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Epiphany

Please remember that we are no longer mailing the Parish Visitor, except by request. Copies are available for pickup in church and on our website.

Peanut Shell



Happy New Year to everyone and best wishes for a prosperous year.

After the hustle and bustle of the Advent and Christmas seasons, January becomes a bit more quiet as we all catch our breaths.

Our annual meeting will be on February 5 and we have included information on agenda items and the preliminary budget to help you prepare for the meeting. The annual report will also be available with more detail prior to the meeting. Please be sure to attend the meeting.

We will celebrate Confirmation on February 12, prior to Pastor Mills beginning his sabbatical.

We included a couple of items from the Synod Bishop's office in this newsletter. The first is a letter reproduced from *The Eastern Synod Lutheran* on benevolence, and the second is a letter distributed by the Lutheran and Anglican churches with food for thought about the upcoming federal election. Please read the material.

The Mission Report contains some interesting stories of life in Papua New Guinea.

If you are able, please assist our Altar Guild by providing communion bread. There are a few guidelines to ensure that we have consistency in the bread. Please speak with Brit Missirlian if you are interested in helping.

I still have some *Windows* booklets. If you would like one, please speak with me.

Gerard and I want to thank everyone for your prayers, cards and concerns during his recent illness. He completed his radiation treatments in November and the prognosis so far is good for his recovery.

Our February/March *Parish Visitor* will be available following the annual meeting to give a report on the proceedings.

Judy

Annual Meeting Update

Advent's Annual Meeting will take place on February 5 following the worship service. We need a quorum of 47 people during the whole meeting to conduct our business.

We will have second reading of the addition to our Constitution, Article 1, Section 3, as follows: "*The organization shall be carried on without purpose of gain for its members and any profits or other gains to the organization shall be used in promoting its objectives.*" This change comes to us a year ago from Synod Council as a recommendation from the Canada Revenue Agency with respect to the charitable status of religious organizations.

We will also have a number of elections to Congregational Council to replace those whose terms are ending

and those who resigned during the year. Please let Carol Peck know if you wish to nominate someone for Council.

We will also elect the congregation's representative to the Mutual Ministry Committee, a member to the Endowment Fund Committee, and a lay delegate to the Eastern Synod Assembly to be held July 5-9 at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo.

The 2006 Budget will also be presented and discussed. Please review the preliminary budget in this newsletter.

Copies of the annual report and financial statements will be available a week or two prior to the annual meeting.

It is recommended that every voting member of the congregation attend the meeting. ♦

Communion Bread

Please let Brit Mssirlian know (416 447 6895) if you are able to buy/bake bread for communion.



Advent Windows Booklet

Copies of the booklet are available from Judy Baribeau at \$5 each. We had a few extras printed, so if you would like one and did not order one, they are available first come-first served.

Parking Lot Congestion

We've been experiencing some congestion in the parking lot recently because of members of St. Demetru also using spaces on Sunday mornings. They are making other arrangements for parking and the current problems should be eliminated shortly. We appreciate your patience in the interim. ♦

ADVENT LUTHERAN CHURCH

2800 Don Mills Road

North York, Ontario • M2J 3B6

(416) 493-1435

The Rev Michael Mills, Pastor

(416) 691-3774

Worship Service at 10:00 a.m.

Sunday School at 9:00 a.m.

(October-June)

The *Parish Visitor* is produced for our members and friends.

Judy Baribeau, Editor (416) 264-4527

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Advent Lutheran Church

www.adventlutheranchurch.ca

Mission Report

Missionary Aviation Fellowship

In many areas of the world the Missionary Aviation Fellowship is very active. The Fellowship is a non-denominational, church-based organization which provides air transport links to about 300 remote airstrips around Papua New Guinea. It has been a presence in PNG for more than 50 years. The Fellowship provides a valuable service, carrying people and goods in and out of isolated parts of this country and others, in many cases being the only airline servicing these areas.

Recently one of the Fellowship planes had an accident landing on a remote airstrip. Both of the pilots, who were from New Zealand, perished. The cabin attendant and all eight passengers walked away with only minor injuries. This was a great shock to the people in PNG and the Fellowship worldwide.

A new airplane had been ordered before the crash and when it was dedicated on its arrival, it gave the Fellowship community another chance to come together to continue the healing process and to celebrate the ongoing services the Fellowship provides in PNG.

Cell Phones are Useful in PNG

Cell phones have suddenly become a way of life in PNG. Cell phones are expensive as one is charged for both incoming and outgoing calls. Most of the population do not have conventional land lines, especially in the remote areas. So towns in PNG have gone from no phones to cell phone service. There are Telikad prepaid calling cards which can be used at any phone, as the price of the call is deducted from the Telikad card.

Electricity – a Prepaid Utility

Similarly, PNG Power (the electricity company) is now introducing Isipei (literally Easy Pay) in an increasing number of areas. Isipei is exactly the same as the prepaid Telikad – it is a prepaid amount of power use. Special power meters are installed at the residences/businesses. Prepaid cards are bought and keyed into the meters and power is available to that amount. If your prepaid card runs out before you bought and keyed the next one into your meter, the power simply shuts off. No power until the next card information is entered.

Namesakes are Popular

Namesakes are very popular in PNG. Often children are named after missionaries or some other respected person.

Bonnie Wepler has been so honoured – they are Bonnie (known as Epe, living in Gunzkor village near Bundun), Bonnie Brown (living in Menyanyal), and a newly arrived boy Bonnie who lives just down the road from the ELC-PNG head office. A friend of hers has named her little girl Stella Bonnie.

PNG Synod Meeting

Remember in your prayers those who are organizing the 25th ELC-PNG Nesenod Synod, January 8-13, 2006. In addition, pray for the many overseas delegates who will be traveling to PNG to be part of this national convention. January 11 is the day scheduled for special recognition of the 25th Synod of the ELC-PNG and January 12 will see the elections for both Bishop and General Church Secretary positions. These meetings are to be held at Wasu, high in the mountains of Finschafen.

Let us pray for new energy and enthusiasm and joy to serve the God who gives us everything. We each are called to different ways of serving God and sharing our experiences with the world around us.

*Joan Fox
Mission Representative*



Evangelical Lutheran Women

- Our Craft and Bake sale netted \$227. Thank you to all who donated and helped.
- The Christmas party at the Schickedanz's was a great success again – good food and lots of fun, thanks again to the hosts. The offering was \$90 which went to the Toronto Star Santa Claus fund. Alex Otten donated a new coffee urn in memory of his late wife Joan. Thank you, Alex.
- The Seniors met on December 20 for a potluck luncheon. What a lunch we had. Fifteen people, including Pastor Mills, enjoyed a good time. We even had music – Martin Arnett played his clarinet and did very well. The next meetings for seniors are January 3 and 17 at 1:00 p.m.

Evelyn Arnett.

Significant Church Websites

Please check the following websites frequently to keep in touch with local and national church news:

- **Toronto Conference** – elcic-torontoconference.ca
- **Eastern Synod** – www.easternsynod.org
- **Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC)** – www.elcic.ca
- **Lift up Your Hearts** – www.worship.ca
- **Lutheran World Federation** – www.elca.org/lwf

We Need Your Help!

This article is reprinted from the November 2005 *The Eastern Synod Lutheran*, with permission.

Members of Congregational Council felt the message is important enough to reprint here to emphasize the need for increased Benevolence in our church.

In the almost eight years that I have been your synod bishop, I have never used this column as a means of soliciting benevolence offerings. (Once begun, I feared the practice might prove habit-forming!) So I held off, knowing there might come a day when that message might need to be delivered clearly and emphatically. That day has now come.

Let me share a few facts concerning Eastern Synod benevolence offerings.

To the end of September 2005 benevolence offerings were running 5.4% behind the same period for 2004.

In 2004, ninety congregations out of 208 gave fewer dollars than they did in 1986, even before inflation is factored in.

In 2004 benevolence offering total of \$1,680,940 is equivalent to about \$1,051,000 in 1986 dollars, compared to the \$1,572,000 actually received in that merger year. This means that we are operating the Synod (including our contributions to Waterloo Lutheran Seminary and the ELCIC national office) on 2/3 of the purchasing power available to us eighteen years ago.

In 1987 congregations contributed 8.9% of their total receipts to regular benevolence. In 2002 that figure was 6.9%, a drop of almost one-quarter. If congregations had just given at the same rate they did in 1987, we would have had \$828,000 more to spend on shared ministry last year.

In recent years this has led to a situation where:

- campus ministry funding has been reduced to the point where

there are no longer any full-time campus pastors serving on our behalf;

- vacant faculty positions at our seminary have had to go un-filled;
- annual support offerings to the ELCIC have been drastically reduced for several years;
- capital maintenance and improvements to our three synodically owned camps have been reduced or deferred indefinitely;
- we have not had the capacity to do any significant work toward the development of the new social statements on a number of pressing questions of faith and life;
- and the list could go on and on and on.

I have a sense that our membership wants to be a part of a denominational body that is active, creative and vibrantly engaged in advancing the mission of our church. We all want to be part of a church we can take pride in. But that doesn't happen, however, without the generous and sacrificial support of our general membership. Hence this plea for help.

I will be so bold as to propose that, sometime before the end of the year, you consider giving a special second mile benevolence gift of \$100, \$200 or \$500 to help us begin moving back to the place we need to be if our synod is to provide a credible response to the multitude of mission challenges which lie before us at the present time.

I know we have the capability to meet this challenge. What remains to be seen is if we have the will to do so.

Bishop Michael Pryse

Stewardship Matters

Tying it Together

At the end of the year we like to tie up all sorts of loose ends, and this column does some of that.

Some of this information will be repeated in my report in the Annual Report, but important items need to be said more than once.

First, I want to thank everyone for their stewardship during the year. It has been a challenging year, not that others aren't as well. We had a number of unanticipated appeals, such as the tsunami, floods, earthquakes and hurricanes that we were asked to support – and we did. We had our continuing 40th anniversary fund, which you supported amazingly well, particularly through the bake auctions, silent auction and Sunday School coin banks in addition to your regular offerings.

However, our challenge goes on, as you can see from the Bishop's article on benevolence at the left.

There are maintenance items that need to be attended to on our building as it is getting older.

We need people to volunteer their time and talents to help out in the many areas of congregational life. We need support for our Conference and Synod activities.

I encourage you to look carefully at our budget for next year and do your best to support it. If everyone makes a proportionate increase in their offerings, we will have no problem meeting our responsibilities.

To make it easier, for some of you, we have the option for Pre-Authorized Remittance (PAR), where you can pre-authorize your monthly contributions to be transferred directly from your bank account to the church. If you are interested, please see Claus Brandes to get the appropriate forms to complete.

Thank you again.

*Judy Baribeau, Chair
Stewardship*

The following letter was distributed by Bishop Pryse as information towards the upcoming election in Canada.

December 7, 2005

FEDERAL ELECTION: What do we value?

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

The coming federal election is a time to assess our values. What kind of society do we want to live in? How can we best deal with the issues we face as a society, and strengthen the common good?

An election is about choices. And not just about which name you choose to put your X beside. It's about choosing to put your faith into action, a faith inspired by a vision of justice and dignity for all. We can make that choice...or we can choose to focus only on issues and policy proposals that benefit us personally. It's up to each of us.

Our faith guides us as we prayerfully consider our response to the issues at stake. Inspired by the witness of Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit, our churches are striving to build communities of hope and compassion in our society. This is a major challenge, when one considers the brokenness around us.

One sign of that brokenness is the increasing number of women, men and children in Canada who live in poverty. While many of us are now racking our brains trying to think of Christmas gifts for people "who have everything," one in every six children across Canada lives in poverty.

During this federal election campaign, we ask you to particularly consider the plight of children and adults in Canada living in poverty. This is an issue of top priority for our advocacy efforts with government. We will be active in a variety of ways to counter child poverty in coming months. When child poverty rates are less than 5 percent in countries like Sweden and Finland, there is no reason why we cannot match their success.

A range of steps can be taken to tackle poverty, including ensuring more affordable housing so parents don't face the terrible dilemma of "paying the rent or feeding the kids," higher minimum wages, low-cost childcare, and other measures. One of the most effective ways of raising incomes in family households is by increasing the federal Child Tax Benefit. Right now, the benefit is slated to reach \$3,240 per child by 2007. If the benefit was increased to \$4,900 per child, that would lift a single parent working full-time at minimum wage up to the poverty line.

We encourage you to become actively involved in the election campaign; this is what democracy is all about. As you do so, please keep our society's children, and their parents, in mind. Please ask party candidates if they are aware that one in every six children is living in poverty. Ask what they plan to do about this critical issue. The attached election questions can help you. Make your voice and vote count to alleviate poverty.

In Christ's Service,



Bishop Michael Pryse
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada



Archbishop Andrew Hutchison
Primate, Anglican Church of Canada



Bishop Colin R. Johnson
Anglican Diocese of Toronto

FEDERAL ELECTION DECISION TIME: Vote to End Poverty!

"Canada's high rate of child poverty is shocking for a country ranked among the wealthiest in the world ... a rate almost six times that of Denmark!"

The Conference Board of Canada

More than 1.2 million Canadian children – one child in every six – are growing up in poverty. This is a national tragedy. The federal election offers us a golden opportunity to show our concern and to elect politicians committed to positive action.

Key findings from a recent report on child poverty by Campaign 2000 underscore the hardships faced by so many of our neighbours:

- Poor families are very poor. A lone parent and child in a large city need \$24,475 annually to meet basic needs. Yet they receive on average only \$14,875;

- Poor children grow up in hungry households. 41% used food banks last year;

- A job is no ticket out of poverty. Almost half (48%) of all poor children live in families with parents who are employed year round;

- The gap has widened between the richest and poorest families. The richest 10% of families with children now earn \$13 for every \$1 earned by the poorest 10%.

- Government policies matter: British Columbia, where the government has

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ADVENT LUTHERAN CHURCH

DETAILS OF 2005 EXPENDITURES AND BUDGET SUBMISSIONS FOR 2006

	Budget 2005	Actual 11/04to 10/05	Submitted 2006	
Pastor				
Salary	\$ 33,800	33,633	34,800	
Housing Allowance	20,960	20,858	21,590	
Books/Education	1,500	1,500	1,500	
Sabbatical	<u>1,000</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>2,600</u>	
Total Pastor's Expenses	57,260	56,991	60,490	
Payroll Expenses				
Pension, Retire & Group	7,600	7,685	7,800	
Blue Cross	4,752	4,746	4,900	
CPP	1,832	1,670	1,900	
EI	1,081	1,172	1,100	
Workers Comp.	<u>375</u>	<u>361</u>	<u>390</u>	
Total Pastoral Expenses	72,900	72,625	76,580	105.05%
Music and Worship				
Organist/Choir Director	6,000	6,112	6,250	
Wine and Cups	800	872	700	
Bulletins/ <i>Eternity for Today</i>	780	830	855	
Pulpit Supply	520	258	270	
Other Expenses	<u>850</u>	<u>647</u>	<u>745</u>	
Total Music and Worship	8,950	8,719	8,820	98.55%
Parish Administration				
Communication	2,900	3,188	2,400	
Web Page	200	155	200	
Convention Delegate	1,000	1,059	1,000	
Advertising	100	91	100	
Bank Charges	50	50	110	
Travel Expenses	3,500	3,083	3,700	
Other Expenses	<u>200</u>	<u>763</u>	<u>150</u>	
Total Parish Administration	7,950	8,389	7,660	96.35%
Property				
Janitorial Service	11,000	10,030	12,000	
Supplies/Maintenance	2,700	3,135	4,000	
Outdoor Maintenance	4,800	5,476	6,000	
Utilities	8,700	8,236	9,300	
Insurance/Govt. Requirements	3,800	4,402	4,350	
Equipment Repairs	3,000	4,459	3,000	
Painting	0	0	0	
Flower Beds	<u>200</u>	<u>675</u>	<u>200</u>	
Total Property	34,200	36,413	38,850	113.60%
Other Funds				
Sunday School	850	906	850	
ESO	700	612	800	
Stewardship/Finance	<u>300</u>	<u>650</u>	<u>400</u>	
Total Other Funds	1,850	2,168	2,050	110.81%
Total Current Expenses	<u>125.850</u>	<u>128.314</u>	<u>133.960</u>	106.44%

See next page for Income Budget

**ADVENT LUTHERAN CHURCH
INCOME BUDGET**

Budget	Budget 2005	Actual November 04-October 05	Submitted 2006	
Total Budget	\$145,300	\$148,698	\$152,110	
Revenues to Support the Budget				
From other Sources				
User Fees	37,900	46,363	54,000	
Interest	<u>500</u>	<u>125</u>	<u>500</u>	
Subtotal	38,400	46,488	54,500	
From Advent				
Envelopes	90,000	77,244	80,360	
Benevolence	10,000	10,355	10,500	
Loose	2,700	2,491	2,500	
Festival Services	<u>4,200</u>	<u>4,235</u>	<u>4,250</u>	
Subtotal	106,900	94,325	97,610	
Total Revenue	\$ 145,300	140,813	152,110	104.69%

**Federal Election
Continued from Page 5**

cut services and income supports, has the highest incidence of child poverty at 23.9%. Quebec's investments in families have seen its rate steadily decline since 1996 to 16.7%. Ontario's rate is 16.1%.

■ Canada's record on child poverty is shameful, compared to other wealthy nations. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) ranks Canada a dismal 19th out of the 26 OECD countries. Denmark, Norway, Finland and Sweden all have child poverty rates below 5%, far less than ours.

It doesn't have to be this way. Inspired by the Gospel's call to love our neighbour, we can choose to build a different kind of society, one that ensures a positive start in life and decent living conditions for all children and their families.

Child poverty is, of course, connected to other factors that affect the well-being of families and communities: affordable housing, jobs at good wages, rather than poverty-level rates, affordable child care, and taxation policies that will benefit children. We need to keep these issues in mind as well during this election campaign.

The following questions can both help you decide how to cast your ballot,

and can help lift up the condition of children, women and men trapped in poverty to wider audiences. Please raise these questions at all-candidates' meetings, with candidates as you meet them, on election phone-in programs and other ways.

Questions for candidates

■ What policies does your party propose to improve the lives of the poor, especially children living in poverty?

■ Does your party support a substantial increase in the federal Child Tax Benefit? It is scheduled to rise to \$3,240 per child by 2007, but a level of \$4,900 would make a major contribution to raising families up to the poverty line.

■ Two-thirds of low-income families pay at least 30% of their income for housing, often much more. Tens of thousands of families across our country are on waiting lists for a non-profit apartment that they can afford. Is your party committed to adequate funding for affordable housing? How would you and your party ensure that funding to build housing arrives quickly, and is not bogged down in negotiations between governments?

■ Across-the-board tax cuts deliver the greatest benefit to people who are already well-off. They also reduce the

ability of government to invest in vital social programs. What would your party do to ensure that tax changes improve the lives of families living in poverty?

Find out more

As Lutherans and Anglicans, we work with our justice partners who share our values so that our combined voice is stronger. We encourage you to make use of their election materials and information:

Campaign 2000 and Campaign Against Child Poverty: National, non-partisan coalitions working to end child and family poverty in Canada. Visit www.campaign2000.ca and www.child-poverty.com.

Much of the material cited above came from Campaign 2000's 2005 Report Card on Child Poverty in Canada, Decision Time for Canada: Let's Make Poverty History, <http://www.campaign2000.ca/rc/rc05/05NationalReportCard.pdf>.

Citizens for Public Justice: An ecumenical non-partisan organization, www.cpj.ca.

Kairos: An ecumenical social justice organization supported by the Anglican Church and other churches, www.kairoscanada.org.

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People and Events Summary

Worship Services and Meetings

Worship services are held every Sunday at 10:00 a.m.

Seniors meet January 2 and 17 at 1:00 p.m. at the church.

Men's Breakfast Group – meets at 9:00 a.m. the first Saturday each month at the Wexford Restaurant, northeast corner of Lawrence Avenue East and Warden Avenue.

Congregational Council meets Monday, January 9, 7:00 p.m. at the church.

ESO meets Monday, January 16, 7:30 p.m. at the church.

Confirmation will take place on Sunday, February 12.

Federal Election

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Make Poverty History: A global campaign to reduce poverty, calling for an end to child poverty in Canada, www.makepovertyhistory.ca.

NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Thank you

- Rebecca Taylor for design and set-up of the labyrinth used during Advent.
- Fred Roth and John Krause for acquiring and setting up the Christmas tree and to Walter Rothenburger for Christmas decorations around the church.
- To everyone who brought Christmas plants to enhance our sanctuary for the Christmas services.

Help us keep our contact list current

We try our best to ensure that our contact list is current, but people do move and change their email addresses. Please give any updates for your address, phone number and email to the church office or Judy Baribeau at gandjbaribeau@rogers.com. That way we can ensure you will always get your *Parish Visitor* as soon as it is available. If you prefer to receive your newsletter by mail, please let me know as well. We respect the privacy laws and this information is only given to those who require it for church use. *jb*

Please remember to turn the ringer off on your cell phone while we worship.

For more information visit, www.toronto.anglican.ca/sjab, or contact Social Justice & Advocacy Consultant Murray MacAdam, mmacadam@toronto.anglican.ca, tel. (416) 363-6021 ext. 240, 1-800-668-8932 ext. 240. ♦



January 2006 Volunteers

Volunteers assist with the worship services. The *Parish Visitor* lists those who have agreed to assist each Sunday as a reminder and a thank you for serving. In addition to the areas listed below, we invite you to provide altar flowers for special occasions in your lives. If you have questions about them, please speak to the Altar Guild person for the particular Sunday.

Altar Care	Greeter	Assisting Minister	Reader	Ushers	Counters	Coffee Hosts
January 1 Brit Missirlian	Yvonne Cumberbatch	Nalini Beekie	Hildegard Weltner	Joan and Arie Fox	Kristin Doak & Carol Peck	Elizabeth & Guy Lancia
January 8 Brit Missirlian	Jenny Persaud	Robert Wraith	Astrid Walther	Chloe Shantz-Hilkes	Judy Baribeau & Gladys Ammattil	Karen & Jim Doak
January 15 Brit Missirlian	Chloe Shantz-Hilkes	Erika Schurr	Judy Baribeau	Olga Cosburn	Carol Peck	Anita & Eric Azeez
January 22 Brit Missirlian	Alfred Schurr	Gabi Schickedanz		Jenny Persaud & Kamaludin Khan	Gladys Ammattil & Bernd Brandt	Gangadeen family
January 29 Brit Missirlian	Hilton Beharry	Lester McLean		Elizabeth & Guy Lancia	Judy Baribeau & Brit Missirlian	Sally & Reg Sawh