

ADVENTure



Advent Lutheran Church

Nov/Dec 2021

We are well and truly back in our Sanctuary, worshipping in person. Praise God! As of last Sunday (October 24th) the congregation was again able to sing hymns and the liturgy. Although it isn't always the most comfortable to sing while wearing a mask, it is still a welcome return to something that makes our worship so special. As we continue with small steps back to our new normal, wine will be offered with communion as of Reformation Sunday. Looking towards the Advent & Christmas season, which is coming up quickly, plans are being made to celebrate in person once more.

Congregational Council Update

Your council continues to meet monthly, with much of our focus on preparing the building for a return to in-person worship. As this important step has been taken, we are looking towards our normal planning as we head towards year-end. In addition, some of our longer-term planning and discussions, which were put on hold in March 2020, are slowly starting up again.

- Some members of Council and Pastor Elaine met with Council members and the Pastor from St. Ansgar. St. Ansgar has been looking at re-development opportunities for a few years already. As part of their discernment process they were meeting with some Lutheran churches and other church denominations to determine growth opportunities. It was a fruitful discussion as we shared our common challenges.
- Some of our user groups have returned to the building. Salvation Church and Grace Communion have returned, worshipping on Sundays, and a new group is worshipping on Saturday afternoon.
- Good News! Our high-speed internet is now installed and operational. There was some additional work that needed to be done. We are very thankful for the work put in by members of Council (babysitting Bell), and especially Siamak Fadavi who not only provided his technical expertise, but worked diligently to install the internal cabling and server need to give us access to the high-speed internet.

*Respectfully submitted,
Gabi Schickedanz*

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Advent Family News:

- We rejoice with Jenn Mejia & Ryan Hunt as their children Anna-Sophia and Daniel Carlos were christened on September 25th. Sophie & Dani are the great-grandchildren of Dani Schickedanz.



Pastor Elaine Writes....

Peace be with you!

“The Sign of a happy heart is a cheerful face” Sirach 13:26

We have now resumed in person worship and in person bible study and we continue to provide both virtually. Our transition back to worshipping in the sanctuary has gone smoothly. We are staying socially distant and are following the guidelines set out by our Synod and our health experts.



I know that many people will not yet feel comfortable with a return to in person worship and that is OK! We will all resume activities at our own comfort level and we will continue to be understanding and gentle with one another.

I would like to encourage you to check out our new website. It is easy to navigate and has a great deal of information. There is a special section for Advent members and the password is PASTOR.

Advent will be part of an eLearning program on hybrid worship put together by the Toronto Council of the United Church of Canada. Our “tech team” will be interviewed about how we have approached online worship. This is a great opportunity to work with our ecumenical partners and for Advent to have an added presence in our community.

What are you reading this month? I have been reading Bart Ehrman “Jesus Interrupted”. It’s a look at how the New Testament is full of contradictions and how we can make sense of the differences and what it means for our faith and what we believe about Jesus. Ehrman has a look at the sources for scripture and reminds us that the stories about Jesus were passed around orally for many many years before things were written down. The stories about Jesus were not written by eyewitnesses nor were they told by unbiased people. In fact, the books of the New Testament were often not even written by who they are attributed to! The stories were told to convert people to a belief in Jesus.

“May you be filled with loving kindness. May you be well. May you be peaceful and at ease. May you be happy.” (*Ancient Tibetan Blessing*)

*Peace,
Pastor Elaine*

Christian Education

Christian education has resumed! We meet Sunday afternoons at 3pm by zoom and Monday mornings at 10am in person. We are starting with a 6-week session provided by the World Council of Churches and the Thursdays in Black movement. Materials are available on our website and will be sent out with the weekly email. You can also contact Pastor Elaine directly to access the material. Our program in Advent will be Parable & Gospel in Dr. Seuss and will run for 4 weeks.

Other Learning Opportunities:

Centre for Media and Spirituality at Martin Luther University College

Upcoming events (online)

November 9th - "What's Next?" Family Ministry

November 16th - Decision Making in Changing Times

November 22nd - 1-pm - Authors and Books

Pastor Elaine will make these links available as they are posted.

ESO News

Do you have too many coats in your closet? too many sweaters in your drawers? boots you don't wear anymore? – all of this still in good shape? New Circles -GLOW (Gently Loved Outfits to Wear) are again collecting warm clothing.

- Winter coats, snow pants, and snowsuits
- Boots and warm footwear (running shoes are very popular and flying off the shelves)
- Baby, toddler and children outerwear
- Warm sweaters, mittens, hats, scarves

If you have anything to donate, bring it to church and I will make sure it gets to New Circles.

For ESO, Brit Missirlian

Advent's Website:

Advent has a new website! As we navigated through lockdown, it became irrevocably clear that we needed to find ways to gather, worship and study together even while we were physically separated. Despite the initial challenges this posed, an opportunity for growth materialized. Our new website, adventlutherantoronto.ca has been launched with this in mind.

While the new website has many features that are intended to welcome visitors who aren't yet acquainted with us, it also features a private members' page, which includes the pastor's schedule for the coming week(s), our most recent weekly newsletter, our Zoom social links, our Christian Education study materials for the coming week, as well as an In Memoriam page where we will include recollections of our Advent family members who aren't physically with us anymore.

If you haven't had a chance to visit the site yet, please stop by at: adventlutherantoronto.ca

From the Loft....

Rejoice, rejoice! We can now begin to start singing together once again!

When I learned of this news from the synod newsletter, I was nothing short of elated. I have a feeling that you were too. During the course of the tightening and loosening of restrictions during the waves of pandemic we've experienced over the past year and a half, not joining our voices in singing our songs of faith is something that we've all greatly missed.

Yes, there will be a bit of an adjustment to be hand in singing together after such a long while, and yes, I know that singing while wearing a mask is more difficult that singing without one. But let's not feel discouraged at these little things. Instead, let is rejoice — together at long last — in song. Let's sing confidently our songs of faith as we pray for a permanent end to the coronavirus pandemic once and for all.

*Yours from the loft,
Trevor*

The Financial Picture

Hello to all

Our summary financial picture continues to be quite reasonable as we are starting to move towards a Post Pandemic world. As of today, October 26, 2021, our Current Account is \$55,700. (Remember that our current account is our operating account which also has an extra balance in case of financial volatility – which is what we have gone through!)

As a comparison, our Current Account in October 30, 2019 was \$123,600. So in 2 years, we have lost almost \$68,000. The lost Rental income starting in March 2020 has hit us hard. Our budgeted Rental Income in 2020 was \$95,000. But as noted in our previous newsletter, the Federal Government wage subsidy program has helped us quite a bit as well as continued contributions from our parishioners. In conclusion – it's been tough on the church's financials but we have held well.

And now as we start opening back up, we will see the Rental income starting to come in. And remember that we still have \$127,000 in GICs (though some of those are designated).

I had promised to be providing progress against our budget and will look to provide that to you in our next ADVENTure report.

*Until next time, God bless all of you,
Bill Wesioly*

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