



# The Eastern Synod Lutheran

Oct 19, 2016

Volume 56



## Journey to Jesus

Rev. Riitta Hepomaki  
Assistant to the Bishop

When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?" Jesus answered them, "Very truly, I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal." Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

*John 6:25-27, 35*

*When they found him on the other side of the sea... When did you find him? Where did you find him? How long a journey did you have to make before you found him? People in Capernaum had met him a day before. They saw a miracle; they were fed and now they were looking for him in order to get more.*

What did they want more of? Some say that these people were looking for Jesus for the wrong reasons and that Jesus reproached them for their wrong motives. That may be true, but today I don't hear criticism in the Lord's voice. I see him sitting there, maybe even waiting for these people, knowing that they would come, because he knew that they were not only poor in wealth, but also in spirit. He recognized their needs. He saw that they didn't have food; he saw that they didn't have peace in their hearts. He saw that they were wandering on their own, not knowing that God cared for them. Jesus saw a crowd of people and in that crowd he saw lonely souls; lonely souls who wanted to believe but didn't know how. Lonely souls, who wanted to follow Jesus, but didn't know where to start.

The journey to Jesus can be short or long. People in Capernaum had to go over the sea. Many of your an-

cestors also had to come over the sea, when they immigrated here. They were looking for a better life, and as you know many of them found it here and many of them found Jesus, too.

It may be a journey of many years even if you don't move anywhere. You try to fill your life with social activities, you study different philosophies, you read ancient wisdom literature, you try different hobbies, you fill your life with endless hours of work, or you try to drown your thirst by escaping the reality.

A thought of eternity or faith may flash in your mind. It may flash so clearly that you cannot help but believe. You get the answer, you know where to go. You go to the Lord. Sometimes, though, a thought of eternity goes as quickly as it came. But even if it doesn't linger in your mind for long, it shows that a little seed is there, waiting for nourishment. God sees a seed in you. God planted it. It is this seed that is thirsty, it needs nourishment. It wants to grow.

Jesus promises to nourish us. He says: "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty." These are the words of everlasting life. And that is what he offers to us.

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### Joint Ecumenical Commemoration

The Lutheran World Federation and the Catholic Church will hold a joint ecumenical commemoration of the Reformation on 31 October 2016 in Lund and Malmö, Sweden. It will begin with a liturgy in Lund Cathedral and continue with a public event in Malmö Arena that will be open to wider participation.

Pope Francis, LWF President Bishop Dr Munib A. Younan and LWF General Secretary Rev. Dr Martin Junge will lead the common prayer service in Lund and the event in Malmö in cooperation with leaders from Church of Sweden and the Catholic Diocese of Stockholm.

The event will take place in anticipation of the 500th Reformation anniversary in 2017. It will highlight the solid ecumenical developments between Catholics and Lutherans and the joint gifts received through dialogue.

Organizers will be live streaming the event for anyone unable to be in attendance to watch.

### Report of the Treasurer (To September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2016)

Although we have been running on the positive side for most of the year, as a result of lower congregational benevolence offerings that were received by the synod during the month of September, we are now tracking behind (-2.3%) the first nine months of 2015.

Offerings to Canadian Lutheran World Relief continuing to run slightly ahead of last year's pace (+3.5%). This increase is primarily attributable to a generous response to the Fort McMurray Wildfire Appeal.

More details about 2016 receipts to date, as well as the synod's 2015 audited financial statements are posted in the Report of the Treasurer on the [Treasurer-Financial Information page](#) on the Eastern Synod web site ([www.easternsynod.org](http://www.easternsynod.org)).

**Thank you for your support!**

### Commemoration of Reformation

submitted by Bob McGee

On September 25, 2016, Thames Ministry Area kicked off the first of what will likely be many events in the Eastern Synod remembering Martin Luther's nailing his 95 theses to the church door in Wittenburg Germany.

In the afternoon, a worship service took place at Trinity London with the clergy of the Ministry Area participating in the liturgy and Bishop Michael presiding at communion. Naturally, the service began with the singing of 'A Mighty Fortress' with more energy and volume than I have ever heard before. The music of Ross Macdonald (organ) and Nancy Jackman (piano) was outstanding.

## EUROPEAN REFORMATION TOUR 2017



**Oct. 28-Nov. 9, 2017**

Join Kevin & Gail Baglole in Wittenberg on  
Oct. 31, 2017 for the

**500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Reformation.**

We will travel over 11 days from Berlin to Munich, following the development and the lives of the the 16<sup>th</sup> Century Reformers, their cities and notable sites including being in Wittenberg, Germany on Oct. 31, 2017. Renew your Baptismal vows in the Church where Martin Luther was Baptized!

\$3419 per person with a 10% discount if you book  
**BEFORE Nov. 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016.**

Includes: 11 breakfasts, 7 dinners, guided tours, luggage transfers and many opportunities for free time to explore on your own.

Excluded: flights\*, meals not specified, gratuities, and items of a personal nature.

**CONTACT** Kevin – [kbaglole65@cogeco.ca](mailto:kbaglole65@cogeco.ca) or call  
905.865.4686 for more information or to book



*\*Group Flights may be arranged in January 2017*

Following the service, those present gathered to enjoy a great catered meal which was topped off by cake baked and decorated by Wendy Hofner from Redeemer London. This was a great occasion for Lutherans to begin the recognition of a significant event that took place almost 500 years ago.



## Connections

submitted by Jordan Smith

At Synod Assembly a straw poll was taken about what should be synod funding priorities. There were four options: WLS, the ELCIC, direct service support to congregations and rostered leaders, and Youth and Young adult ministries. No delegates took joy in choosing one of these over the other but when the results were tabulated, it was surprising to see that the seminary had the lowest priority support.

As a synod council member and a congregation member I am aware of the disconnect that exists between members of our churches and the work of the Synod. It appears that the disconnect between our members and the seminary is even wider. Few members have a direct relationship with the seminary - if your church doesn't support field placement/internship students or if your pastor has been out of school for a number of years, the connection between congregant and WLS can seem non-existent.

Since October 2013 the Synod has been encouraging congregations to sign the "Covenant Concerning the Life and Ministry of the Eastern Synod, ELCIC." This document helps to clarify, affirm, and reinforce the relationship that Synod Office, Synod Council, and our congregations have with each other. This relationship and its expectations are explained in our constitution and bylaws, but the covenant document provides another expression of how we can work together as "a church in mission for others".

I would like to tie this together with the apparent disconnect we have with our seminary. And it is **our seminary**. If there is a disconnect then it is between us as the members of the synod and our Constitution and bylaws. Our constitution guides us and gives us the responsibility to maintain a theological seminary. The top priority as polled at assembly was for direct support to congregations and rostered leaders. This is a task that WLS does every day and their work needs to be promoted, shared, and celebrated more within our synod. A constitution exists to provide structure, processes and rules. But not many people like to get into the legal side of our organization and a result is that priorities and responsibilities fall to the wayside. This is why a covenant document is important: it a

way for us to communicate our promises, goals, and hopes. It is a way for us to share our story. It is a way to bridge the gaps that exist in our knowledge of our many ministries.

We heard many stories at assembly of the great ways we as synod members contribute to and receive from the wider church and world. I encourage delegates to share these stories with our congregational members. Tell them about the work that CLWR is doing for refugees who have just crossed borders. Tell them about the new programs the seminary has created to become a school that can impact society both inside and outside the church. Tell them about the support our ELCIC has passed back financially to the synods for new mission opportunities. There is a joyful connection between our congregation and the synod and there is a joyful connection between our congregations and the seminary. Let us work together to do God's work in the world.

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 Canadian Lutheran World Relief

Find your catalogue at your church or online at [clwr.org/GFTH](http://clwr.org/GFTH).



Wondering what to get someone for Christmas this year? Want to learn more about what's happening in the ELCIC not only in the Eastern Synod but right across Canada? Contact Barb for subscription information, [bwiebe@elcic.ca](mailto:bwiebe@elcic.ca)

## Vacancies

Trinity, New Hamburg  
St. John's, Petawawa  
Peace, Pickering  
For info contact Rev Douglas Reble [dreble@elcic.ca](mailto:dreble@elcic.ca)

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## Waterloo Lutheran Seminary

### Glebe Centre open house

Save the date! The [Delton Glebe Counselling Centre](#), a community outreach project to help strengthen emotional and spiritual well-being, is holding an open house from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 4. All are welcome to the centre located at 177 Albert St. in Waterloo, at the corner of Seagram Drive.

### Abrahamic Faiths Forum

The seminary presents its twice-yearly Abrahamic Faiths Forum exploring issues from three faith perspectives. This fall, panellists from the Jewish, Christian and Muslim traditions will consider the question: What does it mean in your faith tradition to be peacemaking in this global context? Join us in Keffer Chapel on Nov. 2 at 7 p.m. Interfaith-themed Open Door service at 5 p.m., soup supper at 6 p.m. All are welcome to join us for any or all of the evening's events.

### Art on the Wall

Drop into the seminary to see the exhibition by members of Christian Horizons. The B.E.S.T., [Beauty of Embracing Spectacular Talent](#) is showing through Oct. 27.

### thirdspace\_

[thirdspace\\_](#), an alternative worshipping community at the seminary, is pleased to welcome **Elizabeth Eastwood**, a Laurier student in harp and music therapy, as musician for services. [thirdspace\\_](#) is also grateful for the expertise of Laurier student **Ruth Schmidt**, serving as social media manager. They help keep the community humming in so many ways!

### Contact us

Events: Dorinda Kruger Allen,  
[dkrugerallen@wlu.ca](mailto:dkrugerallen@wlu.ca)

Seminary stories: Mirko Petricevic,  
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Brooklynn Lane, a first-year Master of Divinity student, delivers a devotion at the Waterloo Lutheran Seminary Women's Auxiliary annual meeting at St. John's Lutheran Church, Waterloo, on Oct. 1. For pictures of the daylong event of fellowship and learning, visit our Facebook [photo album](#).

## PhD in Human Relationships approved

We are pleased to announce that on Sept. 23 the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance approved the seminary's application to change its doctoral program designation from a Doctor of Ministry (DMin) to a PhD.

Our doctoral program is now a [PhD in Human Relationships](#). Students register in one of two fields: Spiritual Care and Psychotherapy; or Pastoral Leadership.

At this point, we have 33 students in various stages of the PhD program. Alida vanDijk will be our first PhD graduate. vanDijk, who is working as a staff chaplain in the veterans care program at St. Joseph's Health Care, in London, Ont., is scheduled to receive her degree during the convocation ceremony in Waterloo on Friday, Oct. 28.



## Inshallah celebrates 10th anniversary with songbook, launch

Inshallah, the seminary's 130+ voice choir, celebrates its 10th anniversary with the songbook *Sing the Circle Wide*. The launch and worship event takes place at St. John's Lutheran Church, in Waterloo, on Saturday, Nov. 5, at 7 p.m. Free-will donations will go towards sending songbooks to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, and to fund education scholarships for Palestinian students as part of the ELCIC's Reformation Challenge. Visit [inshallah.ca](#)