

## The Grief Grinch

By Joann Brnjas

*Christmas certainly is a time of celebration, but for many it is a time of great sorrow and pain as we grieve the loss of loved ones. Thank you to Joann for sharing her thoughts in this special "poem". "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted." Matthew 5:4*

Twas the season of Christmas  
and all through the streets,  
Were lights going up and big  
social meets.

People taking action to do  
their own part,  
And silent reflections to  
prepare their own heart.

Come, they all say, have a cup  
of good cheer,  
No thanks, not for me. The  
Grief Grinch is here.

He mocks me, he laughs. This  
is his happy time.  
He creeps up to me right from  
behind.

"Your wish – come on now,  
admit it my dear,  
Perhaps you prefer how things  
were last year?"

I cringe, go away. Leave me at  
last.  
So what if I long for things in  
my past.

I acknowledge my pain, in  
time I'll be free.

Get away from me Grinch, I  
insist, now go flee.

"Hmmm, he said, I am your  
shadow. No way.

It's my own preference. With  
you, I will stay."

But as I sigh, I suddenly see a  
bright light!

What could it be? It's so  
brilliant, so white.

With lightning and thunder  
and power it came.  
I was stunned. A loud voice  
called out my name!

My gosh, it's a message from  
God high above,  
"My dear child, remember,  
you are made from pure love.  
Why do you allow the Grinch  
to be near,  
Haven't I told you, you've  
nothing to fear?"

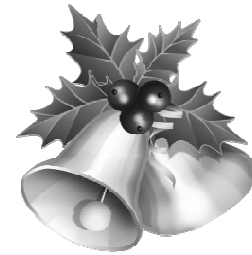
Hark what great news! My  
heart pitter patters!  
The Grinch had no choice but  
only to scatter!  
Dear Father I thank you again  
and again.  
For providing your wisdom in  
exchange for my pain.

Give a hug to my loved one. I  
know she's just fine.  
Tell her I love her, I'll see her  
in time.

Now I must go too and  
prepare for the season,  
Giving glory to God and His  
Son is the reason.

Across the sky remain streams  
of white light.

***To all a joyous season and  
peace through the night!***



## Christmas at Mount Zion

**German Carol Service**  
Tuesday Dec. 15th @ 7:30 pm.

**Family Christmas Service**  
Thursday, Dec. 24th @ 4 pm  
*This worship is especially designed  
to serve the needs of families and  
children. Kids are invited to dress  
as characters from the Christmas  
story if they like.*

**Service of Lessons and  
Carols**  
Thursday, Dec. 24th @ 7 pm  
*A traditional service of Lessons and  
Carols.*

**Carol Communion**  
Thursday, Dec. 24th @ 9 pm  
*This is a reflective Christmas Eve  
worship, with lots of carols, a series  
of meditations, and Holy  
Communion.*

**Christmas Day  
Communion**  
Friday, Dec. 25th @ 10 am

**1st Sunday after Christmas**  
Sunday, Dec. 27th @ 10 am

# ***Communion: How should we enter in?***

by Pastor Tanya Ramer

Growing up, I heard this phrase a lot: “For every action, there is an opposite and equal reaction.”

Now, the science folks out there know that this phrase is one of Isaac Newton’s, who contributed heavily to the area of physics. But the phrase itself, can be applied to many social and academic situations - and yes, even to theology and the way we ‘do’ church.

In recent months, much feedback has been shared around how we ‘do’ communion: how we are called to enter into and receive the gift of grace God offers us in the Bread and Wine.

Many have commented that Holy Communion is just that – Holy; and therefore an appropriate response when we ‘do’ it would be to approach it with reverence, contemplating its meaning for us.

However, on the opposite end of the spectrum, many others offer a different reaction. They tell us they appreciate it when we approach communion with liveliness, celebrating the holiness of communion by raising a joyful noise to the God who gives us grace.

*For every action, there is an opposite, and equal reaction...*and it is crucial to note that though the reactions I described above are opposite, both are equal, hold value, and are important in the life of this congregation. We know this to be true, given the hints that the liturgy itself gives us as we prepare, receive and celebrate communion on Sunday mornings. And that gives us good reason to step back once in a while, for a “refresher” look at the rite of Holy Communion:

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## **The Great Thanksgiving**

*The Great Thanksgiving* section in our service book is where we can begin to dig into the rite of Holy Communion.

It consists of a *Preface Dialogue*, *Proper Preface*, *Sanctus*, a *Eucharistic Prayer*, *Distribution of Communion*, and a *Post Communion Prayer* and/or *Canticle*. But our service book is no textbook. It’s alive! See how these sections draw us in:

*Preface Dialogue* – This is the introduction, where Pastor and Congregation greet each other with heartfelt salutations – P: “The Lord be with you,”... C: “And also with you”.

P: “Lift up your hearts...” (See *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, p.107).

*Proper Preface* – These are the words spoken or sung by the pastor in response to the salutations. The Preface changes to reflect the seasons of the church year. But it begins with clear joy: “It is our duty and delight” (*Ev LW* p.108).

*Sanctus* - Is a sung prayer, rich in meaning: “Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might”. (*Ev LW* p.108).

*Eucharistic Prayer* - The form of the Eucharist Prayer is one of giving *thanks and praise* to God for life and creation, followed by the *Words of Institution* (“on the night in which he was betrayed...”) and the concluding *Doxology* (“...to you blessed Trinity, be all honor and glory, now and forever, Amen.”.. p.108-109).

*Post Communion Prayer/Canticle* – is a spoken or sung response to the receiving of Holy Communion. Whatever it’s form, it’s joyful!

But what does all this have to do with how we understand, receive and give thanks for Holy Communion? Here's what I find helpful:

The *Proper Preface* sets us up to acknowledge the significance of the ritual we are about to partake of, the importance of Holy Communion. It allows us to prepare ourselves to enter into the mystery, by adding ourselves to the story with all the saints: past, present and those who are yet to come. It reminds us that Holy Communion is timeless, and that we join together with people of every time and place when we share Communion. It is a moment or ritual of *contemplation*, remembering Christ's life and ministry, and its meaning for us today.

The Preface is also a reminder of the *celebration* of Holy Communion. "It is our duty and delight" declares this is also a time of rejoicing, helping us ready ourselves to receive God's gift of grace.

The *Eucharistic Prayer* moves us through Christ's life and death, moments on which we contemplate frequently in the Sermon -but the Prayer does not *conclude* with the death. Rather it brings us *through death* into the resurrection hope. Holy Communion reminds us that though we die, there is the promise of eternal life. While this prayer invites us to *think* on this incredible act of love from God in Christ, it also moves us to *celebrate* this new life in Christ – knowing from sadness and despair come true peace and joy.

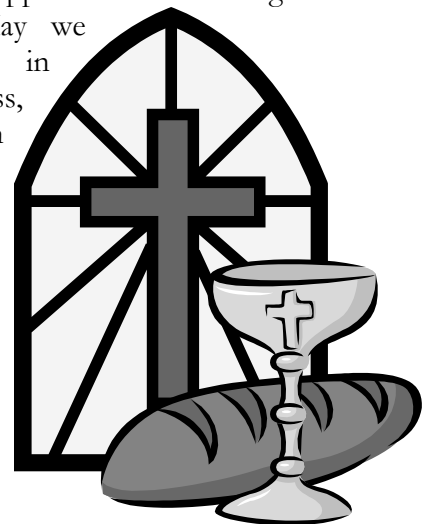
After we, as a family, receive Communion through the *Distribution*, we are called to respond to this gift. You may recall, that in the *Lutheran Book of Worship*, we used to sing a Post Communion Canticle (actually: the *EvLW* has them too, they are Hymns 204-207). The Canticle (and Prayer for that matter), are a way of recognizing what we just entered into, Christ's life, death and resurrection, and of celebrating new life for us and for all people. That's why we joyfully sing,

*"Thankful hearts and voices raise, tell everyone  
what he has done. Let all who  
seek the Lord rejoice and bear Christ's holy  
name. Send us with your promises  
and lead your people forth in joy with shouts of  
thanksgiving. Alleluia, Alleluia."*

All of these words encourage us to celebrate this mystery of faith; to rejoice in the gift of new life in Christ, through the means of Holy Communion. The occasion is indeed holy, and it is indeed opportunity for both contemplation and celebration.

How each of us receives, enters in, or understands Holy Communion doesn't really have a right or wrong way attached to it. It doesn't require an either/or (contemplation or celebration), rather, it is both/and.

The mystery we contemplate. The gift we celebrate. Each is important. For every time we gather for Holy Communion, as one family of God, we may have opposite understandings - but equal reactions! May we continue to grow in God's goodness, asking the tough questions, and living as people with opposite, yet equal reactions.



# Together in Worship



Wednesday, December 2  
**MID-WEEK ADVENT 2**  
 Holden Evening Prayer  
 7:15 pm

Sunday, December 6 **ADVENT 2**  
**Holy Communion** 8:45 am  
**Confirmation** 9:50 am  
**Holy Communion & SCS** 10:45 am

Wednesday, December 9  
**MID-WEEK ADVENT 3**  
 Holden Evening Prayer 7:15 pm

Sunday, December 13 **ADVENT 3**  
**Holy Communion** 8:45 am  
**Confirmation** 9:50 am  
**Holy Communion & SCS** 10:45 am

Tuesday, December 15  
**GERMAN CAROL SERVICE** 7:30 pm

Wednesday, December 23  
**MID-WEEK ADVENT 4**  
 Holden Evening Prayer 7:15 pm

Sunday, December 20 **ADVENT 4**  
**Holy Communion** 8:45 am  
**NO Confirmation**  
**Sunday School Worship Service** 10:45 am

Thursday, December 24  
**CHRISTMAS EVE**  
 Family Christmas Service 4:00 pm  
 Lessons & Carols 7:00 pm  
 Carols & Communion 9:00 pm

Friday, December 25 **CHRISTMAS DAY**  
 Holy Communion 10:00 am

Sunday, December 27 **CHRISTMAS 1**  
**Holy Communion** 10:00 am  
**NO Confirmation**

## Some milestones

December, a great month to be born. We wish the very best to **Abraham Bergen, Fred Von Heyking, Rose Moore, Jean Pym, Jake Stumper, and Mary Seigner** as they celebrate another milestone this month. A birthday and Christmas, what a combination!



*If you know of significant event being celebrated, by one of our members, please share it with us, by sending it to [gastmeier@rogers.com](mailto:gastmeier@rogers.com)*

## Update on the Space Planning Task Group

Building on the “Dreaming about Mount Zion” process that we went through as a congregation a few years ago, Council recently commissioned the Physical Space Planning Task Group to retain Architecture Incorporated Architect, a local firm, to develop design concepts and budget costs to address our space needs. These include addressing the crowding and congestion in the Narthex, upgrading the office, sacristy, choir and storage areas, improvements to technical services, improving the connectivity between the “upstairs” and “downstairs” and improving the presentation of our building to Westmount Road.

The members of the Space Planning Task group – **Bill Gastmeier, Alf Brunger, Doug Jones, Ed Riegert, Richard Brubacher** and **Pastors Tanya and Krister** (ex. Officio), have met with architect Lawrie Carter on several occasions to develop a conceptual design which meets these needs. We will be contacting many of you for further input to firm up the design and it should be ready for presentation to Council and more general review in the new year. Please stay tuned. If you have any questions please chat with one of the members.

# Revitalized mission for Mutual Ministry Committee

By Jim Widdecombe

With the formalization of Mount Zion's co-pastor ministry model late last summer, the congregation's Mutual Ministry Committee also prepared to take on a new shape and a revitalized mission.

Acting on a suggestion made initially by Eastern Synod Bishop Michael Pryse, the Committee was expanded to include some members of the Search Committee that recommended Reverend Krister Ulmanis be called to the Mount Zion ministry team.

Back in September of 2008, in an initial meeting with the newly-appointed Search Committee and Council Executive, Bishop Pryse said "we don't have a lot of co-op ministries in the wider church yet, but they can be the most wonderful thing." In a co-pastor ministry, two pastors operate as equals, sharing the workload and leadership, and negotiating how they work with each other – and with other members of the ministry team in the congregation (e.g. parish nurse, music director, church secretary).

At that time, the Bishop said including some Search Committee members in the Mutual Ministry Committee for an initial one-year period might be of great help in building and supporting the new ministry team.

Mutual Ministry Committee and Church Council agreed, and this fall the Committee was reconstituted to include **Laura Briant**, who continues as Committee Chair, **Kirk Swanson** as Council Liaison, and former Search Committee members **Emily Dolbeer**, **Dennis Eaton**, **Dave Heldman**, **Jocelyn Norris-Lue**, and **Jim Widdecombe**, as well as Pastors Krister Ulmanis and Tanya Ramer.

Membership of the expanded committee is temporary: one year only, after which a new smaller committee, with revised terms of reference (now being developed), will be appointed by Council.

Until then, the current committee is pursuing its mission to be a listening ear and a support system for both the ministry team and the congregation. Or, as Eastern Synod Guidelines for Mutual Ministry Committees

encourage: the committee must look in two directions: "toward strengthening the ministry of the professional leader(s), and toward strengthening the mission of the congregation."

How does that work?

Communication is at the heart of the committee's function: facilitating a communication process to allow for the expression and discussion of concerns, as well as the sharing and exchange of information between pastors, between pastors and staff, and between pastors and congregation "to help ensure the needs of the pastors and the congregation are mutually understood and respected."

In practice, this means meeting regularly (minimum monthly) with the pastors and serving as a personal and confidential support group to them.

It means encouraging feedback and communication to pastors from parishioners –as well as sharing confidential feedback that may come from parishioners.

Other responsibilities in the Committee's new (draft) terms of reference include:

- identifying – and encouraging – continuing education for pastors;
- providing on-going review of the ministry of pastoral staff, as measured against the stated mission of the congregation;
- identifying professional leadership needs of the congregation and facilitating the meeting of those needs;
- serving as agents of reconciliation, if conflicts arise in the congregation

All of this may seem like a tall order. But it isn't really. Not when you consider that support of our shared (mutual) ministry involves not just a committee or council – but every member of our congregation.

Questions about the work of your Mutual Ministry Committee? Speak to any Committee member!

## Lighting up For Christmas

By Betty Behm, Parish Nurse



Every year at this time we are reminded of fire hazards that are present during the festive seasons. Here are a few tips from the Canadian Safety Council to ensure safe Christmas celebrations.

- Use Canadian Standards Association (CSA) approved lights in their appropriate indoor or outdoor environments.
- Prior to putting lights up, new or old, check light strings for broken or cracked sockets, frayed or bare wires, or loose connections. Throw away damaged sets. It is much easier and safer to replace bulbs on the ground, than on the roof.
- Do not use electric light strings/sets on metallic trees. A faulty system could energize the tree and shock or electrocute anyone coming into contact.
- Turn off all lights when you go to bed or leave the house. The lights could short out and start a fire.
- Do not overload electrical outlets, and never string more than three sets of lights per single extension cord.

Let us give thanks for the True Light of the World, Jesus. May He continue to light our pathways in this world.

## Disaster Relief

From time to time an earthquake or hurricane or other natural disaster gives rise to emergency conditions in some part of the world. We as a church respond to such disasters through Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR). The CLWR enables us to help quickly by channeling donations to partners “on the ground” in affected areas.

Typically, the funds are sent to the partners as soon as the most appropriate destination can be determined. Then an appeal is issued to congregations and their members for help, effectively to replenish the amount that has been sent. The easiest way for many individuals to contribute is to include a donation in an offering and specify that it is for CLWR, for the appeal. It is also possible to donate directly through the CLWR website.

CLWR is a founding member of Action by Churches Together (ACT) International, which is an ecumenical disaster response network with many member churches. ACT International was established in 1995, as a result of the genocide in Rwanda in 1994.

The ACT International website provides details of disaster relief efforts all over the world, and is definitely worth a visit, to see how our donations are helping! See <http://www.act-intl.org/>

Mary Thompson  
Member, Service Committee

## Mount Zion Women’s Retreat

Soon it will be time to fill in our 2010 calendars. Here is the date you will want to add. Mount Zion Women’s Annual Retreat will be held Friday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> to Sunday, April 25<sup>th</sup>. Pastor Tanya has agreed to be our leader and we are looking forward to “Celebrating our 25<sup>th</sup> Retreat” with her. We will be choosing a theme at our January planning meeting.

Remember that our accommodation at Camp Edgewood now includes a limited number of “real beds” at Pool side along with the bunk beds in Cedar Lodge.

Watch for further information in the new year.

**SHOW Someone You Care  
this Christmas**  
*an update from Supportive Housing of  
Waterloo*



*Artist's sketch of SHOW  
apartments – under construction and due for completion  
July 2010.*

Supportive Housing of Waterloo (SHOW) has just the thing for that person on your shopping list who “has everything”. A donation to SHOW as a gift to a friend or family member can deliver a wonderful threefold benefit this Christmas season. The recipient of the gift will be delighted with the thought that their gift will enhance the quality of life for a homeless individual in our own community. You, as the sender, will also have the satisfaction of knowing that your gift matters and is not just an obligatory gesture. and, of course, the homeless people of Waterloo for whom this supportive facility is now rising at 362 Erb Street West, will be the biggest benefactors of all.

An additional advantage for you is the ease with which you can purchase a gift of SHOW. If you go to SHOW’s website at <http://www.supportivehousingofwaterloo.org>, you can make a gift donation via the **Donate Now** image that appears there. Or you can do this by mailing the donation and gift information to us at Notre Dame House, 67 Allen Street East, Waterloo, Ontario, N2J 1J3.

**Supporting our Ministry**

AS AT: Oct 31,  
2009

<u>CURRENT</u>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>
Income	200,582	212,445
Expense	231,476	187,354
Balance	-30,894	25,091

<u>BENEVOLENCE</u>		
Synod	29,716	30,070
Global Hunger	6,434	8,022
Open Sesame	8,905	8,765
Other	19,243	11,972

<u>CAPITAL</u>		
Income	11,674	12,607
Expense	24,189	1,616
Mortgage Income	13,341	14,007
Mortgage Interest	343	1,031

**The Numbers Speak for  
Themselves**

The numbers speak for themselves. Our current account has a deficit of over \$30,000. Other than last year, a deficit at this time of year is not unusual, but it still requires additional attention. We do have some cushion from previous surpluses, but we cannot carry this type of deficit to the end of the year. Anything you can do would be a great help.

It is not all bad news – we have now officially retired our mortgage, and while there is some paperwork to complete, the final payment has been made. A reminder to those people that have been giving to the mortgage fund – please reallocate these donations to one of our other accounts.



**“Advent und Weihnachts Lieder  
mit Schriftverlesung”**

**Tuesday, Dec. 15<sup>th</sup>, 2009**

**7:30 pm**

at

**Mount Zion Lutheran Church**

**29 Westmount Road, South**

**Waterloo, Ontario**

*Women* of Mount Zion

*Wednesday, January 13, 2010 - 7:15*

*Cathy Mendler, a trained professional  
organizer and owner of  
"A New Leaf"  
will be offering a presentation entitled*

*"Organizing A Successful Decluttering  
Session and Organizing Your  
Possessions"*

*Come join us for an evening of  
information and fun.*

*All women of Mt. Zion are welcome*

**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 Tanya Ramer., Rev. Krister Ulmanis

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

*Please send your comments, ideas and updates to*

[gastmeier@rogers.com](mailto:gastmeier@rogers.com)

***Deadline for December issue***

***December 10, 2009***

**SHOP  
and Support  
Open Sesame Too**

**With a simple purchase of Zehrs and  
Sobeys grocery cards you can support  
Open Sesame.**

Here's how it works. You buy a either a Zehr's or  
Soby's Grocery Card from Ann Crossman or Mayda  
Scoins. For every \$100 purchase Open Sesame  
receives \$5.

**Talk to Ann or Mayda after the service**