

Advent Journey



*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone,
the new is here! - 2 Corinthians 5:17*

FROM THE EDITOR

All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.
- 2 Corinthians 5:18-19

Paul, in his 2nd letter to the community in Christ in Corinthians, powerfully expresses God's defining mission of reconciliation. This foundational theme of reconciliation is also the core message in the three "lost" parables' recorded in the fifteenth chapter of Luke; that of the lost sheep, coin, and son. God loves "us" at the very core of His being, each and every single one of us. Is it possible to imagine such a love? Is it possible to imagine a love possible in us? Not only do Paul and Luke invite us into such a possibility, they seem to be suggesting such a thing is what defines us as a people of God through Christ. Amazing, just amazing!

I am stepping down from editorship of the Advent Journey after this issue. Judy Baribeau will be the new editor. My witness in the church is to promote seeing ourselves in and through our neighbour. I believe that ministry has been reflected through my participation over the last six years at Advent. I have a chance now to expand that ministry in ways that will be taking me beyond this city and out into the world. Thank you for being my listening over the last two years. Peter

EASTER 2013

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DEAR ADVENTURER'S

The current debate about the possibility of a casino in Toronto raises the fundamental question that confronted Jesus during his forty day pilgrimage in the wilderness of temptation: Will we trust and serve God alone, or will we trust and serve the idol Mammon (i.e., money, wealth, materialism)?

Canada's constitution, and our National Anthem, both invoke the name of God, thus implicitly submitting our common, as well as our private life, to our best understanding of God's will. And most Canadians—of diverse religious faith or of no particular faith—seem to agree that God wills a world of peace and justice in which all human beings may prosper and flourish. The Judeo-Christian heritage, which our public officials often cite as the foundation of our society, calls us – indeed, commands us – to love our neighbours as we love ourselves. Toward that end, God expects governments to ensure that creation's abundant resources are distributed equitably; that none of God's children be excluded from sharing its common wealth (Commonwealth), and that each person's dignity, health and welfare be preserved.

The very nature of gambling undermines such a vision of community life. The booming expansion of slot machines we have witnessed in recent years has seriously eroded our sense of caring for one another – particularly the poorest among us, whose financial deprivation and desperation make gambling a more powerful temptation than it may be for those of us who are more financially secure. The legacy of crime, drug and alcohol dependency, spousal abuse and marital breakdown, seem to outweigh any social benefits in terms of health care, education, infrastructure, etc., advocates of more casinos promise.

Our Holy Scriptures witness to the inevitable decline in prosperity, security and stability under such rampant idolatry. Listen, for example, to the lament of the prophet Jeremiah (5:30; 6:13-15): “An appalling and horrible thing has happened in the land. From the least to the greatest among them, everyone is greedy for unjust gain. Yet they are not ashamed; they have even forgotten how to blush!”

Perhaps God is calling us, in this season of Lent, to reconsider the balance between need and greed. Rather than pursuing more material wealth as the source of our prosperity, security and stability, perhaps we can learn to receive these as promises and gifts of God's love. Perhaps if we, individually and collectively, can make do with a little bit less, our impoverished neighbours will have a little more, and our ravaged earth may finally get the rest and renewal it needs, too!

Pastor Peter

HOLY WEEK WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Maundy Thursday, March 28, 7:30 p.m.

Good Friday, March 29, Joint Service with GCI & FCG, 12:00 noon

Easter Vigil, Saturday, March 30, 7:00 p.m.

Easter Sunday Service, March 31, 10:00 a.m.

ADVENT OCCASIONS

Youths Gathering - Ages 13 - 35 - Please Pass On the Invite

April 13 at 4:30 pm Advent Lutheran - Don Mills - Fellowship Hall
Further information can be found by emailing Carol at

Sunday School during service hours is held on alternative Sunday's (April 7, 21, May 5, 19, June 2, 16).

Advent's Choir is open to all. Practice is at 9 am every Sunday. Our music director, Trevor Hicks, has started classes for children between the ages of 6 and 15 interested in participating in our **Children's Choir**. Practices start at 12 on Sunday's.

The **English Circle** Sunday mornings at 8:30 is a joy to behold. Come and join newcomers in our neighbourhood in their determination to be part of the conversation in their new home of Canada. Michaela would love to find people in the congregation who would be willing to serve as "mentors" for our regular visitors to the English Circle. This would entail a couple hours a week of being in one on one conversation. It is a truly rewarding experience for all who participate. Please be in contact with Michaela at michaela.ehring@gmail.com or before service on Sunday's.

Men's Group meets first Saturday of every month for breakfast and fellowship at the Rosemary and Thyme Restaurant located at 2798 Victoria Park Avenue and the corner of Van Horne.

MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

1. Chairperson Carol Peck called the meeting to order t 11:15 a.m. We required a quorum of 21 members and 43 voting members were present.
2. M/S to adopt the Agenda as printed. Carried.
3. M/S to adopt the minutes of the Annual Meeting held February 26, 2012, as printed. Carried.
4. M/S to adopt the minutes of the Special Congregational Meeting held June 24, 2013, as printed. Carried.
5. There was no business arising from the minutes.

6. **Treasurer's Report**

Fred Roth reviewed the Treasurer's Report as printed. He noted that income for 2012 was up 4 percent from 2011. He explained the Parking Lot Fund and stated \$6,626.82 was in the fund at the end of 2012. He highlighted various parts of the supplemental statements and noted the Capital Reserve Fund could cover the remaining parking lot costs. We transferred \$7,000 into the Reserve Fund at the end of 2012. We thanked Fred Roth for his work during the year. Fred Roth then thanked Jai Sahadeo for assisting in preparing the report.

M/S to accept the Treasurer's Report. Carried.

7. **Council Reports**

7.1 **Pastor:** Pastor Lisinski said Advent has been the liveliest congregation he has served. He briefly reviewed his written report. He noted in particular the Witness and Service areas as they continue to grow. The thanked the Council Executive for their work.

7.2 **Chair:** Carol Peck thanked Council members for their work during the year.

7.3 **Christian Education:** Peter Reble added to his written report that Pastor Lisinski has started a preparation for baptism program and two baptisms are scheduled.

7.4 **ESO:** Brit Missirlian thanked Joan and Arie Fox for all their work over the years.

7.5 **Finance/Stewardship:** Nothing further to report.

7.6 **Good Women of Advent:** Brit Missirlian invited the women of the congregation to participate in their programs.

7.7 **Mutual Ministry:** Carol Peck noted there was no congregational representative on the Committee during 2012 and would like the congregation to appoint someone in 2013. Elizabeth Lancia is continuing as Pastor Lisinski's representative on the Committee.

7.8 **Property:** Bob Schickedanz noted that half the congregation's revenue comes from facility use and thanked Fran Brandes for her work in scheduling the users.

7.9 **Worship and the Arts:** Walter Rothenburger had nothing further to report.

7.10 **Youth:** Nalini Beekie reported that they are trying to explore the talents of the youth group.

7.11 **CNT:** Mona Marcobelli thanked everyone for their participation during the year and asked for suggestions for further presentations.

7.12 M/S to adopt the reports. Carried.

8. There was no business arising from the reports.

9. **Other Reports**

- 9.1 **Endowment Fund:** Erika Schurr reminded members to consider the Endowment Fund when preparing their bequests.
- 9.2 **Men's Breakfast Group:** Jim Doak noted that the group has taken on the responsibility for refurbishing of the organ.
- 9.3 **Inclusive Ministry Task Force:** Peter Reble gave a brief review of the task force's work during the year and provided copies of material they produced during the year.
- 9.4 There was no further business from these reports.

10. **Nominating Committee and Elections**

- 10.1 **Congregational Council:** Peter Reble reported there are five Congregational Council positions open for election. Brit Missirlan and Nalini Beekie have let their names stand for nomination for a second term. Siamak Fadavi, Carrol Pearson and George Tang have accepted nominations for Council. There were no further nominations from the floor.

M/S to close nominations. Carried.

M/S that Brit Missirlan, Nalini Beekie, Siamak Fadavi, Carrol Pearson and George Tang be elected by acclamation. Carried.

Note: Congregational Council will decide which of the five newly elected members will serve a one-year term.

- 10.2 **Mutual Ministry:** Gabi Schickedanz accepted the nomination to be the Congregation's representative on the Mutual Ministry Committee.

There were no further nominations.

M/S to elect Gabi Schickedanz as the congregation's representative on the Mutual Ministry Committee. Carried.

- 10.3 **Endowment Fund Committee:** Erika Schurr was nominated to be on the Endowment Fund Committee. Other Committee members are Sonita Dillon-Rhodus and Gabi Schickedanz. There were no further nominations from the floor and Erika Schurr was elected by acclamation.

11. **New Business**

- 11.1 **2013 Budget:** Fred Roth reviewed the 2013 Budget as printed.

M/S to accept the 2013 Budget as presented. Carried.

- 11.2 **Draft Covenant Concerning the Life and Ministry of the Atlantic Great Lakes Synod, ELCIC:** Judy Baribeau asked everyone to read the Draft Covenant and make any comments to the Eastern Synod. This document will be voted on at the 2014 Eastern Synod Assembly.

- 11.3 **ESL Presentation:** Michaela Ehring reviewed the ESL program that takes place on Sunday mornings and invited us to attend these sessions. The participants are particularly interested in learning English conversation. There is also a need for mentoring the people in the program. The people who have plots in the community garden also need to learn conversational English. Council has given approval to cover the cost of a 40-hour program to assist with teaching English.
12. **Other:** Carol Peck noted that she sent a letter to Virginia Ling letting her know that Advent is holding in trust for her \$3,365 and is waiting for her response. Virginia can collect this money when she turns 21 or sooner if she requests it for a use aligned with the intent of the fund.
13. Pastor Lisinski closed the meeting with a prayer.
14. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,



Judy Baribeau
Secretary

INCLUSIVE MINISTRY TASK FORCE UPDATE

In the previous issue of the Advent Journey, a vision of a reconciling mission at Advent Lutheran Church worked on by the members of the Task Force and written as a response to the criteria of the Creative Mission Initiatives of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. The following is the final submission to Advent's Council in lieu of its activities over the past year.

Submission to Council from the Inclusive Ministry Task Force

I believe we have reached a juncture in the road in the work of the Inclusive Ministry Task Force. There has been a great benefit in completing the submission to the Creative Mission Initiative of the ELCIC. It gave our work a focus and the end result is the makings of a vision of what could be possible and what could be a future direction for Advent Lutheran Church. We are reminded just how urgent this is in Bishop Pryse's statements at the recent Synod Assembly. In his report he comments, "Many people have put a lot of effort into organizational renewal at the national, synodical and conference levels, but about 20% of our congregations are slowly declining by expending every last resource in a fruitless attempt to replicate the past rather than reorganizing themselves to face the future." Our hope is that our work is a contribution to Advent's future.

All futures must include what presently exists. In what presently exists, there are those things that are visible and there are those things present that are not clearly visible. I

mention this because it is mostly the unseen things that have shown up in our work. And it has been those same things that have made our work both a joy and a pleasure. Our sister Michaela had the fortuitous occasion to sit down for a lengthy conversation with Bishop Pryse following his guest preaching appearance at St. John's Lutheran Church in Montreal where she was visiting her son this past weekend. It should be noted it was the Bishop who was most keen on engaging Michaela after everything he had read about Advent Lutheran Church in our submission to Synod. Michaela's email to the Bishop in following up their meeting best describes the gist of their conversation (and joy and pleasure mentioned above):

Dear Bishop Pryse,

Thank you for a very inspiring conversation today at St. John's in Montreal!

As you suggested I will pass on to Pastor Peter the request to invite you to share some time of worship, conversation, food and laughter ...and whatever else may ensue ... with us at Advent. And as we talked about, you are very welcome any time to join our Newcomer Circle which happens at 8:30 on Sunday mornings.

In your sermon today you reminded us of *the joyous time of waiting and watching in expectation of good things that will happen for all of us very soon*. And indeed the "Advent People" (borrowing your phrase) at Advent are "Adventurers" (borrowing Pastor Peter's phrase)...and in this adventure we have encountered many blessings from people who come through our door, to the Worship Service, to Bible Study, to Table Talk, to English Circle for Newcomers, to Good Women of Advent (now that there are officially no ELWs anymore....but we are still going strong under another name :)), to concerts and plays, dinners and health and wellness events; from our music director who composed a special Advent Liturgy (for the congregation not the church calendar) and others who are trying to get a community choir going, from our council member who initiated a peace play to be performed for the UN Day of Peace etc. - the list is long indeed.

As I shared with you we have e.g. a lady who came to the English Circle 3 years ago from China - and now she is our Sunday School Teacher and her daughter a volunteer (and a great pianist who entertained us at our recent Anniversary Dinner)! Others have joined the Circle and then attended worship services and stayed as well. Our friend who came with his family from Teheran 2 years ago as a refugee and who was a Deacon in Iran is now joining forces with Pastor to start a Farsi Ministry at Advent soon. *Great things are happening indeed while we are waiting and watching in joyous anticipation!*

We have a great pool of talents and skills among the newcomers (pianists, violinists, singers, dancers as well as teachers/professors/researchers and people from all walks of life). We want to engage heart to heart with the "gifts on two feet" that come to us from our immediate neighbourhood. Therefore we are planning to have a talent show again (I am attaching a photo from a previous one

a couple of years ago) and maybe have them perform another play (newcomers and ESL beginners overcame their fear of speaking English in front of an audience and performed a play from China for the congregation two years ago that was well received).

Friendships have emerged between the participants from diverse places such as China and Bangladesh, Azerbaijan and Korea, Russia and Sri Lanka and Iran to name just a few. And from the trust that has evolved it is possible to take steps towards integrating our new found friends also in church activities like the congregational dinner, the upcoming Christmas party and eventually worship services. We have been blessed with these people who are our neighbours, and we will certainly continue to move forward in discerning how to best serve them and their needs as we journey together. And we are waiting and watching for the blessings that will surely emerge from this for Advent and its wider community again and again in the months and years to come.

The symbol for Advent is the wreath and the candles: a circle and light. We at Advent aspire to be a welcoming circle for all and light many candles. If I were to choose a song for this, it would be the following (not a strictly Lutheran hymn but we can make room for our Friends in Christ and our old and new neighbours -and soon-to-be friends)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d5Ik-E_RLXw&feature=related

I think that I can speak for many in our Advent Community that we want to draw the circle as wide as we can and light not only 4 candles at Advent time but 365 candles throughout the year :) .

**Wishing you a blessed journey through Advent (and for your trip to Winnipeg).
Thank you very much again for your time and great sermon today.
Auf Wiedersehen.
Michaela**

Truly Christ is already in our midst if only we have the eyes to see.

Our Bishop has helped us discern the most important step going forward in stating in his email of Nov. 29, "In all of the communication I received from Advent, it was never entirely clear that this effort had been embraced or endorsed by the congregation or its elected leadership. I trust that you can understand that the wider church would not be able to grant these precious resources in support of an effort where such support is not clearly evident." It is now time for the Task Force to step aside and let Advent's Council guide the process of any future efforts. To that end we recommend the following course of action:

1. A Council Retreat is held soon after the AGM to discern what would be involved in implementing the vision that lies within the submission to the Creative Mission

Initiative. The intention here is not to pre-approve the submission but rather understand it to its full import for the congregation. For that purpose, we recommend Jonathan Schmidt be consulted to facilitate a suitable event. We also want to acknowledge the contribution that was made by both Judith Snow and Chris Pullenaygem on behalf of the Inclusive Ministry Task Force and the development of its intercultural and inclusive vision for Advent Lutheran Church. It would be our hope that all three of them would be able to contribute jointly to this event.

2. The Council agrees in principle to implement the proposal as drafted by Michaela Ehring titled, "Outreach at Advent Under the Auspices of the English Circle" and the three areas it speaks to. These are: expansion of the conversation classes; formal ESL classes for the Advent community gardeners; and, the establishment of a mentoring program. Given this impetus, Michaela will be asked to refine her proposal as appropriate including timelines, project targets, oversight and a complete budget.
3. Agree in principle to commit a portion of future proceeds from the rental of parking space towards the cost of the agreed upon initiatives.
4. Set-up a leadership team, responsible to Council, to implement and oversee the said commitments. The Inclusive Ministry Task Force requests to be consulted in the selection of this team.
5. Explore resources available through the Synod office for instituting a vision and planning exercise leading up to the 50th anniversary of the founding of the congregation.

All of us on the Inclusive Ministry Task Force would like to thank the Council for the trust granted and shown to us over the last year. It has been a most fascinating journey. We are most thankful for the guidance and granted to our efforts through the living hope and possibility that is Jesus Christ.

On behalf of Michaela Ehring, Sophia Liu, Elyas Yousefi, Mona Macrobelli, Peter Lisinski and Nalini Beekie, I say thank you,

Peter Reble

Outreach at Advent with the help of the English Circle

Advent Lutheran Church has been a multicultural community for a long time. It now has the opportunity to evolve into a true intercultural community by building on the foundations that already exist, one of them being the English Circle.

Aims

"It may be surprising to find that the primary aim in many community-based ESL programs is not actually the teaching of English. Contrary to the academic or business English class, which has specific language targets that the student must reach, the aims of the communitycentred program are often more holistic. Helping students integrate into their new community is usually the goal; the teaching of English is a means to this end, but not the end in itself." (COPAL Concordia Working Papers 1, 2008 'Launching a Community-Based ESL Program')

- The existing English Circle at Advent Lutheran Church has welcomed learners from all over the world for 5 years now. Our participants are newcomers from China, Iran, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Russia, Korea, etc.
- They have very different levels of English competency, the majority are beginners (about 50%) and the rest are at various levels (about 30% at intermediate level).
- The participants have had varied careers in their countries of origin and their limited command of English language is an impediment to their social and economic as well as cultural integration.
- They do not have (enough) access to programs that cater to their specific needs in terms of language and other skills.

This is therefore the impetus for expanding the English Circle at Advent Lutheran Church and eventually other congregations in the area. According to a recent survey among participants the following needs were identified:

1. Conversation Classes

(suggested frequency: twice a week at 2 hours each):

Many students had some formal instruction in English in their own country but the majority did not have the opportunity to actually practice their skills in conversation and practical dialogue. Very often the newcomers stay in their own cultural/language community when arriving in Canada and thus miss out on opportunity to speak English. Therefore it is essential to give them a welcoming space where they can feel that they can practice and further develop their speaking and listening skills as well as fluency without being judged.

Conversation classes can be led by an adult member of the host community (Advent) and can be held at times that are convenient for both the facilitator as well as the participants.

The Conversation Class also provides volunteer opportunities for high school students from the language communities represented among the participants to help with small group work and occasional translation.

2. Formal ESL Classes for Advent Community Gardeners and all interested

The community garden was started in 2005 in partnership with the Advent Lutheran Church, Working Women Community Centre, FoodShare/African Food Basket, Oriole Community Services Association, North York Harvest and gardeners in the neighbourhood. While the garden itself has become a huge success this did not translate into improved English and communication skills among the gardeners and thereby increased integration and participation in the community.

Gardeners tend to restrict their communication and interaction to their own ethnic and language group and thereby forgo the opportunity to develop more skills despite having lived in Canada for some time.

The fact is that most gardeners cannot attend ESL regular programs for a variety of reasons.

In the last number of years a need has emerged to provide these gardeners, most of them women, with skills in English that are relevant to their activity in the garden as well as in their immediate environment.

Goals:

1. Increased confidence in tackling everyday tasks within the English speaking environment, i.e. gardening and communicating with other gardeners, coordinators, people visiting the garden, shopping for healthy food
2. Multiply the effect by having participants speak regularly to their families, friends and other gardeners about the topics.
3. Move from a multicultural community to an intercultural one as more members then before will be involved in direct interaction with the community, i.e. communication and interacting with each other rather than being passive observers.
4. Whereas the Community Garden provides physical space for the community, the ESL program will provide (more) learning space not only for acquiring (more) English skills but also for exchanging ideas and cultural concepts and thus promote mutual development.
5. Increase overall well-being of the participants by having more confidence as valued members of the community and more interaction with organizations in the community, for instance Advent Lutheran Church.

The program will consist of a specific ESL program developed by Toronto Green Community that is geared towards the needs of the community gardeners. This clientele are currently not served by any other program. The program will be delivered once weekly on the premises of Advent Lutheran Church for a total length of 12 weeks. A qualified ESL instructor will teach the program, a paid assistant will help with necessary translation and small group work and volunteers will help out in the form of tutoring and individual practice work.

3. Mentoring:

Mentoring or “buddy system” : this is a one-on-one program geared to the specific situation and needs of the learner. This concept requires significant input from congregational and other volunteers.

Mentoring is a very important aspect of helping newcomers adjust to life in Canada. When coming/immigrating to a new country many questions arise immediately and daily life as well as socio-economic and cultural integration poses many challenges. These challenges cannot be dealt with comprehensively and geared to individual needs in a classroom setting.

Therefore, to truly build intercultural community, it is necessary to team newcomers up with members of the congregation/surrounding community that can help ease integration and provide individual assistance. Not only will these mentors/buddies give their mentees an opportunity to practice their English skills in conversation but give them tips for dealing with all kinds of tasks that newcomers need to accomplish, e.g. provide input from for instance “Where is the best store to shop for...”, “Where do I go to get a health card, a library card or apply for a drivers’ license?” to “How do I enroll my children/grandchildren in school” and “How can I volunteer to gain Canadian experience?” as well as “How do I apply for a job/write a Canadian resume” (all questions that arose frequently in the English Circle☺)

A Mentor can be anyone who has 1, 2 or more hours weekly to spare on a regular basis and who is willing to help a newcomer in return for some rewarding experience and learning about a different country/culture themselves.

Summary:

Out of these 3 components 2 are already in existence, the English Conversation Class and the Mentoring Program.

We propose the extension of both of these projects as well as the opportunity to engage the people in “our backyard”, i.e. the community garden in ways that are meaningful to them and give us the chance to start with them on an intercultural journey. All parts of the English outreach will make use of existing and new volunteers at Advent and therefore lead to true development of community.

ADVENT’S FINANCIAL POSITION

At 28th February, 2013

Our Revenues

The January to February, 2013 totals for Advent’s Giving are summarized below:

ADVENT'S GIVING TO 28/2/13

Commitments	Received to	Received to	Difference
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	28/02/2013	29/02/2012	
Current, Festival & Loose	\$9,877.66	\$11,677.78	-\$1,800.12
Sunday School	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>
Sub-total	\$9,877.66	\$11,677.78	-\$1,800.12
Facilities	\$13,825.75	\$14,094.10	-\$268.35
Regular Benevolence	<u>\$1,561.00</u>	<u>\$1,397.00</u>	<u>\$164.00</u>
Total Received	\$25,264.41	\$27,168.88	-\$1,904.47
Global Hunger	\$552.00	\$585.00	-\$33.00
Parking Lot Fund	\$1,981.23	\$1,798.00	\$183.23

Current, Festival and Loose Giving

Current giving corresponds with the "Current Budget" line of your offering envelopes. Festival donations are those from the pink envelopes at Easter, Christmas, etc., and loose are miscellaneous funds not specifically indicated from a specific member or envelope. Our total for these items for January – February was \$9,877.66, a significant decrease of \$1,800.12.

Facilities

Facilities revenue for January - November was \$68,727.60, comprised of revenue from extra hours, in addition to revenue from our regular users. The revenues show an increase of \$439.85. Bear in mind that Facilities revenue fluctuates considerably as rental payments are received. Considerable rental revenue was deposited in the first week of December.

Benevolence Giving

Regular Benevolence giving for January-February, 2013 increased slightly by \$164 from 2012. Global Hunger giving is forwarded directly to Synod, and does not effect Advent's financial position. The amounts are included for information only.

New Parking Lot Fund

To the end of February, 2013, total receipts for the New Building Lot Fund totaled \$1,981.23.

Advent's Income and Expense

To the end of February, the Income and Expense situation is as follows:

ADVENT INCOME AND EXPENSE - TO NOVEMBER 30,2012

Category	1-1-13 to 28/02/2013	1-1-12 to 29/02/2012	Variance
Income			
Current, Festival, Loose	\$9,878	\$11,678	-\$1,800
Expense Recoveries	\$250	\$77	\$173
Facilities	<u>\$13,826</u>	<u>\$14,094</u>	<u>-\$268</u>
Total Received	\$23,954	\$25,849	-\$1,895
Expenses			
Administration	\$1,438	\$678	\$760
Building	\$10,340	\$7,210	\$3,130
ESO	-\$637	\$256	-\$893
Music	\$1,258	\$1,780	-\$523
Pastoral Services	\$14,946	\$14,563	\$383
Stewardship & Finance	<u>\$113</u>	<u>\$8</u>	<u>\$104</u>
Total Expenses	\$27,457	\$24,495	\$2,961
Net Position	-\$3,503	\$1,354	-\$4,856

2012 ESO costs include the travel, photography and honorarium for Judith Snow in February. Parish Administration costs includes travel and Synod Convention costs for 2012. Worship and Music costs have increased somewhat this year, with the purchase of Choir Music and Cranberry Books.

Fred Roth
Treasurer

Draft Document

**Draft Covenant
Concerning the Life and Ministry
of the Atlantic Great Lakes Synod, ELCIC**

Preamble

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, its synods and congregations have been engaged since 2011 in a process of structural renewal. According to the plan proposed by the Structural Renewal Task Force, by 2014 the Eastern Synod will cease to exist and the Atlantic Great Lakes Synod will come into being in its place. During this same period our National Bishop, Susan Johnson, has called on members of our church to engage in a process of personal spiritual renewal.

This historic moment of regeneration in the life of our church provides a timely opportunity to renew the promises made when congregations first came together, more than 150 years ago, to create our synod.

The Synod and its congregations are committed to ministry together for the sake of God's mission in the world. Our common purpose is the work that marks us as "a church in mission for others" – namely the things we do together that we could not do on our own. This covenant makes clear the cooperative basis of our relationship. It affirms that we are a covenant people.

In this document we acknowledge and affirm our determination to remain accountable to one another in the ways stated, and to call each other to account when the reality does not live up to the promise.

As the Bishop and Synod Council of the Eastern Synod, ELCIC, we solemnly promise that we will do the following.

With respect to **Communication with congregations**, we will:

1. Be honest in all of our dealings;
2. Listen to what congregations are saying;
3. Consult with congregational leaders before making recommendations or decisions on matters that affect synodical or congregational life;
4. Keep congregations informed of news and developments that are relevant to them;
5. Communicate synodical initiatives to congregations, and explain how they can help;
6. Provide timely responses to requests for information from congregations;
7. Be transparent in financial reporting to congregations and members;
8. Use methods and technologies that maximize both efficiency and effectiveness.

With respect to **Mission and ministry**, we will:

1. Act within approved budgets to provide staff, programs and resources for identified priorities;
2. Provide leadership in situations which are beyond the capacity of congregations to address at a local or area level;
3. Provide leadership, support and direction to congregations and pastors when congregations are in decline or dying;
 - o Provide training and support for lay leaders;
 - o Inspire, equip and assist congregations to engage in ministry beyond their local community.
4. Ensure that our programs address current issues and remain relevant to current conditions;
5. Provide training and support to ministry candidates and continuing education to rostered ministers;

With respect to **Ministry vacancies**, we will:

1. Be honest and fair in assessing the needs of congregations and the capabilities of rostered ministers;
2. Recommend interim pastors and assist congregations in finding an appropriate rostered minister when a vacancy occurs.

As congregations of the Eastern Synod, ELCIC, we solemnly promise that we will do the following.

With respect to **Communication with the Synod**, we will:

1. Keep the bishop and synod staff informed of all relevant developments in the congregation;
2. Be honest about our condition and circumstances;
3. Remain respectful and loyal, even when we disagree;
4. Respond to requests for information and reports in a timely, accurate and reliable manner;
5. Meet deadlines for remittances and registrations;
6. Keep our technology current so that we can use more efficient and effective methods when they are adopted by the Synod.

With respect to **Communication with our members**, we will:

1. Educate and inform our members about the Synod and all expressions of the wider church;
2. Share specific information with our members when requested to do so;
3. Forward requests for information to the appropriate individual or group so they can respond on our behalf;

With respect to **Direction and leadership of the Synod**, we will:

1. Listen to and act on direction from the Synod, particularly in times of financial difficulty, membership decline, leadership vacancy, or congregational conflict;
2. Participate in programs offered by the Synod that benefit congregational ministry;
3. Participate in collective, collaborative ministry that involves the wider faith community, and offer leadership when appropriate.

With respect to **Synodical governance**, we will:

1. Send delegates to Synod Assembly and pay the congregation's share of their expenses;
2. Ensure that delegates have opportunities to discuss agenda issues with the congregation both before and after Assembly;
3. Empower delegates to participate in Assembly debates and, after consideration of all points of view, vote as their conscience dictates;
4. Be governed by the decisions made at Synod Assemblies on matters affecting congregational life.

With respect to **Financial support of the Synod**, we will:

1. Provide funding for the administrative structures and common ministry programs of the wider church;
2. Ensure that our financial support is both generous and proportional to our capacity to give;
3. Remit payments on a regular and timely basis;
4. Increase our giving proportionately when increases to the synodical budget are approved by the Synod in Assembly.

Date: April 26, 2012

Author: [Jeff Pym](#)

SUNDAY WORSHIP ROLES

Please contact the appropriate person's listed after the table below if you are interested in participating in Sunday worship roles.

Date	Assisting	Communion Assistants	Coffee Hosts
March 28	Gabi Schickedanz	Carol Peck	No Coffee Hour
March 30	Lester McLean	TBA	No Coffee Hour
March 31	TBA	Sonita Dillon-Rhodium	The Carlsen Family
April 7	Nalini Beekie	Nalini Beekie	Judy and Gerard Baribeau
April 14	Erika Schurr	TBA	Reg and Sally Sawh and Family
April 21	Sean Fromme	TBA	The Khan Family
April 28	Jonah Mills	TBA	Brit Missirlian and Cynthia Stewart

Greeters: Mona Marcobelli (416) 773-1168 or marcobelli@rogers.com **Readers:** Olga Cosburn (416) 429-3826 **Altar Care:** Brit Missilarin (416) 447-6895 or brit-m@rogers.com **Assisting:** Lester McLean (416) 335-5035 or flash04@sympatico.ca **Ushers:** Joan McLean (416) 499-0470 or funce@sympatico.ca **Coffee Hosts:** Fran Brandes (416) 445-4810 or schnuffy@rogers.com