

***About Faith, Easter and Atonement:*****Age old questions worth asking – again and again**

by Dennis Eaton

It's not surprising, but we Christians do tend to ask a lot of the "same old" questions of ourselves during this time of the church year. Questions like what do we really understand about Good Friday? About Easter? And about some of the basic tenets of our faith?

Thanks goodness we do ask, and do revisit – because it's healthy for our faith. That's one of the conclusions I drew a few days ago after sitting down with Pastors Tanya Ramer and Delton Glebe to wrestle with some of those thorny questions.

**For example, what about the *Theory of Atonement*:** which attempts to give meaning to the life of Jesus? One expression, familiar to us all, is "Christ died for our sins." In true Jewish tradition (Yom Kippur), it is said Jesus took on his shoulders all the sins of the world and was the sacrificial lamb demanded by God.

But as Pastor Delton pointed out, several theories have evolved over the centuries as believers have tried to understand and give clearer expression to the meaning of the life of Jesus, and in particular the significance of the crucifixion.

Perhaps most commonly known to us is what's called the Sacrifice/Satisfaction theory. One historian described it this way: "Anselm (11<sup>th</sup> century), in his theory of atonement, seems to have thought of God as being somewhat like an overlord whose honour had been outraged by human sinfulness and demands reparation. It follows that Christ's death is vicarious (on our behalf) in restoring God's honour. This theory was prominent in Medieval society in its use of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth".

Later (12<sup>th</sup> century) scholar and monk Peter Abelard opposed this theory and proposed that Christ came to provide us with an example of how to live the moral life. Our participation is by living life as Jesus lived.

(I admitted my personal comfort level is certainly more with Abelard than Anselm.)

But then Delton offered, "I can still use the word sacrifice, but by sacrifice I do not have a picture to the extent that I had 25 or 50 years ago as a money transaction or price paid. I now shy away from that for myself and I wouldn't use that in a sermon because I don't like that image. I don't like the idea of driving a bargain with God. Nevertheless, there are images in the New Testament where people do drive a bargain with God."

**What then of our liturgy?** Does it move us beyond atonement theory? For some there is much meaning in word images such as, "The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world".

For others, the images those words invoke no longer square with their understanding of their faith. And for others still, the images are reinterpreted into new images that are more reflective of their faith journey. Future editions of our Service Book will presumably offer other or new interpretations, as have the ever-changing editions of the past. But ever so slowly!

**What then of Resurrection?** Pastor Tanya said that when I asked this question, she initially "went back to the thought, is it (Resurrection) rising from the dead or immortality?"

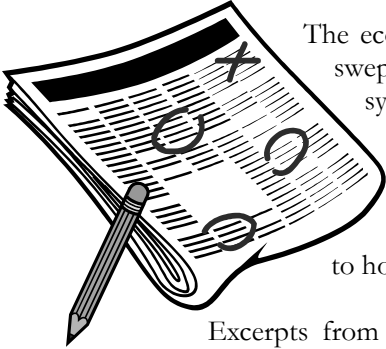
And noting what she experienced with the funeral of Samantha Flannigan just the previous week, she said that funeral "wasn't so much a funeral but a celebration of life. I think now, when I talk about resurrection, my understanding has changed with that experience. Samantha lived life as though the Kingdom of God was here *now*, and so there is a sense of living immortality, a sense of 'I don't need to worry what's to come, I need to live as though it's here right now.' We live in faith."

*Continued on page 3*

# Growing needs in our world: can we help – a little more?

by Dwyne Patrick, Service Committee

The world has certainly changed dramatically in the past six months.



The economic changes that have swept the global financial system and global economy are not abstractions that exist “somewhere else.” Their pain and dislocation are felt close to home as well.

Excerpts from the *Waterloo Region Record* of Saturday March 14<sup>th</sup>:

## 25,500 in region are out of work...

9.1%; Waterloo has the third highest unemployment rate in Canada...

*The news got worse yesterday as Statistics Canada reported that Waterloo Region's unemployment rate leapt to 9.1 per cent in February, up from just 5.3 per cent just 5 months ago, and the highest it's been since 1993.*

## Welfare cases are rising in area...

*Last month, the number of welfare cases in the region rose by 263 over January for a total of 7,182 cases.*

Beyond the news stories, the face of unemployment and job loss too often sits at an empty table. We see that clearly. That's why our community of Mount Zion works in partnership with community agencies who are focused on relieving homelessness and hunger in the Waterloo Region. They, like us, have concerns about the present economic situation. Their own words spell out the need:

“House of Friendship uses approximately 165,000 pounds of potatoes annually in its 18 programs. Each February we hold an annual Potato Blitz. The purpose of this project is to raise funds and potatoes to meet our annual need for emergency food supplies. Funds not needed for potatoes are used to purchase other food items.

The success of the 2009 February Potato Blitz means that House of Friendship will have enough potatoes to help meet record need in its Emergency Food Hamper program, where the number of hampers distributed has increased by 5% in January 2009 compared to January 2008 and by 18% in February 2009 compared to February of last year.

With your cash donations we can purchase potatoes year around from our supplier, Marhaven Farms of St. Jacobs, at a fixed price of 10 cents per pound. Donations are welcome any time of year. “

Consistent with the picture reported in *The Record*, the House of Friendship is seeing increasing demand for assistance with the simple basic need of putting food on the table. Year-over-year increases of 5% and 18% translate into many more real individuals who need help with having enough to eat – today and for some time to come.

Another of our community partners in providing food is the Waterloo Region Food Bank. The Food Bank is a central point into which food donations flow to be distributed to 71 community agencies engaged in helping those in need find food to eat. A tragic point made by the Food Bank is that “almost half of those requiring food assistance are children under 18 years of age.”

Continuing in their own words:

“Last year with the support of our community, The Food Bank of Waterloo Region shared a meal with these neighbours. More than 2.7 million pounds of safe, nutritious food helped approximately 25,000 different people put meals on their tables. Families, children, seniors and other individuals in our community face challenging circumstances in their daily lives that make it impossible to make ends meet. Job loss, illness, unexpected bills, rising food and fuel costs all contribute to the need for emergency food. What a difference it makes for these neighbours to have community programs able to assist in their time of need –71 programs that last year provided over 380,841 hot meals and 59,416 food hampers.”



Like many other congregations, Mount Zion supports both the House of Friendship Potato Blitz each February and the Food Bank food drives in the spring and fall. (Your gifts for the spring drive will be requested in April.)

The need however, is both constant and increasing. That's why Mount Zion members use a third avenue to address this problem: the provision of food

vouchers that provide some additional assistance each month to a few individuals. As a congregation we budget \$250 per year for this assistance.



All of these activities, and others, are good, and important. In the face of the changes in our world and local communities, we are all being asked to consider doing a little more. At the national and international levels greater support is sought for the benevolence work of our ELCIC and related agencies. And in

our local community, there are three ways that we, as a caring community, can do more:

1. We can increase our contributions to our partners – the House of Friendship and the Waterloo Regional Food Bank
2. We can increase our congregational budget for food assistance
3. As individuals, we can contribute more to support food assistance.

Can you consider, as some already have, a monthly contribution to any of our partners - or directly to support our congregational food assistance program? (These funds are used to buy food vouchers which also benefit Open Sesame.)

Donations for any of these purposes can also be placed in the collection plate in envelopes identifying the purpose of the contribution. (If you are already using PAR, any of these programs can be designated for part of your gift to Mount Zion.)

Neighbours are hungry. Will we help – a little more?

## Age Old Questions

*Continued from page 1*

Pastor Delton added that he also still likes the phrase “resurrection from the dead”, and prefers to use it because “it puts the emphasis totally on an act of God. And to make things even more confusing, I would add that the Kingdom is both here, and now, and not yet fully!”

**What then is the significance of Easter and Good Friday?** Could we not have one without the other? Tanya and Delton are very clear on this: No, the pain of Good Friday is important; it is the culmination of Jesus’ life. After all, life is not complete until death, for all of us.

Reflecting on Good Friday and Jesus’ suffering, Delton added that he has never forgotten a remark made by the late Dr. Ulrich Leupold (an early member of Mount Zion) who said that “Jesus had an awareness and sensitivity unspeakably beyond ours, so it is impossible for us to fathom the depth of his pain and suffering.”

However, as Delton emphasized, “This story does not end with Good Friday; this story is only complete with Easter, where we know, as reported by witnesses, that something wonderful happened, a story of something extraordinary. But again, the story does not even end there, it continues on through the ages to you and me here in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.”

The night prior to our meeting, Delton had written down some of his thoughts on atonement, resurrection and faith. He shared the following:

“The challenge emerges to find a theory which pictures salvation by grace rather than good works, which avoids fostering legalism in society and which sees God as other than Judge and Over-Lord demanding satisfaction. With simplicity and certainty, the Gospel of John says: (John 4:16), *God is Love, Whoever abides in Love, abides in God, and God abides in him (her)*. John is talking about the Ultimate Relationship, the Real Relationship.

John continues, *To all who receive him, To all who believe in him, He gives power to become children of God.* This Real Relationship is initiated, and enabled in us by Jesus. Across the pages of the New Testament, Jesus’ preaching, teaching and living, His pain and suffering on Good Friday, His glorious Resurrection on Easter Sunday, This is God’s Love.”

And as Delton and Tanya affirmed in our conversation: that love takes us on a journey of faith that includes exploration, and yes, questioning, that always continues.

# Together in Worship

Sunday, April 5 **PALM/PASSION SUNDAY**  
*Rev. Tanya L. Ramer, Presiding*

Holy Communion 8:45 am  
No Confirmation  
Holy Communion 10:45 am

Thursday, April 9 **MAUNDAY THURSDAY**  
*Rev. Tanya L. Ramer, Presiding*  
*Rev. Everett Mossman, Preaching*

Confession & Holy Communion 7:00 pm

Friday, April 10 **GOOD FRIDAY**  
*Rev. Tanya L. Ramer, Presiding*

Service of Shadows 10:00 am

Saturday, April 11 **EASTER VIGIL**  
*Rev. Tanya L. Ramer, Presiding*

Service of Light with Holy Communion &  
Holy Baptism 7:00 pm

Sunday, April 12 **EASTER**  
*Rev. Tanya L. Ramer, Presiding*

Holy Communion 8:45 am  
No Confirmation  
Holy Communion 10:45 am

Sunday, April 19 **EASTER 1**  
*Rev. Everett Mossman, Presiding*

Confirmation 9:00 am  
Holy Communion & Sunday School 10:00 am

Sunday, April 26 **EASTER 2**  
*Rev. Krister Ulmanis, Presiding*  
*Rev. Tanya L. Ramer, Preaching*

Confirmation 9:00 am  
Affirmation Service with  
Holy Communion & Holy Baptism 10:00 am

**Pastor Krister will be with us, April 26 and May 10. A date in June is still be organized.**

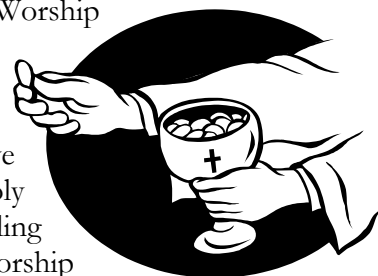
## Get To Know Your Committees

*The first in a continuing series by Tim Ebrlich*

### Worship and Music

It is tempting to conclude that the pastor(s) make all of the important decisions about the worship life of a congregation. It is true that as worship leaders they are the engine, if you will, that drives our worship. But we are all called to God's ministry and, as active participants, we can provide input and guidance about the best way to meet the worship needs of our congregation. This is the role of our Worship committee.

There are some organizational areas for which they are responsible such as finding, training and scheduling worship assistants, readers, and communion assistants. Sanctuary decorations, flowers and the Altar guild also come under the area of the Worship committee. As part of the regular cycle of discussions, issues such as how often we celebrate Holy Communion, scheduling of the many special worship activities, or how many Christmas services are planned, come before the committee. It is here where the committee acts as an important sounding board that can solicit and provide feedback from members prior to an important decision.



Since music is such an important part of our Lutheran tradition, the Music Director is an important member of the committee. Scott Knarr meets weekly with the pastors to co-ordinate the music with the other liturgical elements of worship. One of the key tasks he, along with the committee, has undertaken is introducing the new content in the new red hymnal. It contains no less than ten liturgical settings. Why so many? Why can't we just stick with the ones we like? Those are valid questions but each of those settings has a different character. Some are for organ, one is for piano, another is Latin American, while there is also a setting for hymns. Each can be appropriate for a different worship need. We are attempting to learn numerous settings to broaden our liturgical experience. We do not expect to switch

back and forth continuously. The introduction of each setting has been carefully planned around the overall worship experience.

Most importantly, the Worship and Music committee is a voice of the congregation and everyone's support and participation is crucial to healthy communication and worship life.

## Communion and Worship Assistants Wanted



Any individuals or couples, new or old, interested in participating in a more "hands on" way in worship are welcome to be

assistants. Training is available from Pastor Tanya and Scott can give you vocal tune-up. Mary Baumgart is our Communion assistant coordinator and Wendy Patrick coordinates the Worship assistants. Assisting is a very rewarding way to learn more about the liturgy and to become more involved on a personal level. Many find it well worth the effort.

## Summer Worship Schedule Begins



On April 19 we will begin our summer schedule of one service at 10 a.m.

## Baptisms



**Emery Morden and Colin Smith** will be baptized on April 26<sup>th</sup>.

**Derik Zhi** will be baptized at the Easter Vigil Service Saturday, April 11 at 7:00 p.m.

## Thank you Pastor Ev !!

How fast a year passes!

Last March, we were ready for some pastoral help, and our call was answered in the Interim Ministry of Pastor Ev.

Since then, Pastor Ev has been working in tandem with our ministry team to plan worship, deliver sermons, visit our shut-ins, confirm and baptize our young.

The 'pastor with the guitar' will be set in the memory of many of our children. Pastor Ev's songful children messages have truly been a joy to witness and are a testimony to his love for the Word.

In his report to council last April, Pastor Ev declared the 'work time here is challenging and exciting for me. I am glad to be a servant of Christ in this place.'

Well Pastor Ev, we have been truly blessed that you chose to serve Christ in our community. We thank you so sincerely, and wish all God's blessings continue for you, Betty Ann and your family.

Chris Kosumovic, Congregational President

*We will be celebrating Pastor Ev's ministry with us on April 19 with coffee and cake following 10 a.m. service.*

## Where Are They Now?

**Pastor Joel Crouse** is currently serving as the Pastor at St. John's Lutheran Church in Ottawa, with a part time call to working with a local Anglican congregation in the area. Joel is married to Globe and Mail journalist, Erin Anderssen and has two sons, Noah (age 7) and Samson (age 2). Joel and his family have been with the congregation since 2001.

Joel was a field placement student, under the supervision of Mark Harris.

Joel is the Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries for the Eastern Synod and has a video on YouTube called BTRU2U

(<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vfkJDtoy67M>)

# What's on Council's Mind?

In keeping with the Easter season, another kind of “resurrection” is happening at Mount Zion...the resurrection of delayed projects.

Throughout 2008, your Church Council was preoccupied with the day-to-day happenings and concerns inside our congregation, as we struggled to cope without the presence and support of our regular pastors.

Now, with Pastor Tanya back in the pulpit, and Pastor Krister's imminent arrival, many concerns have been laid to rest, and Council can return some of its attention to unfinished or delayed projects - and to more long-range thinking.

The list of priorities to be attacked is lengthy, and our 2009 Council acknowledges it will have its hands full. Here are some of the key topics **“on Council's mind”**:

**Residential properties:** The Property Committee has long been concerned about the state of the two residential properties that Mount Zion owns on Dawson Street. Council will have to devise a method for examination and discussion which will lead to a decision on how the congregation should move forward.

**Speaking of property:** Our Planning Task Force has picked up where it left off a year ago following a process of consultation with members of the congregation on needs and priorities for the physical space at Mount Zion. The next step in the process is to engage an architectural firm to consider possible options and their feasibility. You can expect this group will be asking for additional input from the congregation in the coming year. (Members of the Task Force are Bill Gastmeier, Anne Woolner, Paul Stolee and Pastor Tanya.)

**Outside our walls:** but significant to our congregational mission, is the visit that Council received recently from volunteer representatives from our Eastern Synod. They informed us that benevolence giving has remained static for the last 20 years. In response, Synod has trimmed programs, axed others entirely, and reduced staff.

These drastic, cumulative, reductions are such that many of the caring programs so important to our collective life as a Church are in jeopardy. We, along with every other congregation in the synod, are being asked to increase our benevolence giving. Part of Council's job here is to alert members to the precarious position benevolence finances are in; to remind members why benevolence dollars are needed and how they are spent, and to convey how important our synodical family ties are. Be assured there will be more shared on this and other vital stewardship matters in the days to come!

**A lighter note:** One task group that continued its work throughout our transition year is the Music Space reorganization group. They have now completed the planning stage of their project, and Council has authorized work to be done (in two phases) on making our sanctuary's “music making space” more flexible, while providing more seating on that side of the building. Listen for details! (Contact person: Scott Knarr)

**Spinning our web:** Another group that has made significant progress is our Website Task Force. Mount Zion's website has been completely redesigned to give it a fresh new look – and writing is well underway to expand and update all content. The goal is for the site to be good looking, current and useful (user friendly!). Watch for the relaunch – and then you can judge for yourself. (Web Task Force Chair is Dennis Eaton)

**And there's more on Council's mind!** So do keep an eye on your Sunday bulletins, and on future issues of **The Mountaineer** monthly congregational newsletter.

- compiled by Karen Gastmeier, Council Vice-President

**The Detour Ends Here**  
No doubt those of you that travel regularly on Erb Street have seen the sign announcing that Erb Street, west of Westmount will be closed for eight months. Getting to Mount Zion will take a little longer, but knowing what awaits at the end of the detour will make the trip worthwhile.

# Caring Connections

Betty Behm, Parish Nurse

We have some very practical resources such as medical interventions that God blesses us with through trained professionals and science. Perhaps more importantly we have spiritual resources to draw on in our difficult times.

Prayer is one such resource. Surprisingly enough, statistics show that six out of ten people attest to the fact that prayer has eased their pain. Some people will say that diverting the mind from focusing on pain that is incapacitating works best.

Meditation on some Bible passages, particularly the Psalms, allows us to cry out to God in our pain. Although the Bible does not speak much of physical pain, it does provide us with examples of lamenting to God. Research supports that meditation produces changes in the brain that may stimulate chemicals beneficial to our feelings of well being, thus relieving pain.

Hebrews 4:14-16 assures us that we have a great high priest who understands and sympathizes with us. We can therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may find grace and receive mercy in our time of greatest need.

## Dates to Remember in April

- April 7 World Health Day
- April 16 Prenatal Health Fair
- April 21 Young Mom's Group 10 a.m.
- April 22 Earth Day
- Cancer Awareness Month
- April 19-25 National Immunization Awareness Week
- April 21-27 National Organ Donor Week
- April 27- May 3 National Volunteer Week

## Supporting our Ministry

As of Feb 28, 2009

<u>CURRENT</u>	2009	2008
Income	37,643	45,408
Expense	43,598	41,907
Balance	-5,955	3,501

<u>BENEVOLENCE</u>		
Synod	5,818	5,061
Global Hunger	1,080	902
Open Sesame	1,505	1,480
Other	7,349	3,930

<u>CAPITAL</u>		
Income	2,169	2,570
Expense	10,541	0
Mortgage Income	2,652	2,742
Mortgage Interest	115	251



## Around Mount Zion

### News of our membership

In April we celebrate the birthday of **Frieda Eichholz** and all others who are 80 plus this month but not in our records. Have a wonderful time.

**Rose Frim** was specially honoured with a full page article in the Waterloo Chronicle several weeks ago. The article is posted on our bulletin board and is an example of great courage and tenacity from which we call all learn.

At the same time we grieve the loss of **Samantha Flanagan** on March 9<sup>th</sup>. Sam was a student at WCI and a member of Mount Zion. Her family is in our prayers.

And, we note the passing of **Alice Schiestel** at the age of 92. Alice was an active member of our congregation and enjoyed many years with our quilters. She was a resident of Columbia Forest LTC.



**Join the Mountaineer for Coffee** When the editorial committee of *The Mountaineer* meets, we have great discussions over coffee.

Once a month, we meet to discuss ideas for articles for the next edition. If you have an interest in communications, theology and Mount Zion, consider joining us. Give Dennis Eaton a call at 884 3421 The coffee is on us.



**Men's Breakfast**  
**April 11 and April 25 ...**  
**Angie's, St. Agatha 8:00 a.m.**

# 45 Plus

## OSTEOPOROSIS

Learn about this illness that strikes both men and women

April 28<sup>th</sup>, 1:30 p.m.  
 ALL ARE WELCOME



## MAY BOAT CRUISE

May 25  
 Boat Cruise and luncheon aboard the  
 DUC D, ORLEANS

*Travel from Sarnia to Monro Honey and Winery,  
 Alviston on the St Clair River*

Total cost is \$61.

Sign up sheet in narthex.  
 More info: Burt Huehn 519-743-8292

# Women of Mount Zion

## MT. ZION WOMEN'S ANNUAL RETREAT

Mt. Zion Women's 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Retreat will be held at Camp Edgewood  
 Fri. April 24<sup>th</sup> – Sun. April 26<sup>th</sup>  
 and our leader this year is Pastor Bonnie Schelter-Brown of St. James, New Dundee. She will lead us in the theme "Wisdom on our Way".

Cost of the weekend is \$87.00 with deadline for registration April 6<sup>th</sup>.

This year, for the first time, we can offer a limited number of "real beds" at pool-side (two single beds to a room) for the cost as the dorm type accommodation in Cedar Lodge. If you are interested in pool-side, book early by calling Carol Ziegler at 886-6675 and watch the bulletin board for registration forms.

*Come and give yourself a weekend of spiritual renewal and laughter at Camp Edgewood.*

## GIRL'S NIGHT OUT

May 29  
 (at the home of Anne Woolner)

## The Mountaineer

### Mount Zion Lutheran Church

29 Westmount Road, South Waterloo, On N2L 2K4  
 Phone/Fax (519) 886-5820 e-mail: [mtzion@mzlc.ca](mailto:mtzion@mzlc.ca)  
[www.mzlc.ca](http://www.mzlc.ca)

Pastors: Rev Rev. Tanya Ramer.  
 Rev. Everett Mossman, Interim

Editorial Committee: Dennis Eaton, Karen Gastmeier, Jim Widdecombe, Tim Ehrlich

*Please send your comments, ideas and updates to*  
[gastmeier@rogers.com](mailto:gastmeier@rogers.com)

*Deadline for May issue:*

**April 10, 2009**