherinfo(AT)gmail.com) – we would love to put you on our mailing list. You may also receive the newsletter by post on a regular basis and at no charge (even if you are not a member of the congregation). Please check the mailing address on the envelope and inform us about changes and corrections.