

ADVENTure



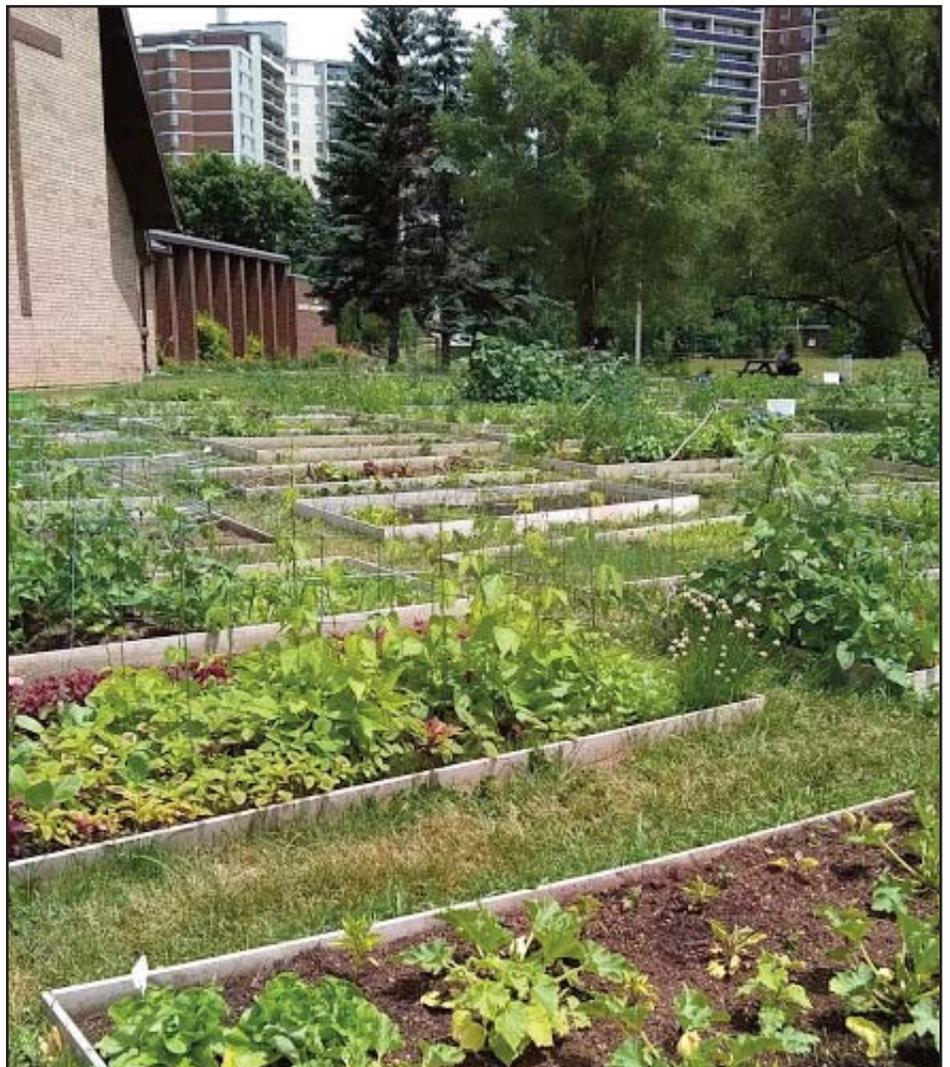
Advent Lutheran Church

July/August 2018

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Oriole Community Garden



Summer Worship

From July 8-August 26 we will worship in Cedar Hall while St. Dumitru's congregation will use the sanctuary. This requires more work preparing for worship as well as putting everything away following the services. Please help as you are able.

Pastor Elaine's Vacation

Pastor Elaine will be on vacation the following three Sundays: August 19, August 26, and September 2. Our worship services will be led by our laypersons. As available, we will announce in the bulletins and in our weekly emails a pastor to call if there is a pastoral emergency. ♦

This is the eleventh year Advent is making space available for community garden plots. This year there are 125 plots used mostly by local apartment dwellers. The program also offers other food programs for the community and the information is posted on our bulletin board. The Working Women Community Centre thanks Advent for providing space for the garden and for the community events sponsored. In addition to the Working Women Centre, they are associated with North York Harvest Food Bank and Flemington Health Centre. ♦

Congregational Council Update

Advent has been a very busy place over the past two months – and moving forward. I thank everyone who is helping to ensure our work is being done.

Council Concerns

Our Council is concerned about continuity – new Council members to replace those leaving at the next Annual Meeting. We need members willing to serve as we are able to ensure the continuity of our congregation. If you are asked to consider being on Council, please give it serious thought. If we don't have a Council, we don't have a congregation. A good Council is a blend of new persons (who will learn) and those who are experienced who can mentor the new persons.

Karyne Holgate-Lemieux resigned as a member of Congregational Council.

Council plans to have more communication with all of our regular users. Both our users as well as ourselves realize that with regular communication we can avoid problems and maintain a good working relationship.

Our Council doesn't normally meet during the summer, but because of significant items, has scheduled a meeting for August 13.

We've had our lighting in the church upgraded to LED lights. We are in contact with the contractor to see if the sanctuary lighting can be a bit brighter. We are also reviewing quotations for outdoor lighting and hope to get this work done before too long.

Property

We have a lot of property issues to look after, particularly with our aging building. We thank Michael Lenzner for seeing that items that need attention are being addressed. We plan to have the fellowship hall, kitchen and washrooms repainted before too long, among other things.

Our garden area is a continuing concern. It is not at all a welcoming place as it is so over-run with weeds and dead plants that we need to remove them. If anyone has access to a rototiller, please let me know so we can arrange to clean out

the area, particularly around the southwest corner of our building. The soil is very heavy clay that is difficult to dig with a shovel. Since our members are not able to look after the area, it is best that we return most of it to grass. We are also making arrangements to remove the dead trees.

On the other hand I thank whoever has been looking after the area outside Cedar Hall. That border hasn't looked this good for many years. Thank you. Thank you.

The community garden is looking better than it has in years as well. We thank Chantal Espinola, the coordinator, for her work with the community gardeners. They organize many information programs, including some for children. Their schedule and program list is posted on our bulletin board. On the negative side, there are thefts of produce from the gardens – even from the entrance to the church. I encourage you to take a walk around the church to see the good and the parts not so good.

Property Management

Council is looking for a volunteer to take over the role of Property Management. This position schedules all the users of our building and prepares the monthly calendar. We need a replacement by year-end. If you are interested, please speak with Tracy McPherson or me.

Finances

Our finances are becoming a concern to Council. You will see from the financial update that our contributions are falling off. Even though we have not had a specific stewardship emphasis for a while, I do encourage everyone to look at our givings. If we are giving the same regular offerings now as a few years ago, isn't it time to consider increasing them? Our costs at Advent go up as well as at home – utilities, food, etc., and we need to ensure that we can meet our commitments. No church can exist when people only use it for baptisms, weddings, funerals, and perhaps Christmas and Easter.

We offer options for contributing – using your regular weekly envelopes, using PAR (you can increase your PAR

donations at any time by contacting Gary Jacobs), or use the "donate" button on our website. They all work. Please do what you can to help. Our Stewardship Committee will be preparing more information to distribute in the fall.

Constitution Review

Our Constitution Sub-Committee, under Jim Doak's chairmanship, is moving forward on our revised constitution and plans to have a draft available for the congregation to review this fall.

Synod Assembly

Pastor Elaine was Advent's delegate to the Assembly. I also attended the Synod Assembly June 21-23 as a volunteer and was able to observe all the business sessions. Minutes from the business sessions are available on the Synod website. Bishop Pryse's report is also available on the website. I encourage you to particularly read his report. The Assembly information is available at <http://easternsynod.org/content/assembly-2018>.

One of the items I am bringing back is a motion passed to do what we can to decrease the use of one-time use of plastics (food containers, water bottles, bags, etc.). We plan to discourage use of one-time use products at church and encourage you to do it as well in your homes.

Judy Baribeau

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Advent Lutheran Church

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Pastor Elaine Writes...

Over the past few months the Pastors in our ministry area have been talking about resurrection. These conversations have been mirrored in the Ministry Area Leadership Team meetings. As a result, the two groups have made resurrection a priority for the next two years. The sentiment has been – we are tired of hearing about dying congregations – what can we do about renewal and a sense of resurrection?

Lunch and Learn Session

As a kick off to this two-year plan, the ministry area leadership team sponsored a Lunch and Learn May 26. Our keynote speaker was Bishop Susan Bell – the new Anglican Bishop of the diocese of Niagara. Bishop Susan was formerly in charge of church plantings and missional work for the Diocese of Toronto.

Bishop Susan was inspiring and down to earth, and she acknowledged the struggles and the challenges that we are all facing. But she is ultimately incredibly positive. She believes in the work of God and the work of the people. But she does not think that the Church of the past will be the Church of the future – it might not even be the Church of today.

I sat at a table with Pastor Olavi Hepomaki – interim at St. Ansgar, and he shared a quote that I think it might be helpful to begin with. Keep this in mind as I share some of what Bishop Susan had to say.

“We are called to be fishers of men – but we are really only keepers of aquariums.”

Our National Bishop, Susan Johnson, who has been talking about Spiritual Renewal for some time has mentioned that we are in a time of challenge and change and reformation.

Bishop Susan said many of the same things at our meeting.

Bishop Susan stressed the need for renewal – spiritual renewal – not plans or programs or resources – but a very basic renewal. She thinks that we must reorient our culture – must re-orient ourselves to

be missional. That Mission is a verb, not a noun; a journey and not a destination. That mission means going TO the world. SENT to share the Gospel. But the questions are what does that look like and how do we join the journey, or how do we begin the journey?

Bishop Susan used a helpful catch phrase – one that undergirds all that she is saying and doing – and she had us repeat it.

Mission Without Renewal is Hypocrisy

Bishop Susan stressed the need for a return to some spiritual basics – to some basics of our faith – prayer, studying scripture. What are we doing around Spiritual formation? Discipleship? Sharing the faith?

Bishop Susan stressed the need to fall in love with God again – for once we love God we love what God loves and we want to show that love to others.

Bishop Susan feels that we have fallen down on Spiritual care – that we have lost the ability to articulate our faith and that we need to work on this – need to reclaim this. We cannot share our faith if we are not faithful.

She asked us to remember who we exist for. We exist for God. The Church is the only institution that exists to care for those who are not members.

It’s funny how we think we know these things – but maybe we forget them – I was struck anew – but the reminder – yes we exist for God – of course.

What does success in renewal look like? It looks like people willing to share their faith. Are you willing to share your faith? Do you feel able to articulate what you believe and why? Are you interested in spiritual renewal? Are you interested in how we can make a cultural change and become missional?

What is Advent’s Future?

What will Advent look like – sound like? What do we want the future to be for Advent?



These are difficult questions – questions that I think we need to start asking.

According to Bishop Susan, the church of the future is going to need a great deal of creativity...she stressed creativity over money – in fact she said that very little money will be needed – but it will need creativity and a coalition of the willing.

Bishop Susan spoke to Judy and me a little bit about Advent’s particular situation. I think she was a little surprised that we share our space with so many other congregations. I also think she found this encouraging.

She asked us to pay attention to what is around our building – the context has changed. We will need to shape our mission around our context.

Bishop Susan suggested that our location is deeply significant because other congregations use our facilities. We are in a significant space – there is a mission field in our location – and she feels that other churches are aware of it. She asked us to pay attention to begin with a coalition of the willing – to recognize that a renewal movement can and probably should start very small.

I agree with both Bishop Susans on the need for spiritual renewal and the work that we can do together to do better spiritual care – and to learn once more to articulate our faith a bit better, and I agree

Pastor Elaine Writes*Continued from Page 3*

that the Church of the past will not come again. But I believe very deeply that as Bishop Susan said God is already working in the world – we just need to figure out how to join in.

Different liturgies or programs or music are not going to bring back the past – will not fill our pews the same way. But we still have something very important – very necessary in our world – we have the Gospel of Jesus Christ – we have a way of living that stresses love of neighbour – love of God – of social justice – of non-violence. We need to figure out how to be missional.

We need to figure out what our neighbourhood needs – need to figure out how to love our neighbours.

It's not easy – and there are significant challenges – there may be a lack of energy – or a lack of volunteers. We are often so focused on our buildings – on the maintenance that perhaps we are missing the focus on the people – on the basics of our faith – why we believe – why we have

hope – why we bother to gather to pray and sing and praise and share a meal.

Why are we still doing that? It's not just habit – it's faith – and it's a love of God. Let's fall in love with God again. Let's think about how we can share our faith – how we can talk about what we believe and why.

Partnerships will be important

This is not a quick fix – in fact it's not a fix at all. I have magic rings – but not a magic ball to see the future. But I know that community partnerships, denominational partnerships, partnerships with our fellow Lutheran congregations will be important.

There is a feeling that every 500 years the Church goes through a period of reformation or renewal – well 500 years ago it was Luther – perhaps the time has come again to reshape our Church, to bring new life. To say no to dying congregations and yes to resurrection.

We will need to be extremely focused on the basics of our faith, and I believe that we can do that. We can fall in love with God once more – we can take that love and share it. We can learn to talk

more about what we believe – we can learn to be a missional Church.

I found Bishop Susan to be an inspiring speaker. I found her thoughtful and ultimately very encouraging – she believes at her core that God is already working in our world, and so do I. I was encouraged when she stressed the need for spiritual renewal and looking at the basics of our faith and the need to tend to spiritual care.

I was encouraged because I believe that this is part of my call to Advent... part of my call to be your Pastor. We have begun some adult education – we did a learning Sunday where we looked at why we worship the way that we do – a really nuts and bolts kind of thing, and I will continue.

In the fall I will offer a program on Prayer. Let's look at how we pray, why we pray – different forms of prayer – it's a small step in spiritual renewal. Let's make a commitment to one another that we will consider spiritual renewal – which we will learn to talk about our faith – that we will become more comfortable with prayer and study. And that we will do this together. Amen

Leaving a Legacy

I've written in the past about the need for ongoing stewardship to support the ministry of Advent Lutheran Church. We are blessed with an abundance of resources compared to others around the world and have the opportunity to choose how we use these gifts. There is nothing more enduring than to leave this world a little bit better than how we found it. We have an endowment fund that has a vision of using the proceeds to support outreach and ministry at Advent but is currently too small to make a meaningful impact. While there are other opportunities to donate to support our ministry, the benefit of donating to the endowment fund is that the funds are guaranteed in perpetuity so it truly is the gift that keeps on giving. Leaving a legacy gift can be a generous statement of your own ministry and that vision can continue.

One option available to each of us is planned giving. This includes bequests, trusts, life insurance and annuities to make charitable donations to support the philanthropic vision that you have of the world, including the community at Advent. The ELCIC has lots of information on their website: <http://elcic.ca/LPG/default.cfm>. There are many ways to maximize your donation by taking advantage of these options that will minimize the tax burden.

I would recommend that you meet with a qualified independent financial advisor whenever you make any financial decision. Please consider joining a vision for Lutheran ministry for generations to come.

Thanks.

Erika Schurr



Congratulations to Maud Danaher, Pastor Elaine's daughter, who was confirmed on May 20 in Belleville.

Our Sympathy

Our sympathy goes to Alice Sawh and her family on the death of her son Patrick Sawh. His memorial service was held on June 21. ♦

Financial Update

The May 2018 YTD revenues for Advent are showing a downward trend relative to the Budget and to last year at this time. Member contributions are down, plain and simple. In discussions with the Financial Secretary, we also see people that had contribution envelopes in the past are not attending church anymore.

	2018 May YTD	2018 Budget	% to Bud.	2017 May YTD
Current Envelopes	\$26,136	\$79,200	33.0	\$31,423
Other Current - Loose, Festivals, Other Charities	2,305	15,090	15.3	6,082
Sub Total Current	28,441	94,290	30.2	37,505
Benevolence	4,789	10,500	45.6	4,242
Facilities	39,371	105,100	37.5	36,144
Interest Revenue on GICs	685	1,640		
SUB TOTAL REVENUE	73,286	211,530	34.6	77,891
Designated				
Parking Lot Fund/				
Outdoor Lighting	1,989			6,070
Memorials	1,545			5,412
Other—Endowment, Stewardship, Carpet, Vanier	1,682			3,720
TOTAL REVENUE	78,502	211,530		93,093

There are also large variances in some of the other items but with a couple of these, we have to better understand the context in 2017. Relative to the Parking Lot, we had some large contributions last year to give us the final push to pay off the Parking Lot. And relative to Memorials, we had some very large designated contributions for people who had passed away in 2017.

On the positive side, our Facilities Rental Income is trending positive, and since that is the largest portion of our overall revenue, that is a good sign.

I hope everyone has a safe and happy summer and remembers to continue contributions throughout the summer, as the summer historically is a low period for contributions.

*Bill Wesioły
Treasurer*

From the Loft

Calling Instrumentalists

In my last installment of “From the Loft” I described Psalm 150 as “The Organists psalm” because of the way its magnificent text can be applied to the organ as a musical instrument as well as an instrument of praise.

To state the obvious: organs like the one we have at Advent didn’t exist back when the psalmist wrote Psalm 150, but it’s a magical coincidence that the timeless words can be applied to the modern organ as a whole.

Perhaps more literally, the psalmist was calling for instrumentalists to praise the Lord through the use of the instruments that they had, from the seemingly simplest to play to the most complex. In this regard, the psalm is stating that ALL instruments are important in divine

worship; and that no instrument is too quiet or too loud, too technical or too simple, to be used in the worship and praise of God. Indeed, there is no limit to how we can praise God, be it from clapping our hands to the beat to playing a complicated instrument like the organ.

We all have gifts that are given to us by God, and it’s important that we as church leaders offer His people the opportunity to use those gifts in His holy house and to His glory. Remember, liturgy means “work of the people.”

It’s for that reason I want to attempt to get some of our instrumentalists at Advent involved in worship. If you play an instrument – any instrument at all – please come and speak to me so that we can see where we can include your talents



in divine worship. Lester and I have had fun with impromptu duets between the organ or piano and saxophone, and I have had many ideas that could include trumpets and other brass instruments, percussion, woodwinds and strings.

Perhaps you’re not feeling called to sing in the choir (despite my insistence), but might enjoy using your gifts as an instrumentalist. Let’s join forces and praise God with all instruments.

*Trevor Hicks
Music Director*



Stewardship – it is the gift of our time, talent, resources and taking care of our property. Give as you are able to. There are many activities in and around our church that you could volunteer for. We need readers, ushers, coffee hosts, altar care assistants, communion assistants, etc. If you would like to get involved please speak with Judy Baribeau. Your help is appreciated.

Taking care of our property – our church needs your financial support. We can do this by placing contributions in the offering plates on Sundays or you can enroll in the PAR system (Pre-Authorized Remittance Program). PAR is a service

that allows members of a congregation to have their offering deducted automatically from their bank account and credited to the church every month. By enrolling in PAR you choose the amount you want to be withdrawn from your account. If you are interested in PAR, please contact Gary Jacobs via email at garyjobs@rogers.com or you can speak to him. I am enrolled in the PAR system and I find it convenient.

Also we would like to ask you to consider increasing your donations as the cost of running our congregation is increasing annually.

Nalini Beekie

Worship Update

On July 1 we will include a healing blessing in our worship service.

We will continue our “fifth Sunday” plan and on July 30 will again schedule a hymn sing. So please be prepared to suggest a favourite hymn to sing.

Our September 30 “fifth Sunday” will focus on a welcome back to everyone after the summer and thank our volunteers for their work. We’re planning a “Histamap” review of Advent’s history by decade so brush up on our history. We’re planning a pizza lunch so our regular food volunteers can enjoy a day off. Then at 2:00 p.m. we will hold a Blessing of the Animals, so be prepared to bring your pets in the afternoon.

We are also planning some liturgy changes in the fall.

The choir will begin its rehearsals on September 8. Trevor would love to have additional voices. ♦

Baptism

On June 10 we celebrated the baptism of Avery Sheldon Brown, infant son of Crystal Wetlauter and Sheldon Brown. ♦

Volunteer Schedule

Please sign the sheet on the bulletin board for the Sundays you wish to read and usher.

	Altar Care	Greeter	Assisting Minister Communion Assistant	Counters	Coffee
July 1	Carol Peck	Joe Hunt	Erika Schurr Jim Doak	Judy Baribeau Nalini Beekie	No coffee fellowship is planned during July and August.
July 8	Walter Rothenburger	Yvonne Cumberbatch	Bill Wesioly Olga Cosburn	Carol Peck Adele Buckley	
July 15	Judy Baribeau	Indira Beekie	Nalini Beekie Indira Beekie	Judy Baribeau Nalini Beekie	
July 22	Carol Peck	Elias Yousefi	Lester McLean Karen Doak	Nalini Beekie	
July 29	Elias Yousefi	Elizabeth & Samantha Walther	Nalini Beekie N/A	Michael Lenzner Nalini Beekie	
August 5	Walter Rothenburger	Cynthia Stewart	Erika Schurr Indira Beekie	Brit Missirlian Nalini Beekie	
August 12	Judy Baribeau	Joan McLean	Bill Wesioly Jim Doak	Adele Buckley Brit Missirlian	
August 19	Brit Missirlian	Adele Buckley	Lester McLean N/A	Nalini Beekie Judy Baribeau	
August 26	Elizabeth Lancia	Olga Cosburn	Lester McLean N/A	Brit Missirlian Carol Peck	