

# Reflections

St. James Lutheran Church, Elmira, Ont.

September 2016

***ST. JAMES IS A WORSHIPING FAMILY PROCLAIMING CHRIST  
THROUGH LOVE AND SERVICE TO ALL PEOPLE.***

(St. James' Mission Statement Re-Affirmed March, 2015)

## ***St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church***

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## **Pastor's Message**



**“CAN YOU HEAR  
ME NOW?”**

*“From your dwelling  
on high, you water the  
mountains; the earth  
is satisfied with the  
fruits of your works.*

*You make grass grow for the cattle, and plants to  
serve humankind; that they may bring forth food  
from the earth, wine to gladden human hearts,  
oil to make the face shine, and bread to  
strengthen the human heart.”*

*Psalm 104: 13-15*

Well Summer is almost over! A Summer of hot dry weather where we have seen more days above 30 degrees than many previous years. The weather forecast for tomorrow indicates a “Rare weather event” - something that we would normally have called a rainy day.

The Psalmist reminds us that God waters the earth which allows us to work the land and bring forth food to feed ourselves - God is the provider! That’s often difficult for us to hear, and even more difficult for us to understand - God provides - not us. So often we look at what we have and think that we have been the authors of everything that we have gained and worked for.

At the same time, we tend not to talk to God, as long as things are going well. Again, thinking that we are the authors of our own good fortune we become complacent about God, about church, and about worship.

At the same time we really need to look around and ask ourselves if things are going so well.

Yes, the brickwork project has started, Sunday School classes will begin again soon, talks are still on-going with Faith-Fergus about possible partnership opportunities, I am still serving as interim at St. James, St. Jacobs and encouraging them also to look at possible partnership opportunities. And yet - nothing seems to be happening.

I think there are those in our congregation who feel that things are not going well and are continually calling to God and, sometimes asking, “Can you hear me yet?” “Are you still there?” For some of us, things are not moving fast enough.

A recent news article I saw showed that craft beer-making has increased substantially here in Ontario. A follow-on story indicated that many local beer brewers are looking for a local supplier of hops to have a truly local beer. Many farmers are moving into the field of growing hops in order to join this up-coming trend. The only issue is that from first

planting the vines it takes three years before the first harvest is usable. Three years.

Perhaps, that’s our situation as well. We have planted the seeds/vines and now we have to wait for God’s rain to continue to water the crop and we need to wait for the crop to grow before we can harvest the fruit.

I agree, waiting is never easy - particularly when we have to allow God’s hand to help grow the vines. Just as there is nothing that we can do to add more hairs to our head or more years to our life, we also can’t hurry the process of growing.

While some of us may still wring our hands with anxiety wondering if God can hear us in our cries of anguish, we need to be assured that God will work toward good and God will provide in God’s time.

God’s watering of the soil to help grow our seeds will provide bread that will strengthen us and wine to make us glad. From our perspective, we need to be patient; continue to gather as a community of faith; and allow God’s work to be effective.

Grace and peace  
Pastor Hans

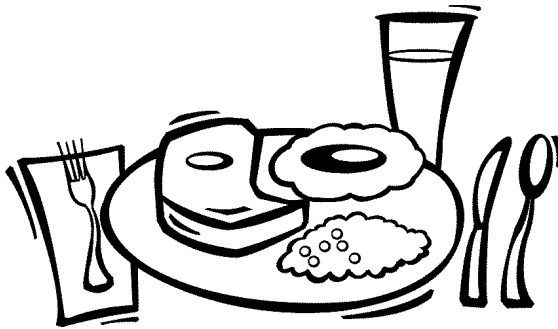
## Due Dates for Report Submission

**Committee Reports**  
for Church Council  
package should be in the  
office by **October 11<sup>th</sup>**.



Articles for  
**October Reflections**  
should be submitted to  
the office by  
**September 16<sup>th</sup>**.

## St. James Dames Meeting



See you  
**Wednesday, September 7<sup>th</sup>**  
**at 8:15 a.m.**  
Breakfast at “Crossroads”

## Anniversaries for the Months of September



If you are celebrating an anniversary and have not been listed, perhaps we need to update our records. Please call the church office with the information regarding your anniversary. Please wish these folks a “*Happy Anniversary*” when you see

them. Below are the couples celebrating anniversaries for the month of September:

Sept 16 – Robert & Charlene Berscht  
Sept 17 – David & Dawn Koebel  
Sept 19 – Murray & Carol Heimpel  
Sept 23 – Ryan & Melanie Beisel  
Sept 26 – Harvey & Bonnie Martin

## National Worship Conference



Approximately 135 people attended the conference, which brought together Anglican and Lutheran clergy and lay people from across Canada, the United States, and abroad.

The theme of this year’s conference was “Formation and Reformation: Worship, Justice, and God’s Mission”.

“From our conversations around these two important foundation points, the words justice and God’s mission seemed to beg the invitation to join a worship conference, as they are all intertwined,” Ramer said.

“This also led us to the question which grounded all planning discussions, ‘How can worship be a response and catalyst to social justice issues and God’s mission in the world?’”

### *Keynote speakers*

Two keynote speakers offered insights towards answering that question based on their own experiences.

The Rev. Dr. Stephen Larson, interim pastor at Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church in New Hamburg, Ont., offered a Lutheran perspective. Participants praised his natural storytelling ability as he related personal encounters of justice and compassion to how ritual and liturgy can serve as

a starting point for Christians to examine their role in the world.

In what Archbishop and Primate Fred Hiltz called “a very powerful image that I won’t forget for a long time,” Larson related the idea of a breadline, commonly associated with images from the Great Depression, to people lining up in the context of Christian worship—where, in the Primate’s words, “we are coming hungry for the bread of tomorrow and the wine of the age to come.”

The Very Rev. Bruce Jenneker, rector of All Saints Church, Durbanville in the City of Cape Town and canon liturgist for the Diocese of Saldanha Bay in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa, provided an Anglican perspective. He discussed the meaning of liturgy in Christian tradition as a public work aimed at “the glorification of God and the divine sanctification of those who celebrate him.”

### ***Worship, workshops, and music***

Participants had the chance to take part in a variety of workshops, many of which explored the use of music in worship and the role of liturgy in building movements for justice.

Worship at the conference itself reflected similar themes. A highlight was an outside Eucharist held under the trees. The Rev. Canon Norm Casey, parish priest for the Anglican Parishes of the Six Nations, led the service along with other Indigenous clergy and lay leaders, with an elder ceremonially opening and closing the space.

National Indigenous Anglican Bishop Mark MacDonald called the conference “historic, in that it focused on issues of the church and Indigenous Peoples. It was expansive in bringing a new view on these issues to people working in all the related fields present”.

While ELCIC National Bishop Susan Johnson presided over the opening service and Bishop MacDonald preached, Archbishop Hiltz presided over the closing service. Bishop Linda Nicholls,

coadjutor bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Huron that served as host diocese, offered a homily for the latter.

“The worship is always certainly a highlight, because of the musicians and the care that’s taken to plan and prepare the worship,” Bishop Nicholls said.

### ***‘Being the church in and for the world’***

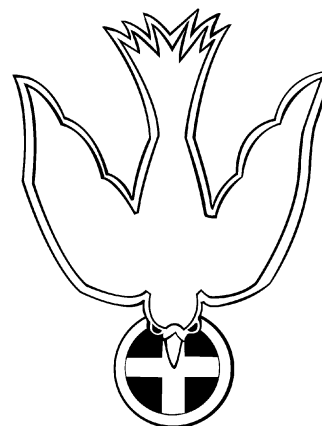
For Archbishop Hiltz, the conference underlined the shared importance of liturgy for both the ACoC and the ELCIC, and their common commitment to “being the church in and for the world”.

“I think this particular national worship conference really did nurture our continuing life together,” he said.

From a Lutheran standpoint, Ramer echoed the Primate’s sentiments.

“I think both of our churches are churches that have a message of abundance to share with the world,” she said. “And I don’t necessarily mean abundant of financial wealth, but an abundance of the good news the world is craving.

“When we come together to share ministry, we become a richer church, because we model for the world that even though there are differences, the gifts in which we share unite us in works of justice and love for the world.”



## Worship Schedule for September



### Pentecost 16

Sept. 4      9:30 a.m.      Worship with Holy Communion in the Fellowship Hall

### Pentecost 17

Sept. 11      9:00 a.m.      **Christian Education**  
 9:45 a.m.      Refreshments  
**10:15 a.m.      Worship - Service of the Word in the Sanctuary**  
**11:30 a.m.      Congregational Meeting to approve Constitutional Changes**

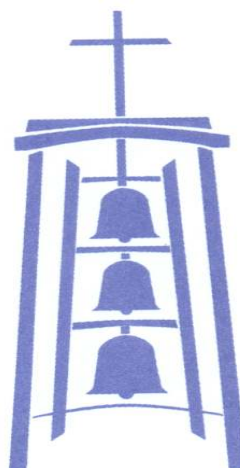
### Pentecost 18

Sept 18      9:00 a.m.      Christian Education  
 9:45 a.m.      Refreshments  
 10:15 a.m.      Worship - Service of the Word in the Sanctuary with Pastor Karen Kuhnert leading worship.

### Pentecost 19

Sept. 25      9:00 a.m.      Christian Education  
 9:45 a.m.      Refreshments  
 10:15 a.m.      Worship - Service of the Word in the Sanctuary

## Women's Auxiliary WLS Annual Meeting



**Saturday, October 1, 2016**

**Registration** at St. John's Lutheran Church, Waterloo. The cost of registration including a catered lunch is \$22.00. Please call the church office to register.

**Theme:** Branching Out:  
**Keynote Speaker:** John Milloy – Faith in the Public Square.  
**Afternoon Seminars:** John Milloy – Faith Perspectives on

Physician Assisted Dying, Dr. Kristine Lund and Janet Howitt from the Glebe Counselling Centre – Supporting Emotional and Spiritual Well-being, and Rodney Said – Our Partnership with Jordan and the Holy Land.

## LIBERATED BY GOD'S GRACE EASTERN SYNOD ASSEMBLY 2016 REPORT

The Eastern Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada Assembly was held in Toronto from Thursday June 23, 2016 to Sunday June 26, 2016 and was attended by Pastor Hans Borch, Rod Kruger (delegate for St. James, and chair of the Board of Governors for Waterloo Lutheran Seminary), and Verneda Prentice (Head Steward).

As an overall comment, I would note that this Assembly was more subdued than previous Assemblies have been without heavy debate over hot issues and controversial policy issue voting. There was some very memorable and creative worship experiences, (especially the music provided by the band from Nova Scotia!) and various reports from Church officials and guests. Also, a considerable amount of time was spent on

elections for delegates to attend the 2017 National Convention and for replacements for Eastern Synod council and Vice Chair, due to regular retirements and resignation.

Bishop Michael Pryse presented a lengthy and thorough report on the work of our Synod over the past two years and some insightful comments on our future.

Elections: Every Assembly involves elections. I was appointed to the Elections Committee to oversee the elections process.

This year, in addition to the normal Synod Council replacements and replacement of any officers, a new series of elections to elect twenty-four (24) lay, Seventeen (17) clergy and three (3) youth delegates to attend the upcoming 2017 National Convention was added. This function used to be handled by the eight Conferences that are now disbanded. As this was the first Assembly for the delegate elections, a lot of time was spent as is often the case with something new. Hopefully in future, the process will be more refined. Pastor Hans was elected as a clergy delegate to attend the national convention in 2017..

In addition to elections for retired Council members, an election was also held to replace the Vice Chairperson, Linda Granger, who was elected as the Vice Chairperson of the National Church Council and subsequently needed to resign from the Eastern Synod position. The new Vice Chair is Laurie Knott.

#### Reports:

Our National Bishop Susan Johnson gave a very detailed report on the state of the National Church today.

A report was received from Robert (Bob) Granke , Executive Director of Canadian World Relief. We received Sixteen (16) Area Ministry reports one of which was from the Two Rivers Area Ministry of which St. James is a member. Also received were reports from Synod Council on their work over the past two years, and reports from the following Standing Committees and Ministry

#### Directors:

- Mission Committee
- Candidacy Committee
- Examining Committee
- Professional Leadership Committee
- Stewardship and Resource Development Ministries
- Youth and Young Adult Ministries
- Womens' Ministries
- Witness and Evangelism Ministries

In addition to the above, reports from the Secretary, Necrology report and the Archivist were received.

A presentation from the Evangelical Lutheran Foundation of Eastern Canada (ELFEC) was heard. Note that (ELFEC) is the major investment arm for various congregations including Synod and the Waterloo Lutheran Seminary that have pooled their resources to create a substantial investment fund.

Waterloo Lutheran Seminary Report: It was also my pleasure as Chair of the Board of Governors of the Waterloo Lutheran Seminary along with Dr. Mark Harris, Principal Dean, to give an extensive update on the work of the Seminary and our plans for rehabilitation of the existing building (currently estimated to cost nine million dollars (9 M) and the future programming and name change to Martin Luther University College currently being pursued with the Ministry of Colleges and Universities. This report advised the Assembly of the need for a capital fund raising program to commence this fall to raise One and Half Million dollars (1.5 M) and to approve a one million dollar (1M) grant from Synod. This request was subsequently approved by the Assembly during the budget deliberations and approval of the 2017 – 2018 budgets.

Report of the Treasurer was received with the usual outstanding humorous presentation by our treasurer Keith Myra. Only Keith can keep so many delegates awake and somewhat focussed for the Saturday afternoon (2 ½ Hr I think???) budget

session. This was a very extensive and detailed report, as all budget reports are, but the long and the short of it is in 2014 we were in a deficit situation of (- \$120,513) and 2015 were (- \$120,746). Further, the projected budgets for 2017 and 2018 are (- \$256,959) and (-235,800). Clearly not a sustainable situation that is causing considerable concern for the next Synod Council to find ways to balance those budgets. A new Strategic Plan is now in the works to help try and identify where cuts to programming might be made.

Reports from the Committee of Reference and Council: Three (3) reports were received and all recommended actions were approved by the Assembly. These reports are from various petitions submitted from the floor that raise various issues and propose action by members of the Assembly.

Guest Speakers: Bishop Munib Younan President Lutheran World Federation and Rev. Leroy Nicholson President Evangelical Lutheran Church in Guyana

Special Session – Biennium Reconciliation Initiative: The session integrated worship elements throughout the evening. Guests, Chief Ava Hill and Father Norm Casey were part of the evening activities. Delegates and visitors participated in and learned ways to help equip themselves and their congregations to form real relationships with First Nations neighbours.

This Assembly did not have any candidates for Ordination or an Ordination Service. In the past, this was always a significant time of celebration.

The Assembly concluded with the Awards Banquet on Saturday evening. This is a time of celebration to honor Pastors who have completed 25 years, 40 years, 50 years and 60 years of ministry.

**25 years:** Rachel Dart, Dale Finch, Martin Giebel, Thomas Mertz, JR Bestvater, James Brown, Marti Hyhko, Allen Jorgenson, Jerry Slote, Peter Van Katwyk.

**40 Years:** James Anderson, Stephen Larson, Rolf

Ruppenthal, Red Conroy, Stanley Johnstone, Fritz Kristbergs, Douglas Moore, John Tsang.

**50 years:** Frederick Schmidt, Douglas Schweyer, Oscar Cole Arnal, Adam Prasuhn.

**60 years:** Val Hennig, Bob Binhammer, Paul Bosch, David Metzger.

Also honoured were four people for the Eastern Synod Leadership Awards. They were Rev. Jeff Smith, Pat Lovell, Rev. Dr. Peter Kuhnert and Murray Haase.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank St James for allowing me to attend this Assembly as your delegate. I always find the time to be most uplifting and an opportunity to meet new people as we all work for the betterment of our church and our society together.

(Note: as the reports are somewhat detailed and lengthy, I have not attempted to either comment or reproduce them here, but would suggest that they are available on the Eastern Synod website. I have also left a paper copy of the Assembly material in our church office.)

Yours in Christ

Rod Kruger, St. James Delegate

