

# The Eastern Synod Lutheran

Sept. 22, 2014

Volume 33



## When It's Hard To Be Thankful

by Pastor Douglas Reble  
Assistant to the Bishop

This morning I sat down, at my desk, to read from the Bible. Something I try to do most mornings before I begin the task of the day. This is what I read: *"I called to the Lord out of my distress, and he answered me; out of the belly of Sheol I cried, and you heard my voice. You cast me into the deep, into the heart of the seas, and the flood surrounded me; all your waves and your billows passed over me. Then I said, "I am driven away from your sight; how shall I look again upon your holy temple?" The waters closed in over me; the deep surrounded me; weeds were wrapped around my head at the root of the mountains. I went down to the land whose bars closed upon me forever; yet you brought up my life from the Pit, O Lord my God. As my life was ebbing*

*away, I remembered the Lord; and my prayer came to you, into your holy temple. Those who worship vain idols forsake their true loyalty. But I with the voice of thanksgiving will sacrifice to you; what I have vowed I will pay. Deliverance belongs to the Lord!" (Jonah 2:2-9).*

A long passage of Scripture which is a plea from Jonah for deliverance when he is in the belly of the whale. Why do I share it with you?

Because today, as I write this, I am very conscious of what is happening in this world in which we live- ISIS beheading journalists and killing hundreds more in the name of God, the vulnerable children suffering and dying because of the Ebola crisis in west Africa, the reality of the missing and murdered aboriginal women across Canada, continued fighting in the Ukraine- and the list goes on!

Today I am also conscious that as I write this, we are only three weeks away from our annual Thanksgiving celebration, the time of year when we thank God for all the many blessings that have been bestowed upon us.

How do you bring those two events together? How can one be thankful when all you want to do is join with Jonah and ask for deliverance out of our distress? How can one be thankful

in a world where there is so much pain and so much sadness?

Well, as the people of God have done for thousands of years, I turned to the Psalms. This is what I read: *"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside still waters, he restores my soul. He leads me in the path of righteousness for his name sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil, your rod and your staff- they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil, my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever and ever."*

I read those ancient words of comfort and hope and, once again, I am reminded that problems and trials will come in this life and sometimes those problems and trials are big enough to cause us to feel swallowed up and overwhelmed, just like Jonah. But God is still God. And this God loves us and this God understands our weakness and this God will never leave us to face the perils of life alone.

This year maybe that is enough to be thankful for. Thanks be to God!

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**NEW**



**Dammee, pictured here with one of her new friends.**

**Faith Lutheran, Brantford Refugee Sponsorship**

submitted by Janaki Bandara

When Jesus said, "Love your neighbours," do you think he directed us to love our neighbours a continent away? This is what the congregation at Faith Lutheran Church in Brantford is seeking to do with its recent congregational decision to sponsor a family of eight from the refugee camp in Kakuma, Kenya.

A daughter of this family, Dammee, is a neighbour of Faith, a mere block and a half from us. She is 21 years old and has completed her second year of study under World University Scholarship Canada at Wilfrid Laurier University. Her scholarship was her ticket out of the refugee camp where she had lived for about 12 years.

Studying Human Rights, Dammee and Faith's pastoral intern, Janaki, met at the student house where they lived together for three months. It was those key three months in the fall when we all begin to bundle up for the winter. Dammee, feeling the cold, came to Faith to access its Clothing Depot and was immediately met by some of the loving women of this ministry, whose hearts went out to one so far from her family.

The Holy Spirit put the desire to help on all of our hearts, and initial enquiries and invitations began.

Dammee participated with our youth group and visited with some of our members, sharing her story of growing up in the camp. She and her family arrived there in 2000, having fled their homeland Ethiopia. In her gentle, quiet voice, Dammee told us about her life and of her philosophy: there is always hope and opportunity. Consultation with Canadian Lutheran World Relief began. CLWR's Jennifer Ardon worked closely with us and Dammee to find out what the costs would be and confirm the process. It can take anywhere from two to five years for family sponsorship like this to be completed, and the cost, based on Ontario Works budget, is just under \$43,000.

This is no small project for a congregation in times of declining membership, but in April 2014, the Faith congregation faithfully voted to sponsor Dammee's family.

In doing so, we are showing our love for our neighbour. It began with the kind of co-ordination only the Holy Spirit can arrange. Thanks be to God.



Our thoughts and prayers go out to Pastor Brad Mittleholtz and his wife Tracey as they mourn the death of his grandmother. We also pray for Pastor Kimberlynn McNabb and her husband Timothy as they grieve the loss of her father.



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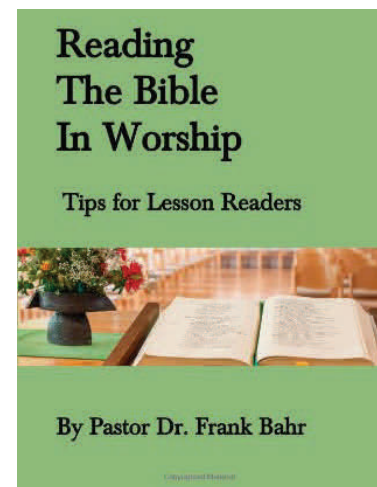
**Canadian Lutheran World Relief**

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[www.clwr.org](http://www.clwr.org)

**Tips for Lesson Readers**

One of our Eastern Synod pastors, Rev. Dr. Frank Bahr, notes that during his ministry he was often asked if there were classes for lesson readers. Seeing a need, he wrote a booklet titled *Reading The Bible In Worship: Tips for Lesson Readers*. The book is available on amazon.com



Do you have an idea for The Eastern Synod Lutheran?

Is there something that you would like to read more about?

Send your suggestions to Liz, [ezehr@elcic.ca](mailto:ezehr@elcic.ca).



### Breaking News!

The Rt Rev. Munib A. Younan, Bishop of ELCJHL and President of the Lutheran World Federation is coming to Canada!

He will be in Ottawa Oct. 20-21 and in Kitchener-Waterloo Oct. 22-23.

Plans are currently being made for public events in Ottawa the evening of either Oct 20 or 21 and in K-W on October 22. The Eastern Synod office will release finalized plans as soon as they are available.

Bishop Younan is pictured here with our own Bishop Michael Pryse.



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[glebecentre.wlu.ca](http://glebecentre.wlu.ca)

#### The Courage to Ask for Help

By Dr. Kristine Lund

The story of the bent over woman (Luke 13:10-17) is one of my favourites in the New Testament. We are told of a woman who had been unable to stand straight for eighteen years. Jesus is teaching in the synagogue and sees her in the crowd. He calls to her, lays his hands on her and she immediately stands up straight. Amazing!! I can only imagine what that must have been like for this woman who had gone through her world for eighteen years with limited vision, only seeing people's legs, small children, animals walking in the streets etc. Never being able to stand straight and see the sky clearly. What must it have been like to stand and look into the face of Jesus?

We all carry burdens to a lesser or greater degree depending on what is happening in our lives. Some of our burdens may be physical as the woman in Luke while others may be more of an emotional or spiritual nature. We can feel so weighed down that it is a challenge to see the bigger picture. At times like these it is important to have support and access the available resources. Certainly, our pastor and church community can be a very important resource as can our families and friends. There are

times, however, when it feels uncomfortable to talk about our challenges with those who know us. There are also times when we have discussed our challenges with those around us and they have been unable to provide either enough support or the right support. This is where seeking help from a professional can be important.

Sometimes when we need help it's hard to admit and reach out to access it. In Luke's story I'm struck by the fact that Jesus saw the woman and responded to her need. Wouldn't we like it if others did that for us? Sometimes, that does happen where those around us recognize that something is wrong and reach out to us. But often, we need to take the initiative and make the first step to find help.

At the Delton Glebe Counselling Centre we recognize the courage that it takes to make a phone call to ask for help. It is a sign of strength to know that you have reached your limit of being able to address what's burdening you by yourself. With compassion, our therapists sit with clients to respond to the challenges they are facing and work together to develop a plan to address them so they might stand straight like the woman in Luke's

Gospel. You can reach us by phone at (519)884-3305 or by email [glebecentre@wlu.ca](mailto:glebecentre@wlu.ca). You can also visit us online at: [www.glebecentre.wlu.ca](http://www.glebecentre.wlu.ca) The centre is located at 177 Albert Street in Waterloo, Ontario directly across the street of the Waterloo Lutheran Seminary.

#### Ministry Changes

Rick Pryce from St. Philip, Kitchener to Lunenburg Parish, Lunenburg.

Adam Snook from Maynooth/Raglan Parish to St. John's, Mahone Bay

The following Pastors are now retired:  
Ben Coltvet from All Saints, Newcombville

Steve Kristenson from St. John's, Mahone Bay

Douglas Moore from St. Matthew, Fredericton

Chad Honneyman began at the Parish of the Bruce.

Hope, Saint John, NB officially closed on September 1, 2014.

# Bishops' Company Dinner

Saturday, November 1, 2014  
Dundee Country Club

## Meet this year's keynote speaker, Janine Pearson .

Now in her 25th season with the Stratford Festival, Janine coordinates a team of specialist coaches who serve the company in meeting the physical and vocal demands of staging the plays in repertory. She also teaches for the Michael Langham Workshop for Classical Direction and the Birmingham Conservatory for Classical Theatre Training. They are members of Zion Lutheran in Stratford.



Reserve your tickets by contacting Liz Zehr [ezehr@elcic.ca](mailto:ezehr@elcic.ca) or call 519-743-1461 or 1-877-373-5242  
Ticket Cost is \$ 35/plate

### Lutheran Campus Ministry- Waterloo Submitted by Rev. Patricia Jackson

In the fall of 2013 the Lutheran Student House transitioned into the Delton Glebe Center. This new direction for the house did not change the ministry that Lutheran Campus Ministry continues to offer to the students of Wilfrid Laurier University or the University of Waterloo.

Pastor Patricia Jackson remains the part-time Lutheran Chaplain working out of the Multi-Faith Resource Office on campus. Located in the Arts Building of WLU Rm # 1C12A, six other chaplains share the space and we work together to minister and offer our ears and time to students of many denominations and faith traditions.

Lutheran Campus Ministry specifically works to build leadership skills with its four 'peer ministers'.

Here are our new plans for this fall. Thursday, September 11th is our 'Students Against Human Trafficking'

event; Wednesday, September 24th we are painting rocks in the concourse to celebrate 'International Day of Peace'. Thursday, October 30th we are holding a 'Refugee Rights' event and holding an awareness information table for the "Daughters for Life" campaign. We're also very excited to have KAIROS (the Canadian Ecumenical Justice Organization) lead us in a "Truth and Reconciliation" blanket exercise on the evening of Friday, November 14th in the Hawk's Nest to shed light on the history of our Aboriginal sisters and brothers in partnership with the Aboriginal Students Association on campus.

On Tuesday nights at the Seminary on the second floor we also hold a "Cost Supper" for students on campus. It is a paltry \$3.00 for a full course meal homemade by local church ladies. We are always looking for more cooks for the students so if you're interested in helping out you can contact Anne Woolner at [annewoolner@hotmail.com](mailto:annewoolner@hotmail.com) As well, our free "Welcome to Campus" BBQ will be held on the Seminary lawn (close to the library near the

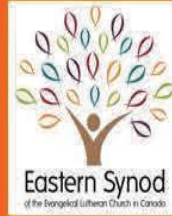
walkway) on Tuesday, September 16th beginning at 4:30 p.m.

We have also connected with the Wellness Centre at WLU building a working relationship with the Mental Health Advisory Group. This is leading into opportunities to partner with the Wellness Centre (formally the Counseling Services office) to provide support for students facing first year homesickness, anxiety or a host of other stress related issues.

Through the years Lutheran Campus Ministry – Waterloo has served the students of Wilfrid Laurier University, and U of W by providing support and leadership opportunities to students as they struggle with questions of faith, meaning of life, and career decisions. This has been accomplished through a caring community of volunteers, chaplains and peer ministers. We are looking forward to another wonderful year serving in this capacity.



## Biennium Reconciliation Initiative



**Together: For the Love of The World** was the theme of The Fifteenth Biennial Convention of the Eastern Synod this summer in Toronto, Ontario. It was an inspiring and challenging call for all of us to be about Jesus' mission in and for the love of the world! During the Assembly delegates adopted a number of motions that asked me to write to our congregations and special ministries and underscore the importance of the work that we have covenanted to do together.

Rather than write letters I have decided to highlight each of those resolutions in successive issues of our **Eastern Synod Lutheran**. My intent is to seek your resolve to make these ministries your own.

Personally, I am delighted at the overwhelming adoption of the **Biennium Reconciliation Initiative** (motion ES 14-20). Please download a copy from our Synod website and make it widely available within your faith community.

<http://www.easternsynod.org/content/biennium-reconciliation-initiative>

I encourage you to make plans – how can your congregation actualize this initiative? What might you do together with your Area Ministry, ecumenical or interfaith partners, or civic organizations – Together: For the Love of the World?

In 2008 following the June 11 apology our Prime Minister made to the Assembly of First Nations, Inuit and Métis, I wrote to all of you noting that our synod had expressed

its solidarity with our sisters and brothers in the Anglican Church in Canada and our Aboriginal sisters and brothers as they continued to implement and live out the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement through the launch of *Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission*. At that time I encouraged the congregations of synod to be aware of, sensitive to and supportive of the work of reconciliation and transformation among the peoples of these communities. I noted that this apology marked an historic moment in our Canadian history. Likewise, the **Biennium Reconciliation Initiative** marks a profoundly important direction for us now. What I said in 2008, I now repeat:

“Do not be afraid to take small steps forward toward the truth of what has happened and move towards authentic reconciliation. Do not be afraid to develop ecumenical partnerships on the grassroots level. Do not be afraid to support the vision of human rights and their principles and values to strengthen joint initiatives and to build relationships.”

Please make wide use of the reconciliation suggestions posted on our [website](#).

With all best wishes,

Bishop Michael J Pryse

Eastern Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

### Congregational Treasurer's Workshops

Hosted by Keith Myra,  
Synod Council Treasurer

Sat. Sept. 24, 2014  
Trinity, Sudbury, ON

Sat. Oct. 18, 2014  
St. Paul's, Bridgewater, NS

Sat. Nov. 1, 2014  
Redeemer, London, ON

Sat. Nov. 8, 2014  
St. James, New Dundee, ON

### Leadership for Healthy Congregations

Hosted by Pastor Riitta Hepomaki & Jeff Pym

Sat. Oct. 4, 2014  
Faith, Hamilton, ON

Sat. Oct. 18, 2014  
St. Matthew's, Kitchener, ON

Sat. Nov. 15, 2014  
St. Mark's, Kingston, ON

To register please contact Liz,  
[ezehr@elcic.ca](mailto:ezehr@elcic.ca) or call 519-743-1461

### Pastoral Vacancies

The following Eastern Synod Congregations are seeking pastors. If you are interested please contact Rev. Douglas Reble, Assistant to the Bishop.

- St. Paul's, Montreal, QC
- St. Mark's, Kitchener, ON
- St. John's, South Porcupine, ON
- St. Peter's, Cambridge, ON
- South Dundas, Williamsburg, ON
- Trinity, Ayton, ON

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