

ADVENTur e



Advent Lutheran Church

March/April 2016

Inside

White Altar Paraments Dedicated .	2
Baptisms	2
Confirmands	2
Easter Flowers	2
World Day of Prayer Service ...	2
Theatre Event	2
Egg Cartons	2
Men's Breakfast Group	2
An Easter Cabaret	3
Pastor Peter Writes	3
Annual Meeting Highlights	4
From the Loft	5
Interim Treasurer's Report	6
We are All Disciples	7
Volunteer Schedule	7

Holy Week and Easter Worship Schedule

Palm Sunday – March 20	10:00 a.m.
Maundy Thursday – March 24	7:30 p.m.
Good Friday – March 25	10:00 a.m.
Easter Vigil – March 26	6:00 p.m.
Followed by an Easter Cabaret at	7:30 p.m. (see Page 3)
Easter – March 27	10:00 a.m.

Tax receipts for 2015 donations are available from Gary Hoosein. If you are not at church to pick yours up, they will be mailed to you.

Copies of the 2015 Annual Report are available at church if you did not receive yours by email.



White Altar Parameters Dedicated

On January 31 we dedicated our new white altar parameters. We thank the Krause family for donating them in memory of John Krause.

Baptisms

■ **Arisa Rose Munday**, granddaughter of Pastor Peter and Rose Lisinski was baptized on January 10.

■ **Talia Megan Conway**, daughter of Mario and Tina Conway, was baptized on January 17.

Confirmands

The following three confirmands were introduced to the congregation on February 14: James Yamashita, Joseph Persaud, Samantha Persaud. Depending on scheduling, plans are being made for their confirmation later this spring.

World Day of Prayer Service

This year's World Day of Prayer Service will be held on Friday, March 4, 2:00 p.m. at St. Matthew the Apostle Anglican Church, 80 George Henry Blvd. This year's service is written by women from Cuba.

Men's Breakfast Group



All men in the congregation are invited to a good breakfast, conversation and fellowship the first Saturday every month, 9:00 a.m. at Rosemary & Thyme Restaurant, southwest corner of Van Horne and Victoria Park. Please speak with Jim Doak for further information.

Easter Flowers



This year the Worship & Arts Committee agreed to arrange for Easter flowers for the church. We invite you to donate the amount you would spend on an Easter plant and designate your donation "In Memory of...", "In Honour of ..." or other. Please pick up an envelope for your donation from an usher on Sunday mornings and place it in the offering plate. Envelopes will be available through Palm Sunday. Following the Easter service, those who donated may take a plant home with them. A list of those who donated will be included with the Easter Sunday bulletin. Please help beautify our church for Easter.



The Civic Light Opera Company is presenting their next show,
a Richard Rodgers

(as in "Rodgers & Hammerstein") musical

Advent has been extended a special offer for an expressly reduced group rate of \$20 per ticket (a \$30 value) for the performance of TWO BY TWO on Thursday April 14, 8:00 p.m.

The story of Noah's Ark in the style of
FIDDLER ON THE ROOF...

Zion Cultural Centre

1650 Finch Avenue East (at Don Mills)

If you are interested, please sign up on poster at church,
or call Brit (416-447-6895)



Egg Cartons

Please bring your empty egg cartons to church and give them to Judy Baribeau. The food bank receives eggs in bulk and uses the cartons for their distribution to families. We thank everyone who has been contributing and look forward to your continued contributions.

ADVENT LUTHERAN CHURCH

2800 Don Mills Road

Toronto, Ontario M2J 3B6

416 493 1435 (church)

905 424 7649 (residence)

The Rev. Peter Lisinski, Pastor

Email: fryarpuck@hotmail.com

Worship Service and Sunday School –
10:00 a.m.

ADVENTURE... is produced for our
members and friends.

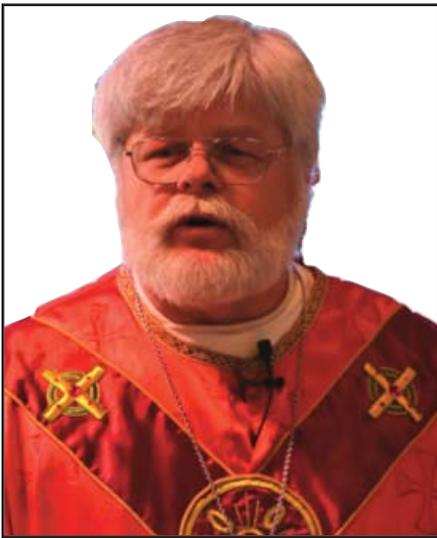
Judy Baribeau, Editor 416 264 4527
judybaribeau@rogers.com

Copyright ©2016

Advent Lutheran Church

www.adventlutheranchurch.ca

Pastor Peter Writes



Dear Adventurers,

The recent conflict between Pope Francis and Donald Trump has initiated a timely worldwide conversation about what it means to be a Christian. In reply to a journalist's question regarding the latter's plan to build a wall to secure the border between the southern American states and Mexico, His Holiness implied that any person who would take such an approach is "not a Christian" – a judgment that would, I suppose, have to include anyone who would support such a policy. In his response, Mr. Trump challenged the comment: "For a religious leader to question a person's faith is disgraceful..."

Now, I have a tremendous amount of respect for the Bishop of Rome; and I have a corresponding disrespect for the populist Republican candidate for presidency of the USA; but in this case, I must agree with The Donald. Whether or not a person is a Christian is not defined by our behaviour – what we say or do – but by what we believe about Jesus Christ. This is the very heart of the Lutheran Church's understanding of the gospel, stated clearly by Apostle Paul: "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not the result of works..."

(Ephesians 2:8. See also Romans 3:21-28). In his letter to Titus, Paul connects God's grace with baptism: "God saved us, not because of any works of righteousness we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:5). I define a Christian, therefore, as "any baptized person who confesses faith in Jesus."

But that doesn't get Donald Trump, or Pope Francis – nor any of us – off the hook. We may all, indeed, be Christians, according to scripture; but scripture also makes it clear that Christians, i.e. the chosen people of God in Israel or in Christ, can and will do evil things. Pastor Martin Luther described each Christian as "a sinner and saint at the same time."

In this light, the traditional Lutheran summary of the gospel – "Justification by grace through faith" (Augsburg Confession, Article 4) – also needs the balance provided by James: "Faith without works is dead" (James 2:17, 26). I encourage and recommend reading the entire second chapter of James' New Testament letter for a fuller understanding. In the meantime, I quote the wisdom of my favourite Christian theologian, Rev. Dr. David Buttrick, Professor of Preaching & Worship at Vanderbilt University – a Presbyterian, like Donald Trump – not. "We are justified by faith; but we are judged by works!" (see also Jesus' words in Matthew 7:15-23).

*Pastorally yours,
Peter Lisinski*



An Easter Cabaret Following the Easter Vigil Saturday, March 26, 7:30 p.m.

Please join me in Cedar Hall following worship on Easter Vigil (March 26) for an intimate acoustic concert entitled "An Easter Cabaret" concentrating on music from the *Great American Songbook* and beyond. Expect to hear music from Irving Berlin, Cole Porter, Harold Arlen, Duke Ellington and more, in addition to some solo piano music and songs made famous by some of the most well known artists of our time.

"An Easter Cabaret" will also feature a sneak peek at all new work from two of my upcoming projects: the newest incarnation of my musical *The New World* and my patriotism-themed concert that features my solo song cycle *A Patriot Sings: Reflections on 9/11* and an eclectic selection of patriotic songs from Canada, the United States, Great Britain, Australia, Russia, Germany and Ukraine.

"An Easter Cabaret" promises to be a great evening and I look forward to welcoming you to the show as we begin the most joyous of all seasons in the church year: Easter.

A free-will offering will be collected to benefit our church building and its activities.

Trevor Hicks

Annual Meeting Highlights

Advent held its annual congregational meeting on February 7 following the worship service. Thirty-eight voting members were present at the meeting. The Annual Report was sent by email to our members and printed copies are available for those without email. The minutes from the February 15, 2015, and the Special Congregational Meeting on January 17, 2016, were adopted as distributed.

Financial

As is the custom, many people are thanked for their work during the year. We thank everyone who contributed to the parking lot fund which currently has \$40,000 owing. We thank Jai Sahadeo who volunteered to serve as Interim Treasurer following Fred Roth's resignation last August. The Treasurer's duties have been split, and Sonita Dillon-Rhodium is now looking after payroll and preparing cheques for payment. We thank Sonita and Jai for their work.

Jai Sahadeo has generously agreed to continue as Interim Treasurer until May 2016. We urgently need someone to replace him. Jai is willing to update the new Treasurer on the requirements. Please let Council know if you are interested in helping the congregation with this most important function.

Jai Sahadeo reviewed the financial statements and noted that we need \$168,000 a year to pay our bills. What is left over is transferred to the Capital Reserve fund, but there has been very little. The parking lot is the largest current restricted fund. We paid out \$35,000 toward the parking lot plus interest in 2015. The Endowment Fund is our second largest restricted fund.

Some ways to increase our income were suggested. Members can mail their offerings to the church if they are unable to attend services. We also have the option of PAR (pre-authorized remittances) which can be set up with the Financial Secretary to transfer a designated amount from a donor's bank

account each month to the church. We also had a suggestion to encourage pledges from members for offerings.

Jai presented the 2016 Budget. In preparation, he reviewed the accounts for the past three years to make the most accurate projection of 2016 expenses. For 2016, reduction in Compensation and Benefits will be about \$13,000 for the months August-December. He noted that for 2016, we will only forward Benevolence received rather than a designated line amount (as in the past). We also are only including one delegate to the Synod Assembly this year, saving approximately \$1,000. The clergy are required to attend and so Pastor Lisinski will represent Advent and a lay delegate will not be designated. The budget approved by the congregation for 2016 is \$167,507.

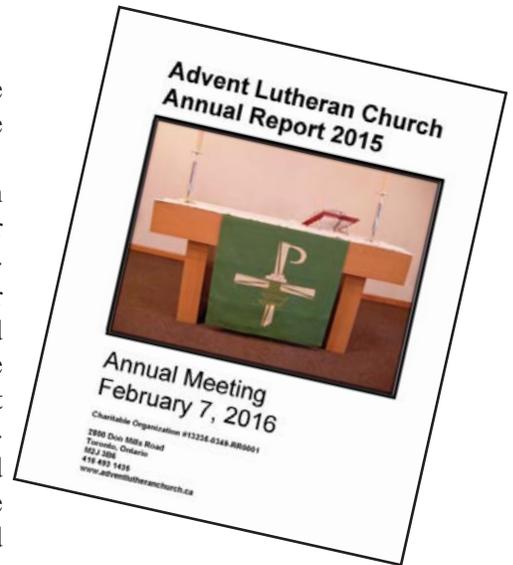
Jai recommended that we conduct a financial review, at the least, if we are unable to have our accounts audited. We have not had an audit for a number of years and two volunteers are required to do this review.

Congregational Self-Study

We are looking for persons willing to work on a Committee to engage in a congregational study. Our congregation and the community have undergone many changes over the past 20 years, and this is an opportune time to do a self-study so that we may move forward in a positive way. Synod has recommended the book *Holy Conversations* as a study guide. If you are interested in participating, please let me know.

Elections and Appointments

There were some changes in our Congregational Council and appointments. Elias Yousefi has resigned with one year to serve in his term. Brit Missirlian and Nalini Beekie have completed two consecutive terms on Council, and are ineligible for re-election; and we thank them for their work. George Tang agreed to serve a second term as a Council member. We welcome George and three



new persons to Council elected by acclamation: Karyne Holgate-Lemieux, Waveney Kanhai, and Tracy McPherson.

We also accepted the resignation of Peter Buckley (not a Council member) as Financial Secretary, and Council appointed Gary Hoosein to replace him as Financial Secretary. Other appointments confirmed are Gabi Schickedanz as the congregation's representative on the Mutual Ministry Committee, and members of the Endowment Fund Committee are Erika Schurr, Sonita Dillon-Rhodium and Gabi Schickedanz.

Other

Pastor Lisinski mentioned there are three students in Confirmation Class and hopes they can be confirmed later this spring, pending scheduling of study sessions.

Bob Schickedanz thanked Brenda Kroeker for her work in scheduling users of our building. The use of our building is a positive outreach to our community.

We passed a motion to collapse the Youth and Wish List reserve funds and Council will designate how this money will be allocated.

We thank everyone for attending the meeting. We look toward some uncertainty in 2016 and ask for everyone's prayers that we will make the best decisions as we move forward.

Judy Baribeau

From the Loft

For my inaugural column, it seems fitting to write about the importance of music in our Christian life. People who have had conversations with me can attest that I very often speak of music as a ministry of my faith and my career as a church musician. Very often, follow-up questions abound and the most frequently asked one is: "Why is music so important in church?"

While I could write forever on this topic, I'll summarize it in three points: (1) Music is biblical; (2) Music is inclusive; and (3) "A lyric is worth a thousand words".

The Bible is full of countless verses that deal with music as its own instrument of praise. Psalm 150 is one of my favorite examples of this. In fact, as Pastor Peter has mentioned in some of his sermons, the Psalms are the original hymnal of the church. Our liturgy is full of biblical references in both spoken word and song, and if you listen carefully to some of the readings, you can pick out verses that we use each and every Sunday in our liturgy.

(2) We humans are creatures of preferences and those preferences are almost guaranteed never to overlap. I doubt that there is one hymn universally loved by the every single one of the millions of Christians all around the world. That said, music in our liturgy, choir anthems, solos and hymnody are nevertheless all-inclusive. Liturgy means "work of the people" and one of Martin Luther's own revolutionary preferences was to have the entire body of the church participate. When we sing, we sing as one to God. No one is excluded and everyone is invited to add their voice in our songs of praise. The universality that is music, often considered a universal language in and of itself (and rightfully so) is thus not only an inclusive part of worship, but an integral one as well.

(3) You have all heard the phrase that "a picture is worth a thousand words." As a musical artist rather than a visual artist, the phrase can easily be adapted to read that "a lyric is worth a thousand words." In both congregations I have served, I've heard comments on hymns that compliment a sermon so well; it brought the church service full circle for the congregant. Sometimes a hymn is so powerful that it brings out so much emotion and changes the atmosphere of a service. This idea is not only true in church music, but also, for instance in musical theater, where a properly written song can take 15 minutes of dialogue and contain it more powerfully in a five minute song. Likewise, a hymn or anthem can very easily take a lengthy idea or Biblical passage and powerfully summarize it in two or three minutes.

What are your most profound musical experiences in church? What hymns are your favorites? Let Pastor Peter or myself know and we will do our best to include them. Until then, happy singing.

*Yours from the loft,
Trevor Hicks
Music Director*



Wanted: Treasurer

Jai Sahadeo has generously donated his time to serving as Interim Treasurer since last fall. He will be ending his term in May and we urgently need a volunteer to take over this vital role for the congregation. Jai will train the new Treasurer on our state-of-the-art software and give assistance where needed. If you (not somebody else) have accounting skills, please speak with Jai or Congregational Council Chairperson. We thank you for your consideration.

Advent Lutheran Church Interim Treasurer's Report – YTD January 2016

Current Fund Balance Summary

General Ledger	Beginning Balance 01-01-2016	Receipts	(Payments)	(Transfers) & BS Adj.	Ending Balance 31-01-2016
General Ledger	\$24,321	\$23,041	\$ (13,757)	\$ (2,596)	\$ 31,009

A very simplistic report on the actual cash balance at Advent...in the Current Fund. The cash balance has improved in the month of January 2016 over prior year (January 2015) for various reasons:

Receipts

- **Envelopes, Festival and Loose:** 2016 – \$7k vs 2015 – \$5k – a favourable variance of \$2k.
 - ◆ Five (5) Sundays-January 2016 vs. four (4) Sundays – January 2015. Also, included in the \$2k are extra dollars from regular members giving.
- **Received from other Charities:** 2016 – \$5k vs 2015 – \$3k-a favourable variance of \$2k.
 - ◆ Canada Helps, a Registered Charity gave a large amount in January 2016. This resulted in approximately \$2k more than January 2015.
- **User Fees:** 2016 – \$9k vs 2015 – \$8k – a favourable variance of \$1k.
 - ◆ Rental price increase in 2016 over 2015.
 - ◆ Increase users and extra hours in 2016 over 2015.
- **Envelopes-Benevolences:** 2016 – \$1.5k vs 2015 – \$.7k – a favourable variance of \$.8k.
 - ◆ Also a 5 weeks month in 2016 vs 4 weeks month in 2015.
 - ◆ There is no dollar amount committed to ELCIC for 2016. Advent will remit to ELCIC whatever it receives. However, Advent is encouraging its members to continue to give freely and generously for all Stewardship programs of the Church.

Payments

- The winter weather condition was favourable to Advent, in that the Heating cost for January 2016 was lower by approximately \$1k vs. the cost of January 2015. Also, note that the January 2016 bill for Heating was not received and recorded in January. It will be recorded in February.
- Forecasted payment for February/March: Large payments would include, compensation and benefits, outdoor maintenance, Insurance, Cleaning, Utilities etc. It is estimated that the balance of cash in January and receipts in February and March, will cover these payments.

Transfers and BS Adjustment

- In January \$2k was transferred to the Capital Reserve Fund.

Restricted Fund Balances

Parking Lot

- Advent received approximately \$1.6k in January 2016. This is consistent to the amount Advent received in 2015 of \$1.4k. At the end of January 2016, the balance of the Parking Lot Fund is \$1.6k.
- Advent paid \$10K against the Parking Lot loan (principal), and interest on loan of \$4.2k in January 2016. The Parking Lot loan stands at \$40k after repayment of principal and interest.

Capital Reserve Fund

- During January \$8k was used from this Fund to partly repay part of the Parking Lot loan. Furthermore, \$2k was transferred from Current Fund to Capital Reserve Fund which now stands at a balance of \$27k.

Youth Fund and Wish List Fund

- These Funds were consolidated into a new Fund called **Stewardship, Youth and Confirmation Fund** and has a balance of \$1.6k. It is of extreme importance that Advent continues to implement its Budget 2016 cash strategies and to effectively build on its Stewardship activities for the rest of the year.

My many thanks to all at Advent for their support.

*Respectfully submitted,
Jai Sahadeo, Interim Treasurer*

We Are All Disciples

Some might say that recent events mean that our church is at a crossroads. I disagree. I believe that this is an opportunity and that it's time to get back to basics. To return to the ideas that have been taught to us by Jesus. The first is how to be a disciple.

There is a TED talk by Derel Sivers called "How to start a movement" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RXMnDG3QzxE>.

I originally watched this as part of leadership training at my company. However, the parallels between this "new" idea and how we are taught to be disciples are striking. In the video, there is a leader dancing alone on a hillside. That's Jesus trying to show us the way. The video makes the point that the key to being a leader of a movement is that the idea is simple and easy to follow. While it may seem that the path is difficult, what is needed to be a follower of Jesus is actually quite simple. To be a disciple, we need to believe.

Then the leader in the video gets his first follower. In the Gospels, Jesus calls to the brothers Peter and Andrew to become his first disciples, his first followers. Like the leader in the video, Jesus welcomes his disciples and includes them in his ministry. There is a little bit of riskiness being the first follower but stepping up and becoming a first follower is key to the success of the original idea. To be a disciple, we must have the courage to follow.

Next in the video the first follower calls to his friends and one joins them. As the narrator says in the video "Three is a crowd and a crowd is news". Jesus tells Peter and Andrew that he will make them "fishers of men". The theme of the gathering of the disciples is present throughout the New Testament. Because of them and their ministry, more and more choose to follow the ways of Christ. The Gospels are full of people testifying about Jesus and spreading God's word is key. To be a disciple, we must testify.

Now the video gets interesting. More people join in the dancing and a

movement is born. A lot of people have talked recently about the decline in the church, and it may be because we've forgotten the role we play as disciples. What role can we play here in our church that would make us better followers? Most of us already believe or we wouldn't be members of Advent. The next step is for us to take action and testify. Tell your family and friends about the interesting sermon you heard at church. I know I learned a lot about Saint Valentine from the Pastor's sermon on February 14 and found it an easy topic of discussion with my family and friends. Invite people around you to attend. As the Pastor says every Sunday: "All are welcome." Each one of us can make a difference.

We already have a leader; the so-called lone nut standing out from the crowd sent by God to show us the way. Jesus is calling us to be his "first followers", his disciples. If we answer the call and join him, we all know we will be welcomed with open arms. It's up to us to take that first step. Believe. Have courage. And testify.

Erika Schurr

Volunteer Schedule

Please contact Olga Cosburn if you would like to serve as coffee host on a particular Sunday. On Sundays where we provide "Coffee Only", volunteers are needed to help with the cleanup after coffee. Also, any offerings of goodies are welcome.

Altar Care	Greeter	Assisting Minister/ Communion Assistant	Reader	Counters	Coffee Hosts
March 6 Elizabeth Lancia	Cynthia Stewart	Gabi Schickedanz Jim Doak	Tracy McPherson	Judy Baribeau Bob Schickedanz	Coffee Only
March 13 Rosarie Lisinski	Joan McLean	Bill Wesioloy Judy Baribeau	Bill Wesioloy	Nalini Beekie Bob Schickedanz	Hannelore Matthews Erika Callon
March 20 Rosarie Lisinski	Adele Buckley	Gabi Schickedanz Olga Cosburn	Martin Gangadeen	Judy Baribeau Bob Schickedanz	Coffee Only
March 25 Walter Rothenburger		Erika Schurr		Erika Schurr Bob Schickedanz	
March 27 Walter Rothenburger	Olga Cosburn	Bill Wesioloy	Martin Gangadeen	George Tang Bob Schickedanz	Coffee Only
April 3 Brit Missirlian	Joe Hunt	Gabi Schickedanz Olga Cosburn	Carol Peck	Bob Schickedanz Erika Schurr	Coffee Only
April 10 Carol Peck	Yvonne Cumberbatch	Lester McLean Judy Baribeau	Bill Wesioloy	Sonita Dillon-Rhodus George Tang	Walter Rothenburger Rohini Leslie
April 17 Judy Baribeau	Indira Beekie	TBA Karen Doak	Carol Peck	TBA	Coffee Only
April 24 Brit Missirlian	Elias Yousefi	Bill Wesioloy Indira Beekie	Elizabeth Lancia	Judy Baribeau George Tang	Theresa Ajodhia

Please check the Usher sign-up sheets on the bulletin board and volunteer for Sundays you are available.