

St. Ansgar Lutheran Church

From the Pastor

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Godspeed

I find myself with mixed feelings as I write my last article into the Family Doings. First, I feel good about the fact that I have served at St. Ansgar for nine months. I have learned to know many of you – some through deep conversations, others superficially. Some of you and I have only discussed over the phone. Nevertheless, I value all connections that we build up during this time.

The other side of the coin is that usually, we expect good relationships to continue. With pastors, it is different. When we leave a congregation, we leave for good and leave the good relationships behind us, too. This arrangement makes it possible for the new pastor to begin forming their relationships with you. This does not mean that from now on we must act as if we never knew each other. If I suddenly bump into you at Eaton Centre or whatever venue, on my behalf, it will be a joyful reunion. In other words, we do not actively seek to connect with each other but if we do, we act like friends.

At the end of interimships, I keep asking myself, “How did it go?” In the case of St. Ansgar I have felt that as a 60% pastor who spends two days per week at the church, I couldn’t keep myself connected to people’s lives the same way if I had lived on Toronto area. This was an important lesson for me. The pastoral ministry may be sliced into small sections that one can carry out. However, to be able to keep connected with the people requires close proximity and time for presence – at least for me, it does.

I bet 2018 will be named as a year of many changes into St. Ansgar’s chronicles. The long-time music director Bill Weldon passed away suddenly around Easter, Anna McRae – also a steady staff member – will retire this September. Moreover, as it would not be confusing enough, the second interim pastor will take over after me just for a short period before the actual pastor is called and steps in. This all will pass, however. My only advice to the members who find the ride too rough is to hold on and enjoy the speed and new experiences as much as you are able. When things get back to more stable, you can again enjoy the routines of the life at St. Ansgar.

I am thankful to God that you trusted me to serve at St. Ansgar. To me, a congregation’s trust is a sign of God also trusting me to carry on. Thank you for that.

May the Lord be with You,

Olavi Hepomaki



Administrator's Update

Most of you have heard by now that I will be retiring at the end of September. St. Ansgar has been a very important part of my life for the past 15 years. I have been putting off retirement for a few years now and the time has come to just do it. I am sad to leave you while you are in such a time of change but I also feel that all the staff changes will open many opportunities to inspire some wonderful ideas and changes for this church going forward.

St. Ansgar has been my second home and family. I would like to thank each of you for welcoming me and making me feel like part of the family. I wish each and every one of you the sincerest best wishes for you and your families personally and in your St. Ansgar home.

The new church administrator is Lourdes Vega. She will begin on September 4 and we will work together for the month of September. Lourdes is very capable and will make the transition very easy for you all. She will join us for the Annual BBQ and so please be sure to come and meet her. You are also welcome to drop by the office in September to meet Lourdes between the hours of two to four on Thursday, September 20 and September 27.

Looking forward to seeing you all at some time in September and of course many more times in the future.

Anna McRae
Church Administrator

Next Council Meetings will be Monday, September 17, 2018, at 7:00 p.m.

The next issue of Family Doings will be the October Issue. Deadline September 24, 2018.

Our Church

Worship: Every Sunday, 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. followed by coffee and refreshments. We have a wheelchair accessible building.

Baptism & Marriage: Pastor Olavi will be happy to meet with you to discuss weddings and baptism (for yourself or your child). To make an appointment, speak with Pastor Olavi after service, or call the Church Office 416-783-3570.

Hospital Visitation: If you or a family member end up in the hospital, please take a moment to inform the church office. We will be pleased to provide pastoral visitation/prayer support for you.

Funeral Planning: We grieve the loss of your loved one with you. Please contact the Pastor at your earliest convenience for pastoral support and preparation of arrangements.

Church Council Corner

The council meeting in August took place on the 20th. At that meeting, we went through our regular reports from the administrator, pastor and treasurer. We also went some property issues as well. The main points from the evening are:

- We have finalized on hiring Lourdes Vega as the new administrator of our church. Lourdes will start on September 4th and will work with in conjunction with Anna for the month. Anna's last working day will be September 28.
- Even though Lourdes is competent in assuming the duties of the church administrator, it would still be good for everyone to support her in this transition by helping with duties around the church where possible.
- Replacement of the church boilers will be addressed as they are advanced in years. Work will hopefully be completed to bring the boilers to a newer more efficient state before the winter begins
- The church roof is in need of repairs and quotes have been obtained for that job. This is one of the priorities of property that will need to be addressed.
- St. Ansgar is still hoping to work with CLWR in terms of the refugee sponsorship. The timing of this new sponsorship would begin in 2019.
- A new outreach and social initiative will be started in the coming months. St. Ansgar will support the "Out of the Cold" program, specifically at the Beth Sholom Synagogue at 1445 Eglinton Avenue West. See below for more details of this program will and continue to watch for more information in the coming months.

Council meets regularly to carry out the responsibilities of looking after the church. If there are any initiatives or suggestions, please feel free to speak to any council member and we can bring those to the next meeting.

Alexander Mak

Fall Clothing Drive Out-of-the-Cold Program

Fall Clothing Drive to support Beth Sholom/ Beth Tzedec Out-of-the-Cold Program
Elsie Duval and David Bestvater August, 2018

In June of this year we had the privilege of attending the ELCIC Eastern Synod Assembly. I attended as a volunteer and David attended as St. Ansgar's lay delegate. (Pastor Olavi attended as our ordained roster delegate.)

This year, the Assembly's theme was 'Liberated by God's Grace ... to be neighbour' and there were a number of presentations and workshops pertaining to this theme. One of the presentations was given by Rafi Aaron. Rafi is a local well known poet, writer and activist. He is also the spokesperson for the Interfaith Coalition to Fight Homelessness and is Co-chair of the Beth Sholom/Beth Tzedec Out of the Cold Program. Working tirelessly (and right within a short walk from our own front door) Rafi and his associates and volunteers are showing us how to be a neighbour to the homeless ones who are living in our midst.

In addition to giving warm beds to sleep in, the Beth Sholom/ Beth Tzedec program also provides evening meals and for those who need it, they also provide warm clothes. Our congregation has decided to contribute to their clothing bank. So, in the fall, we'll be reaching out within our congregation, and we'll ask you to gather up and bring to the church any 'new or nearly new warm clothes that you'd be able to donate to this important program.

You'll hear more about this from us

Outreach & Evangelism

Lead the way

I have to honestly say that I do not like growing up. It is not like there was a manual that explains what was going to happen and all the responsibilities that needed to be taken care of when you reach adulthood. Of course, even if there was such a manual (of which I believe there are probably quite a few books written on the subject), no young person would ever read it nor would they really listen to the wisdom within those pages.

In a previous article, I had mentioned bills to be paid as part of those responsibilities, but there are also the emotional stresses that exist. When I was younger and irresponsible, I did not spend much emotional resources on things other than what was directly related to me. Going out with friends and staying out late without incurring the wrath of my parents was one of those major stressors at that time.

Today it is very different for me. Recently, I have not been sleeping well and I find myself being more forgetful of the little things that make up life. At first, I chalked it up to just getting older and this is just the beginning...it will just go downhill from this point. But as this happens more frequently over the past month, I can't help but think it is something more.

Taking the time to break it down, I found that I have been in denial over something that has recently been eating away at me. I have some baggage that I carry, but I thought I had gotten rid of it. I did not realize that I have been carrying things with me all along until recently when I had to face my problem for an extended period of time.

Slowly, it eroded the wall I had put up to hide my problems and now that it is exposed, I don't like what I see. Facing your own demons is pretty tough...maybe like flesh eating tough. Life does not always make sense and resurfacing issues that I had thought were non-issues just adds to that stress.

When things don't make sense to me, or when I find that I do not know what steps to take next, I am very happy for one thing...the history I have with God. In my junior high school days, I did not have many friends. Sometimes when I think back, I can count on one hand the number of people who would even stand beside me if I had a problem back then. In actual fact, I could count it with one finger.

Other than that person, there was Jesus. "What a friend we have in Jesus" is how the song goes. I believed in Jesus then...I trusted in him to lead me through the darkness. Life did not make sense to me back then, why did I not have any friends? But I had my faith placed at the cross and He led me through those times. Why would it be any different today?

Facing my demons is daunting because it DOES scare me. I do not know what I will uncover along the way. I do not know what the end result will be. But I still believe in Jesus and I still have faith in Him to lead me.

Do I know what the outcome will be? Of course not. The road may not be clear and it may be difficult to understand what route to take, but I have to trust and have faith in Jesus to lead me like he has always done in the past.

Alexander Mak

St. Ansgar Annual BBQ

St. Ansgar's 5th Annual Rally Sunday Service and BBQ.
Sunday, September 16, 2018

We are encouraging you to let us know that you plan to attend and we will make sure that there is plenty of food. You will have a choice of beef burgers, veggie burgers, hot dogs, salads and desert.

It's a great day to get back in touch with your friends at St. Ansgar after a long summer. There will be another exceptional service for all ages. It will be time to get your school bags, briefcases, cell phones and other work and school paraphernalia blessed. Registration for Sunday School will also happen.

Pastor Olavi is leaving us and the BBQ is a great chance to say good-bye to him. Lourdes Vega will be joining us for the BBQ so please come and meet her.



RSVP by Wednesday, September 12.

Sign up in the narthex or send an email to admin@stansgar.ca or to Elizabeth Narain at enarain@rogers.com

Let us know how many members of your family will be attending and the breakdown of beef burgers, veggie burgers or hot dogs.

All freewill offerings collected will go to the St. Ansgar Refugee Fund!

All are welcome!

Vacation Bible Camp

We had 23 kids at Vacation Bible Camp this year and they all had a lot of fun. I would like to thank all of the volunteers who help make this Bible Camp a great success. A special thank you to Michael Reardon for all his efforts at organizing the camp and the volunteers this year.

The theme of Bible camp this year was Time Lab, and when the children arrived on Monday they entered smokey lab where the time machine was and anything was possible. We started each day with an opening. Then the children were divided into three groups depending on their age, and they rotated through a variety of different activities; crafts, science, snack and games. Then they ended the day with a closing and a bible verse. On Thursday we had the opportunity to have Scientists come in and do experiments with the kids, and they brought home lots of cool experiments. Friday we finished off the week with a trip to the park.

The week was filled with lots of smiles, each child had their favourite activities and learned a lot. The student volunteers did a great job of helping and engaging the younger children. Clearly the station leaders had taken time to prepared interesting activities and delicious snacks. Hopefully we will see the Wacky Scientist and King Jordan again soon. I hope to see everyone again next year at Vacation Bible Camp.

Catherine Friesen

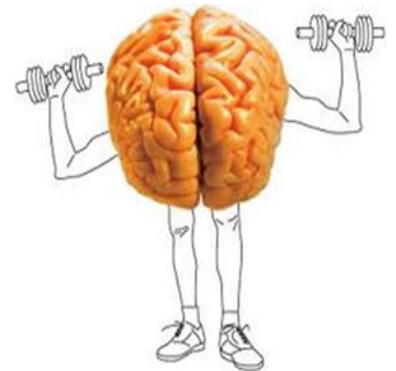


Seniors Exercise Classes

**The Tuesday 10 a.m. class will focus on Heart Health.
The Wednesday 12:30 p.m. class will focus on Yoga
and Stretching. Both Classes are in the narthex.**

**No charge!
All are welcome!**

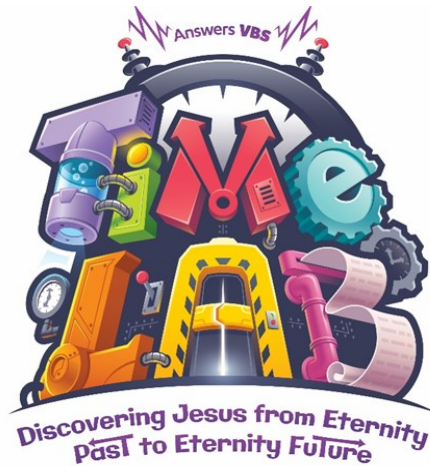
Members and friends of St. Ansgar are invited but also members of the neighbouring community. If you know anyone that could benefit from these classes please tell them about it.



VBC 2018

This year's Vacation Bible Camp shaped up to be one of the most memorable to-date! We had a record-tying attendance of 23 children, including six that are not St. Ansgar attendees. Additionally, we had 20 volunteers offer two or more days of service to the camp (most being first time helpers!), with 7 of them being from other churches. As the theme this year was time travel, each child was transported to eternity past to learn about Christ in creation and finished the week with lessons about their destiny with Christ in eternity future. Overall, it was a wonderful time filled with crafts, science experiments, laughter, and lessons from the Scriptures. We are thankful to the Lord and to all of the volunteers for this time and anticipate a bright future for all the youth in attendance!

Michael Reardon
VBC Coordinator



September Birthdays

Daniel Pastia	Sept 1
Birgit Ratz-Cheung	Sept 2
Rosemarie Mackness	Sept 4
Beverly Morningstar	Sept 4
Kirsten Weind Matthews	Sept 4
Peter Wagner	Sept 5
David Veights	Sept 9
Anna McRae	Sept 11
Edgar DaSilva	Sept 13
Diane Bestvater	Sept 14
Richard Heslop	Sept 14
James Heslop	Sept 14
Nicholas Niestrwaski	Sept 17
Don Taylor	Sept 18
Sebastian Rode	Sept 19
Tiffany Bunbury-Pelley	Sept 22
Laura Wagner	Sept 23
David Weind	Sept 27
Mark Weind	Sept 28



Baptismal Anniversaries

Kastania Horber-Safwat	Sept 1
Leslie Porter	Sept 9
Eric Eirikson	Sept 12
Sarah Weind	Sept 12
Logan Heslop	Sept 13
Joshua DaSilva	Sept 16
Christina Weldon	Sept 16
Katherine McDonald	Sept 18
Lisa Weldon	Sept 18
Karl Hauer	Sept 19
Chase Friedrich	Sept 20
Gavin Battaglio	Sept 21
Dylan Battaglio	Sept 21
Daphne Molinaro	Sept 24
Connor Fullerton	Sept 25