

St. Peter's Post

St. Peter's Lutheran Church Newsletter



St. Peter's Lutheran Church
400 Sparks Street
Ottawa, ON
K1R 5A2

Phone: (613) 233-9911
Fax: (613) 233-9936
Email: info@stpetersottawa.ca
<http://www.stpetersottawa.ca/>

Pastors Elina Salonen & Ed Bastian

Vol. XXXI, No. 1 March 2020

From the Pastors' Desk: Love Resurrects Our Hope

That first Easter morning was a time of uncertainty. Our account of that day this year is from the gospel of John. Mary went first to the tomb. Found the stone moved and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, who ran to the tomb. The other disciple waited for Simon Peter. Peter entered the tomb and found it empty. The other disciple then went in and scripture says "believed." However, John makes clear "for as yet they did not understand the scripture that he must rise from the dead." And then, we read that they went home.



Mary, however, goes back to the tomb and finds two angels where Jesus had lain. She has an encounter with Jesus, whom she first assumed to be the gardener. In her grief, she asks the "gardener" where they've taken Jesus. Jesus says her name and she knows right away who He is.

The gospel lessons of this past Lenten season present Jesus as the one to clarify things for us, whether that was regarding the supposed sin of the man born blind or that inferred by many of the Samaritan woman at the well.

Like the ancients, we still tend to get both of them wrong as we see only problems. Scripture records folks then seeing the man born blind as sinful. We know that many generations since have considered the multiply married woman a sinner. Jesus made clear that neither the man nor his parents sinned, leaving it to you and me to make clear that the Samaritan woman was not a sinner, but hurting after many losses and in light of great vulnerability. Jesus' response was to provide her with living water, which would give her more than life's struggles could take away.

This Easter will be like none we have experienced for many years due to the uncertainty surrounding us. The Covid-19 pandemic has all of us fearful. What do we do when we come to the tomb and find it empty? What do we do when we find our churches empty?

Scripture advises us to go to the place of our fears. Express them, like Mary. God can take it, as our loved ones have patiently taken in our concerns. But then, we are to listen and wait. C. S. Lewis's warning was that our repeated cries can keep us from hearing God's response. He wrote, "Perhaps your own reiterated cries deafen you to the voice you hoped to hear."¹ The answer will come if we are persistent in our relationship and, equally importantly, if we are open to God's creativity in answering it.

The Samaritan woman became an evangelist, telling her whole community about Jesus. The greatest surprise comes when we hear her community later say that it is not because of her testimony that they now believe, but because they have heard for themselves.

As Lutherans, we listen as God speaks to us, understanding that sometimes, as happened to the prophet, that God's is a still, small voice, rather like that of our loved one. You know – the one we hear even when they're not with us.

Easter affirms that love never ends and invites us to live in love regardless of what's happening around us, as the psalmist said. Love provides the security we need in uncertain times and resurrects our lives. That's why it is even greater, as Paul wrote, than faith and hope.

Pastor Elina and Pastor Ed

¹ "A Year with CS Lewis: Daily Readings from His Classic Works", edited by Patricia S. Klein, HarperSanFrancisco, 2003, page 301

Reports From Council and Committees

Treasurer's Update

The most recent financial statements for the parish cover to the end of February. That also happens to be the last full month prior to the various restrictions placed on all of us as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The financial position of the parish through at least the end of April will undoubtedly be different than what was projected at the AGM. How different? It will depend on many factors, most notably how long the call for social distancing remains in place. All that being said, as of Feb. 29:

1. Total offerings for Operations are down by around \$900 compared to the same two-month period last year. At the same time, though, an additional \$1,655 was donated to the Furnace Appeal, bringing the balance to \$9,330.
2. Total Operations income from all sources was a little over \$45,000 while Operations expenses were just over \$61,000, creating a deficit of just under \$16,000. The most significant one-time expense was the final payment for tax appeal services (\$8,814).
3. After paying the buyout fee, the parish now owns its photocopier outright which should result in a savings of around \$1,000 by year end versus what was budgeted.
4. Unrestricted benevolence to Eastern Synod was \$1,800, a \$300 increase over the same two-month period last year.
5. No payments were made from the Building or Ruth Funds

-- Cory Matieyshen

COVID-19 Giving Alternatives Provided by the ELCIC National Office

Although the churches are closed during this pandemic, like all of us, there are still bills that must be paid – donations made during this period are greatly appreciated. The ELCIC National Office is now offering payment options that offer convenience and efficiency to members. Currently, the National Office is assuming all processing costs and passing on 100% of money received to St. Peter's. Please note that for funds donated using any of these options, your year-end tax receipt will be issued by the ELCIC National Office.

Secure Online Credit Card You may opt to make credit card donations – the ELCIC national office offers a secure online option. The link to access this option is:

<https://secure.elcic.ca/>

- Select **ELCIC General Fund**
- In the “**Personal Message**”, enter “**St. Peter's ELC, 400 Sparks St, Ottawa, ON**”

Pre-Authorized direct bank account receipt option You may have amounts remitted directly from your bank account. If you are interested in this option, please contact Kyle Giesbrecht, Director, Finance and Administration at kgiesbrecht@elcic.ca for further information.

Interac E-Transfer using online banking You may make contributions using a form of electronic transfer. If you would like to use the ELCIC National Office's Interac E-Transfer at this time:

- Through your personal banking account, make your Interac E-Transfer to **payments@elcic.ca**
- Follow up with an **email to payments@elcic.ca** ; specify “**St. Peter's ELC, 400 Sparks St, Ottawa, ON**” as the recipient, along with the answer to the security question you entered.

Call for Volunteers: Bylaw and Policy Review

St. Peter's last revised its bylaws and policy on committees in 2010. Since then, Eastern Synod has passed a new model constitution and bylaws. I invite members of the congregation with an interest in any of the following areas to join me in comparing the two sets of documents and recommending revisions to Council and, ultimately, the congregation:

1. Membership categories and maintaining a membership roster
2. Annual meeting (including timing) and terms of office and installation of members of Council
3. Discipline and authority, procedure for amending the bylaws

The main tasks for each of the above areas will be a close reading of 5-10 pages of text, active participation in an email discussion of the proposed changes and production of a document recommending changes to Council. Please email me at treasurer@stpetersottawa.ca if you are interested in helping out.

-- *Cory Matieyshen*

St. Peter's Property & Grounds

Furnace Replacement Project The Property Committee has met at St. Peters on several occasions with (three) contractors to get recommendations and quotes on replacing "the beast in the basement". The old boiler is estimated to be operating at about 70% efficiency, the two new replacement boilers will operate at 95 to 98% efficiency. Fundraising, which started in December, has been going very well, with approximately \$10,000 raised thus far. A poster in the parish hall reflects donations to date. We encourage everyone to continue to support our fundraising efforts in order to meet our goal of \$40,000. Installation of the new system is planned for this spring. To donate, put "Furnace fund" in the "Other" category on your church envelopes. A poster in the parish hall will reflect the donations to date.

Refinishing of Pews Every year, money is (designated) in the budget to refinish pews . Four pews have been finished this year. Two pews, on the left side, have been shortened to allow space for a wheelchair. These pews are directly opposite the pews which were shortened last year, on the opposite side.

Front Doors After several delays, Madawaska Doors have completed the exterior doors facing Sparks St. (The wooden portion in the arch above the doors is also part of the replacement. One of the two new doors will be equipped with a panic bar, similar to those on our other exterior doors. (Installation) is expected to take place in the spring. The cost of these doors has been covered by the same external donor that covered the cost of the (three) bells in the tower.

Bicycle Lane This summer the City of Ottawa is planning to build a bicycle lane on the west side of Bay St. from Laurier to Wellington. The bicycle lane on the east side of Bay St. will remain there, with bicycle traffic travelling north, while the new bicycle lane on the west side will have bicycles travelling south. The City will be reclaiming two feet three inches of their property along Bay St. from our current parking area. There will continue to be an exit from our parking lot on to Bay St. With the installation of this bicycle lane, eight on-street parking spots will be lost between Queen and Sparks St.

– *Bernie Rosien*

Witness and Hospitality Committee

The Open Table On November 24th, 2019, St. Peter's served a hot meal to 65 young people at The Open Table, located at 454 King Edward Street in the downtown core. The youth served



there were young university students living away from home, and they were most appreciative of the delicious home-cooked meal St. Peter's provided. It was a wonderful evening with warm conversations and a very lively atmosphere. We even discovered a piano in the corner and sang a few songs there.



St. Peter's was well represented by a group of twelve, comprised of both youth and adults. All in all, it was wonderful evening of fellowship and thoroughly enjoyed by all involved!

-- Anisha Eipe



Worship Assistant Committee

Thank you to everyone who has served as Worship Assistants – we really appreciate your continuing participation. We encourage you to try it out, if you have not yet done so – it brings a new dimension to your own worship, and is a truly rewarding experience.

-- Julie Nelson

Musical Notes

Once the isolation phase of the COVID-19 has passed, we all look forward to “making a joyful noise unto the Lord”! When that time arrives, we hope that you will feel called to join our weekly Thursday night choir practices, and rejoice in song with us.

-- Keegan Lazarus



Learning Committee



Advent Pageant. In the midst of Lent, Christmas 2019 is now but a memory... but these precious pictures of the children's Advent Pageant need to be shared! Entitled "Looking Forward to Christ", it was enjoyed by all – the congregation, the parents, and especially the participants. Continuing a tradition that began a few years back, the confirmation students, along with some of the older kids from LYO, helped with the younger ones and joined in the fun of putting on the show. Now we look forward to next year's pageant! We would like to recruit new people to help select plan and direct this year's edition. It's never too early to start!



Pancake Breakfast The annual Shrove "Tuesday" pancake breakfast was celebrated by the SCS kids on February 23. A delicious time was had by all!

We look forward to returning to our normal activities once this crisis has passed.

--*Nicolas Eason*



Confirmation

Congratulations goes out to Lewis Bilauri, who affirmed his baptism on Sunday, March 22nd. He is pictured here with his father, Leonce, and brother, Leon. Lewis' confirmation was necessitated by the family's return to their homeland. We are thankful for the years that they shared with us at St. Peter's. Our love goes with them to Tanzania!

May 31 is when we observe Pentecost – the day on which St. Peter's, along with many other churches, has traditionally held our annual Affirmation of Baptism (Confirmation) ceremony. We ask that you keep this year's candidates, along with Lewis, in your prayers, that their faith may be strengthened daily.

-- *Julie Nelson*



Lutheran Youth Ottawa (LYO)

The Ottawa Ministry Area-wide youth group, Lutheran Youth Ottawa (LYO), continues to meet twice a month right here at St. Peter's! Activities have included; Kraft Dinner Buffet; Movie night; Pancake Making (in honour of Lent); and writing cards for homebound members of our congregation.



The youth have been active participants in our worship and fellowship as well. As part of the Tri-Congregational worship on January 19, LYO members assisted with serving and clean-up of coffee hour. Youth from St. Peter's and St. John were also included as readers during the service.

Given the shared youth ministry of St. Peter's, St. John, and Resurrection Lutheran Church in Ottawa, our coordinator, Ben Lukenchuk, is intentionally visiting all three ministry sites. On February 23rd, Ben worshipped with Resurrection and gave an update on both CLAY and LYO activities. During Lent, Ben supported the confirmation candidates at St. John as they offered sermons during mid-week Lenten services.

We have also expanded our social media presence! You can catch up on LYO updates on Facebook (LYO – Lutheran Youth Ottawa) and our new Instagram (lutheranyouthofottawa).

COVID-19 changed the game for programming! In March, Pastor Joel at St. John had taken the lead on planning a 40-Hour Leadership Retreat. This was cancelled in addition to all in-person youth group nights. In April and May, we are planning to attend the Anglican Lutheran Stewards of Creation retreat in Hamilton (April 17-19), and then a Confirmation Camp at Camp Lutherlyn (May 8-9). We will monitor the advice of Public Health Officials and decide how to proceed on these events.



Because of COVID-19, we are moving to virtual LYO meetings; we are meeting weekly online. Check out our social media for more information!

-- Ben Lukenchuk

CLAY Preparations continue for the Ottawa Area Youth to attend the Canadian Lutheran and Anglican Youth Gathering (CLAY) in Calgary this coming August 20-23. See <http://claygathering.ca/enroute/> for more information about CLAY2020. At the time of publication, CLAY has not been delayed or cancelled due to COVID-19.

We have nine people registered: three from St. Peter's; four from St. John; and Ben Lukenchuk and Rebecca Wong attending as Home Team Leaders. It will cost around \$2000 all-in to send a youth to CLAY. After gifts from Resurrection and St. John, and funds from the youth themselves, we are perhaps a quarter of the way there.



We are immensely grateful for the fundraising support we have received! The youth and their families hosted a Soup and Bread Lunch fundraiser for St. Peter's AGM. It raised around \$500. Ben collected sponsorships for a marathon he participated in. This raised around \$1000. We continue to

operate our bottle drive – contact Ben for a pick-up! Stay tuned for information about our Spring fundraisers. Please note that in the event CLAY is cancelled, we will roll the offerings over and get a head start on fundraising for the subsequent CLAY.

Please remember that any offering/giving can be designated for “CLAY”; since all fundraising is done through St. Peter's, any funds donated in this manner will appear on your normal year-end tax receipt.

-- Ben Lukenchuk



Service Committee – Serving Our Community (During COVID – 19)

“**Between a rock & a hard place**” may best describe how the community organizations that St. Peter's supports find themselves in during these days of COVID -19. Members of the Service Committee have reached out to their key contacts within the organizations to let them know of our support during this precarious time. They heard compelling stories of adjustments required in order to meet the challenges of continuing to provide services while protecting their staff and volunteers from exposure to coronavirus. How to balance the needs? They are front-line organizations where staff and volunteers interact closely with the vulnerable populations they serve. There are many considerations as they struggle to keep their doors open and street and shelter ministries available. In close interactions, they need to reach out and not touch; to keep safe and to serve. Breath-taking considerations!

St. Peter's is a member of Centretown Churches Social Action Committee (CCSAC) which represents 22 downtown churches. We share a responsibility for services in the downtown core. The community organizations that St. Peter's support are: Centre 507; Centretown Emergency Food Centre; Community Laundry Coop; Ottawa Innerscity Ministries; Daybreak Housing; and, Restoring Hope Ministries. Through our recent contacts with them, we have gained an even greater appreciation of their resilience and fortitude as they develop contingency plans to keep their services available to the homeless, those on marginal income, those living on the streets, those with addictions and mental health issues. They are part of our community and they represent youth and older persons, many of whom have experienced seemingly insurmountable hardships throughout their lives. The services that these organizations represent are essential to the daily well-being of their clients. They provide caring, supportive services for a better, brighter future.

The scene has been changing day-by-day as organizations employ new, creative measures to adapt their services during this crisis. Some organizations have had to temporarily suspend ongoing services in order to regroup and seek new ways to implement their face-to-face services. Centre 507 has joined with the Centretown Emergency Food Centre; they have modified procedures for efficient distribution of food and take-out meals to their increasing client population.

It is an honour to partner with these impressive organizations, staff and volunteers who serve the inner-city. They find ways to meet the unprecedented challenge of the coronavirus in order to provide significant outreach and services. They bring much more than food and shelter; they offer hope and a lifeline to their clients. They bring beauty, strength and dedication to those whom they serve. They make things happen in good times and, as now, in most difficult of times. They surely fit the descriptor: “**Where’s there’s a will, there’s a way**” - and we would add, “with God’s almighty help!”

St. Peter’s Lenten Food Challenge: As our church doors closed due to COVID - 19, so too did the Lenten Food Challenge come to a close. Our food items were meant to stock the shelves of the Centretown Emergency Food Centre. When our church doors open again, we will pick up this challenge and help replenish the shelves with much-needed food items. The following item provides information for supporting the Food Centre during COVID -19.

Centretown Emergency Food Centre (CEFC): The CEFC reports that they remain open to serve clients, carefully following Ottawa Public Health guidelines concerning social distancing and hygiene. Given limits on staff and volunteer resources, the Food Centre is now issuing clients pre-packaged hampers with a good supply of staples. This procedure replaces the usual practice of volunteers interviewing clients individually, allowing them to select items from a list of available food. The Food Centre is not requesting food items or supplies at this time. If you wish to make a financial donation to CEFC to offset costs of purchasing food, it would be most appreciated. To make a financial donation, please visit CEFC’s website: <http://cefcottawa.org/>

Serving Centre 507: Centre 507 is special to us. We had two visits to Centre 507 in the last few months. We enjoy going there with chili or sandwiches and always...desserts! Last November, the Youth and Service Committee prepared 200 sandwiches to the enjoyment of all who came for lunch. In January, the Service Committee served a Chili Luncheon, fruit and desserts to approximately 100 thankful persons. We always receive a lot of thanks and smiles for our meals and especially for the fruit and trays of desserts. We often hear how they love the homemade desserts, a big treat for most. Although every cookie is appreciated, the homemade cookies and squares are the first to go.

During the COVID -19 crisis, Centre 507 and the Food Centre have joined together and initiated a new client service in another location in the building. The hours of operation have been modified and the new service area allows for more social distancing for clients to pick up food supplies.

Centretown Churches Social Action Committee (CCSAC) Anisha Eipe is the new representative of the Service Committee to CCSAC and she has taken on the role of Administrator of CCSAC’s new Facebook Page. We know Anisha will continue the proud tradition of active liaison and impressive involvement that John Pedersen established with CCSAC over many years. To follow the outreach done by CCSAC, please visit their Facebook Page at: <https://www.facebook.com/CentreTownChurches/>

PRAYER (Evangelical Lutheran Worship Hymnal)

“God of compassion, whose Son became poor for our sake: Help us to see the face of Christ in those who are poor, and in serving them, to serve you. Give us generous hearts so that those living in poverty may have adequate food, clothing and shelter. By your Spirit move us to affirm the dignity of all people to work for just laws that protect the most vulnerable in society, through Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. Amen.”

--Aggie Castleman

Finance Committee

Offering Envelopes Demystified

I'm sure that everyone recognizes this picture as being one of the weekly offering envelopes. But you may have questions, just as I did, as to what exactly each of the lines is for and where the money goes to when an amount is placed on that line. This brief article is intended to help everyone understand what each of the lines means.

The first line - **“Current Operations”**: Any money allocated here stays within the church and is used for the work our church does as part of it's the core ministry we do. If you were to look at the budget for the church, and all of the expenses listed within it, this is where the money goes.

The second line, **“Regular Benevolence”**, can be confusing to some. Anything allocated to this line is passed along to Eastern Synod for their use, which includes support for other congregations. A portion of this money also goes to the national church, the ELCIC.

The last item on the envelopes is the **“Other”** line. This is where each of us can direct funds. For example, this is where you can help a specific cause or activity that the church is conducting. For example, we currently have a special appeal for replacement of the furnace. If you were to write **“Furnace”** in the “Other” line, the money would be placed into that special project fund. Note that your year-end tax receipt includes all designated amounts. Examples of designated giving include the following:

Projects Internal to St. Peter's:
Furnace
Unrestricted Building Fund (Building)
CLAY
Quilters

Charities Related to St. Peter's:
Canada Lutheran World Relief (CLWR)
Ottawa Lutheran Refugee Support
Committee (OLRSC)
Centretown Emergency Food Centre

PreAuthorized Remittance (PAR) Have you ever forgotten your envelope at home, and used one of the ones on the back of the pews? Have you ever wanted to give your envelope into the church, but haven't been able to make it into the building to do so due to illness or weather? There is an option that can help, which is preauthorized remittance, or PAR.

What is PAR you ask? If you use automatic debits from your bank account to pay for insurance, cable TV, taxes, fuel, or a mortgage, then you understand the PAR principle. It means regular offerings throughout the year, even when you are unable to attend worship.

You can direct your offering just like your envelope, with options for Current Operations, Benevolence and Special (equivalent to OTHER on your envelopes). There is no minimum amount needed to use PAR. Individual donors are charged their normal chequing fee by their bank (if you are charged one by your bank). The amount is drawn on contributor's accounts on the 20th of each month (or the following business day if the 20th falls on the

weekend). The funds are transferred directly to the church and recorded as a donation from you.

Some people use this as their primary giving method. Others use it to ensure their giving is completed. And others use it in combination with their envelopes, setting a base amount through PAR, and giving further through their weekly envelopes. And you are able to change the amounts at any time. Regardless of the reason, consider using PAR today.

The PAR forms are located in the parish hall and they are available electronically from the church office. Hopefully, this has helped everyone understand how we can use our offering envelopes and, with PAR's, a possible alternative to the weekly envelopes completely. Please contact me if you have any questions.

-- *Jonathan Risto*

St. Peter's Supports CLWR

Quilters continue to meet and tie quilts the last Wednesday of the month. We are looking forward to our annual quilt blessing, which we hope to hold in June. Progress continues towards this year's goal of compiling 40 Baby Bundles for CLWR on Mother's Day. We estimate that we are currently sitting at about 60% of our goal. Sleepers, onesies and sweaters still needed – preferably in size 9-18 months.

-- *Carolyn Johnston*

News from the Ottawa Lutheran Refugee Sponsorship Committee

Needless to say, there will be no new refugee arrivals until after the Covid-19 crisis is past. We hope that the government agencies involved take this opportunity to work on processing applications.

Pastor Rosalie and her family continue to live in danger and in fear in South Africa. Immigration approved the paperwork that CLWR filed on her behalf and has assigned a case number to her file. Now that that step has been made, CLWR is able to request that her case be expedited. We heard from her recently; with lockdowns and restrictions in place, their daily lives have been made very difficult.

Refugees and displaced persons will be amongst the most vulnerable in the current pandemic, as they live in intensely crowded situations, with little to no healthcare available to them. Please remember Pastor Rosalie and her family, and all people awaiting resettlement in your prayers.

-- *Carolyn Johnston*

Tributes to St. Peter's Members

Bilauri Family We bid farewell to Leonce Bilauri and sons, Lewis and Leon. Leonce was stationed here in Ottawa for a number of years with Tanzanian Embassy. He has now been called to return to Tanzania. Leonce sent the following letter to the members of St. Peter's:

Pastor Elina: Thank you so much Pastor, you might not know how much we have been blessed though you and Pastor Ed. Believe me, we have been blessed abundantly.

I am very happy that Leon and Lewis got confirmed here, their faith and curiosity to know more about Jesus Christ is growing on daily basis, the work of Mr. Nicolas and his colleagues in the Sunday school is highly appreciated, as well as Mr. Ben.

I also thank Pastor Beglo and his successor, our pastors in our early days in Canada; we also thank all St. Peter members, I am sure God will bring us together once again in future. COVID-19 has stolen my final plan of standing in front of the church which would be our last Sunday in Canada to thank the congregation and entire St. Peter leadership, this plan having failed, I wish in one of your announcements you will let the people know that we are leaving, but forever we will cherish everything at St. Peter. God bless you all, my message in the book of Psalm 121.

Our church in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania, will be Azania Front Lutheran Cathedral Church, which was built by German missionaries in 1898. Some photos of the church are attached.

I will send our contacts in Tanzania upon arrival and let you know my new position in the government.

*The Peace of Christ be with you all always.
-- Leonce, Leon & Lewis*



Lenore Dinsdale 14 August 1923 – 25 February 2020

Long-time St. Peter's member Lenore Dinsdale left this earthly life at the age of 96 on February 25, at the Dinsdale Personal Care Home in Brandon, MB. Lenore's memorial service will be held in Brandon at a future date. I am writing this as we will not have the opportunity to celebrate her life here, where she was an integral part of the community at St. Peter's for over 50 years. Lenore was a true friend, inspiration and role model to so many of us.



Lenore was a force of nature, a true character – full of life, with a ready laugh and a twinkle in her eye. She loved her God and her church, her family and friends, and her country. Born in Manitoba into a Lutheran farming family, Lenore Gusdale earned her first degree at Brandon College (now University) in 1945 and the following year, received a Bachelor of Social Work from the University of Toronto. After the war, she was re-introduced to returned serviceman Walter Dinsdale – who first caught her eye years before, playing in the Salvation Army Band. They married in 1947, and the first of their five sons arrived in 1948.

Lenore was fond of saying that she found it possible to change her political affiliation, but *never* her religion. Not only was Walter a staunch member of the Salvation Army, he was the son of a Conservative MLA. Born a Liberal, Lenore proudly supported Walter, a Social Credit MP who ultimately became a Conservative cabinet minister under John Diefenbaker, thoroughly immersing herself in Conservative causes and enthusiastically campaigning for him. True to her word, Lenore remained a stalwart Lutheran. Walter won a by-election in 1951, and the young family relocated to Ottawa. Lenore arrived here just as St. Peter's was constructing its new building in the present-day location. Walter passed away in 1982 while still in office; Lenore, who loved her life here in the nation's capital, stayed on in Ottawa until her mid-80's.

Everyone who knew her no doubt has their own treasure trove of “Lenore stories”; I certainly do. Possibly one of the busiest women I ever knew, Lenore's accomplishments and awards are too numerous to mention. Whatever cause she chose to champion, she never went about it by half-measures; Lenore *never* sat silently on the sidelines. A master of elocution, she could reel off a speech without a microphone; those in the far back rows had no difficulty hearing her words – a skill we appreciated on the Sundays that Lenore served as reader. In addition to all the organizations that she was involved with, the demands of an MP's wife, and raising the five boys, Lenore worked for the Children's Aid Society in Ottawa, placing over 300 children for adoption. During our own adoption process, an older friend related her story to me, saying that theirs was delayed because her social worker was married to an MP, and the adoption had to wait until Parliament resumed in the fall.

A firm feminist, Lenore was a strong believer in the necessity for women in politics, and befriended all those elected, regardless of their political leanings; I believe that she would have loved to have joined their ranks herself. In her later years, Lenore remained active in numerous organizations, in the annual Prayer Breakfast on the Hill, and served as an immigration judge. Lenore lived her faith every day, infusing it into everything she did. Lenore always considered Brandon “home”, returning to her cottage there every summer, and staying involved in local organizations. She nurtured her close ties to it and to family – always knowing that her last home would be the Salvation Army retirement home there that the bears Dinsdale name. Godspeed, Lenore!

-- Carolyn Johnston

ELCIC – Local, Regional & National

Live-streamed and video worship Are you missing church? Feeling the need to connect to a service, and reflect? A number of ELCIC churches are offering live-streaming and pre-recorded worship services; you can find a list on the ELCIC website: <http://elcic.ca/publichealth/livestreaming.cfm>

Daily Devotionals Another good source is **Lutherans Connect – (campus) ministry for the virtual world** – which has an emphasis on social justice. This is a link to their blog; it features daily, seasonal devotionals. <https://reimaginingjustice.blogspot.com/> You can join by sending an email to: lutheransconnect@gmail.com

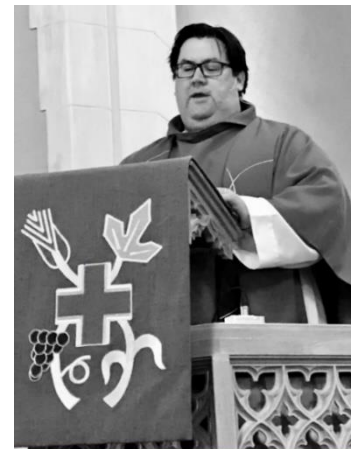
Tri-Congregational Conversation About Stronger Lutheran Witness in Ottawa

The first gathering took place on November 12th. The congregational councils of St. John (Ottawa), Resurrection (Orleans), and St. Peter's (Ottawa) met at the parsonage of St. John. Participants engaged in a S.W.O.T. (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis for their respective congregations with the pastors serving as facilitators and documenting the outcome of this discussion. After a short break, the three pastors facilitated the same groups as the groups outlined their respective views on the pros and cons of merging at St. Peter's Lutheran Church. Art Pittman from St. John congregation planned and facilitated the evening activities.

The second gathering took place on Monday December 9th at Resurrection Lutheran Church in Orleans. The congregational councils and choirs of St. John (Ottawa), Resurrection (Orleans), and St. Peter's (Ottawa) met together with their spouses, partners, and friends. Thus, the circle was drawn wider. Again, we were well served with Art Pittman, who planned and facilitated the evening activities producing a summary report of the conversations for all the councils involved. The questions the participants were invited to wrestle with are listed below:

1. What are strategies to address emotional attachment of members from St. John and Resurrection to their buildings/churches? *Pastor Joel Crouse, Facilitator*
2. How can we address "resistance to change" which might be experienced in all three congregations? *Pastor Edwin Bastian*
3. How do we ensure that members from St. John and Resurrection feel like equal partners in a merger at St. Peter's? *Pastor Elina Salonen*

These two gatherings resulted in the third gathering – a Sunday worship at St. Peter's together with 161 members present from St. John, Resurrection, and St. Peter's on Sunday, Jan 19, at 10am, following a heavy snowfall. Planning and leadership tasks were shared amongst the pastors and lay worship leaders, including youth. A light lunch was provided by members of St. Peter's. Art Pittman designed the structure of the conversation that took place after the worship and lunch. He also facilitated the event. We are grateful for his leadership! Our dialogue



focused on exploring specific strategies our community of faith could pursue in order to remain viable and grow and in light of:

- Financial challenges - increasing costs while churches are experiencing challenges with revenue
- Demographic challenges - churches are experiencing overall reductions in size, with low percentages of children, youth, and young adults
- Societal challenges - the struggle to be perceived as relevant in this time of rapid societal change

The three pastors invited the congregational councils to approve a motion and bring it before the congregations at their AGMs in a few weeks concerning a tri-congregational conversation on merger that would be more official and lead by the Synod and outside experts.



The motion comes from the material provided by the Synod:

That the Congregational Council of St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Ottawa Ontario, be authorized to form a team who will work with St. John Lutheran Church, Ottawa Ontario and Resurrection Lutheran Church, Orleans, Ontario to explore a potential merger/amalgamation of the three congregations.

The motion passed in all three AGMs: St. John 32 Yes/7 No (Jan 26); Resurrection, unanimous with one abstention (Feb 9); and St. Peter's, unanimous (Feb 2).



In the January Council meetings, the three councils were invited to make a motion to send the letter stating our united interest in formal dialogue and inviting the Bishop guide and explore possibilities for a renewed vision for mission and ministry between the Ottawa Area Congregations of Resurrection, St. Peter's and St. John. This motion was passed by all three councils.

The next step for the council is to create a steering committee (three members per congregation) for the formal discussion of merger/amalgamation between the three congregations. They will then work together with Ms. Karen Bjerland, the Eastern Synod's Congregational Redevelopment Services Advisor, whom the Bishop has appointment as the facilitator to work with us. She is a highly skilled facilitator and will, as a first step, help the steering group to design a process that is acceptable to all three congregations and will address whatever concerns each may bring to the table.

Thanks to Anisha Eipe, Ben Lukenchuk, and Pastor Elina for providing the photos for this edition of St. Peter's Post.