

“Before we get there...”

Lenten greeting and thoughts from Pastor Krister Ulmanis

Sharing thoughts with you for the first time through the pages of *The Mountaineer*, let me say first that I so look forward to the days when I will be able to place a face and name to you who read this now!

I welcome the days when you will have a chance get to know me in person - outside of what you have learned through the information shared by your Council and Call Committee. There is so much for us to share together, so much to talk about. But before we get there...

"But before we get there..." Are those not the operative words for the season of Lent? Lent being a time of transition and preparation leading from the mountaintop of Transfiguration, through the valley of the shadow of death, to the glorious Resurrection on Easter Sunday! A time to stay in the moment and reflect on what is, what has been, and what is to come, without trying to reach the destination before its time. *"But before we get there.. there is work to be done"*. In our personal lives the images of the season very much reflect where we are in our own lives. For example, here in the Ulmanis household, the "for sale" sign is on the lawn and we are preparing for moving day to arrive. My son Niklas is celebrating acceptance offers received from universities, as he prepares to move to the next stage in his life. And although I love all things winter and snow, we are both waiting and anticipating the transition from winter to spring - the time for the motorcycles to come out (a Suzuki SV 650-S for Niklas and a SV 650 for me).

"But before we get there...there is work to be done". In our spiritual lives, Lent is a time of prayers and a discipline of worship. In our house there are two traditions around this season we have kept from my childhood. One involves pussy-willows. Their stalks stand in a vase, naked and barren as a

reminder of the somber season of Lent. On Easter morning they will be transformed - decorated with brightly coloured feathers and different coloured eggs around them.

The second tradition from my childhood is to take a small branch of our Christmas tree and turn it into a cross that stands on a table. It is a powerful reminder "connecting the dots" between Christmas and Easter. (In some congregations I have served, we have taken the entire Christmas tree, which adorned the worship place, and turned it into a cross; a stark, empty, cross for Lent that is then brightly decorated (transformed!) at Easter. *Advent and Lent* - times of preparation. *Christmas and Easter* - times of new life. The seasons are linked together forever.

"But before we get there. to Easter... there is work to be done". Lent is a time for each of us to focus on what it means for our lives that "...the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matthew 4:17). It is a time to spend in personal and public prayer, as well as in worship, reflecting on what is really important in our lives. Refocusing ourselves on which kingdom it is that we place first in our lives.

I so look forward with anticipation to the days when I can be with you. When we can journey on the road of faith together, living out the mission of Mount Zion.

With every good wish,
Pastor Krister

Sunday, March 8

Meet the newest member of our Ministry Team!

Pastor Krister Ulmanis will preach at both services

Meet him for coffee after the service

Mark your calendar!

Lent? It really is too good to give up!

Pastor Tanya Ramer

Growing up as a child in the Lutheran Church, I hated the season of Lent. There was always talk in church of having to “give up something” for Lent, and as a kid, I didn’t really want to give things up. I had no understanding why I was to give something up, just that I was supposed to do it!

So I gave up what (thinking back now) seem like silly things: chocolate, chips, and nail-biting. But what I soon realized was that this was only a temporary giving up of things, and that the meaning of Lent had no “staying power” for me.

Lent has traditionally been known as a 40-day period of fasting and purification. Well... giving up chips was fasting, and in some way it was probably a way of purifying my body of nasty carbs...but what about now, what is this 40-day Lenten journey *really* all about?

In recent years, we have come to think of Lent as a time for internal contemplation, and for giving back to the community (instead of giving something up), and for becoming reconciled with God and neighbour. And that’s all fine, as far as it goes. However, what it’s taken some time for me to learn is that doesn’t go far enough.

That’s because Lent is about so much more. It’s about preparing to celebrate God’s marvelous redemption at Easter, and the resurrected life that we live, and hope for, as Christians.

But how do we do that? I’ve found a good place to start is with that thundering Old Testament prophet, Micah. He was extremely concerned with ethical issues and socioeconomic injustice. He was concerned for the shepherds of his time, concerned for the down-trodden, and he felt called to be a prophetic witness of hope and divine forgiveness. In his writings he went so far as to say that worship without social justice is meaningless.

Micah declares, “He has told you, O mortal, what is good...” And then the prophet poses (and answers) the question “... and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love

kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” (Micah 6:8)

During this season of Lent, in this year 2009, when economic stress is so high and winter fatigue has set in, perhaps Micah can help us again to refocus our journey by asking ourselves some questions like these:

What is good? Is it good that I tithe 10% of my earnings or good that I tithe my time? Is it good that medical technology has prolonged the span of life, but there are no cures for cancer?

Is it good that we have freedoms in Canada that allow us (directly or indirectly) to inflict destitution on other nations and on God’s creation? Is it good to take and take and not worry about future generations and their survival? What is justice? What is right? What is fair? Is an eye for an eye justice? Is justice about turning the other cheek? When God, through Jesus, encourages us to take care of our neighbour in need, how much care is enough – for them, for me, for you?

Loving kindness? What does it mean to love our neighbour? How do we reclaim the importance of manners? Can I love you, without wondering what is in it for me?

These have never been easy questions for Christians, and there are still no easy answers, because each of us is called to discern the answers for ourselves in conjunction with God’s grace.

So let us continue to search for our answers by walking humbly with God through Lent, open to hearing our call to ministry, as we journey toward the Easter Promise. And as we travel, may we recognize Lent for what it is – a part of our journey that is just too good to give up!

Together in Worship

Sunday, March 1 **LENT 1**
Rev. Tanya L. Ramer, Presiding
Rev. Everett Mossman, Preaching
Holy Communion 8:45 am
Confirmation 9:50 am
Holy Communion & Sunday School 10:45 am

Wednesday, March 4 **MID-WEEK 1**
Holden Evening Prayer 7:15 pm

Sunday, March 8 **LENT 2**
Rev. Tanya L. Ramer, Presiding
Rev. Krister Ulmanis, Preaching
Holy Communion 8:45 am
Confirmation 9:50 am
Holy Communion & Sunday School 10:45 am

Wednesday, March 11 **MID-WEEK 2**
Holden Evening Prayer 7:15 pm

Sunday, March 15 **LENT 3**
Rev. Tanya L. Ramer, Presiding
Holy Communion 8:45 am
No Confirmation
Holy Communion & Sunday School 10:45 am

Wednesday, March 18 **MID-WEEK 3**
Holden Evening Prayer 7:15 pm

Sunday, March 22 **LENT 4**
Rev. Everett Mossman, Presiding
Holy Communion 8:45 am
No Confirmation
Holy Communion 10:45 am

Wednesday, March 25 **MID-WEEK 4**
Holden Evening Prayer 7:15 pm

Sunday, March 29 **LENT 5**
Rev. Tanya L. Ramer, Presiding
Holy Communion 8:45 am
Confirmation 9:50 am
Holy Communion 10:45 am

Pastor Krister will be with us March 8, April 26 and May 10. A date in June is still be organized.



Lutheran Campus Ministry- Waterloo

You are invited to celebrate 35 years of Campus Ministry in Waterloo here at Mt Zion on Sat. March 21 from 5:00-8:00 pm.

Come for an evening of supper, fellowship, music, and reminiscing. This "Caribbean Evening" with island food and steel drums is Lutheran Campus Ministry's "Thank you" for all of your support over the last 35 years. As a "team" we make Ministry happen on our local campuses. For more information or to RSVP please contact Anne Woolner at annewoolner@hotmail.com.

Thank You You Came to the Cabaret!

Mount Zion's Cabaret Night in support of Supportive Housing of Waterloo was a great success due to the amount of encouragement the organizing committee received from members of the Congregation.

Coupled with a \$750 grant from Faith Life, the event raised \$5,388. The organizers went into the project hoping to raise \$3,000, so we are thrilled.

We would like to thank all of you who were involved by donating to the silent auction, participating in the program, buying tickets or volunteering.

We hope to arrange for a cheque presentation some time in the near future.

Supportive Housing of Waterloo is an organization of faith groups raising funds to build an apartment building on Erb Street which will supply housing to the homeless. Further donations to the cause can be made through your envelope.

Karen Gastmeier

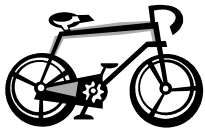
The Carbon Fast—A Step Beyond Chocolate

KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives, believes that it is time for us as individuals and as a society to reexamine our dependence on fossil fuels. With this in mind the Grand River chapter has developed the Lenten Carbon Fast. The version below is edited for space. For the full version see: www.easternsynod.org

Week One - Transportation

Everything is Connected to Everything Else

All living organisms occupy one ecosphere and what affects one affects all.



- Drive less.
- Join in the annual community “Bike to Work” day
- No flying for one year
- Consider a small, efficient diesel, lower-emission car with manual transmission
- Reconsider your commute - can you work closer to home or live closer to work?
- Have one day per week where you don’t use your car
- Take the Saving Gas quiz on www.thegreenguide.com
- Try to drive at the speed that is optimal for fuel efficiency (around 90 to 100 km per hour)
- Maintain correct tire pressure and regular oil changes.
- Carpool whenever possible
- Drive more leisurely, allowing for a slower journey.
- Consider car sharing instead of a second car (or instead of your only car!)
- Resist using your car’s air conditioning

Week Two - Shelter and Utilities

*Everything Must Go Somewhere
There is no “waste” in nature and there is no “away”*

As consumers, we can send a message by not purchasing

products packaged or made from PVC (look for the number 3 in the recycling symbol or the letter “V”).

- Turn off all appliances, or pull out the plug when not in use.
- Own fewer devices. Buy fewer electronics.
- Consider buying a device that tells you exactly how much electricity the house is using every second.
- Hang your clothes to dry - outside in the warm weather, inside during the winter.
- Use a handkerchief instead of tissues.
- Wash in cold water and wash with a full load.
- Use a programmable thermostat.
- Reduce your internal temperature to 19 degrees Celsius. A 1 degree reduction may



- decrease fuel needs by as much as 15 per cent.
- Consider replacing your furnace if it is more than 20 years old.
- If you have an old fridge or freezer in the basement or garage, consider getting rid of it. They’re often power leaches.

Week Three - Retail and Entertainment

Nature Knows Best

Any major change humans make in a natural system is “likely to be detrimental to that system.”

- Buy more of those things that help the environment, such as a microwave oven.
- Take your own bags when you go shopping.
- Avoid excess packaging.
- Buy less! Acquire few needs.
- Buy clothes made out of organic cotton, hemp or



Tencel and Ramie.

- Take a shopping fast for one day a week, one week, or one month. Buy only food and absolute necessities.
- Replace items only as necessary.
- Buy recycled or reused products.
- Take a hundred mile holiday this year - vacation within a hundred miles of your home
- Engage in self-propelled leisure activities
- Separate “needs” from “wants”.

Week Four - Food & Cooking

There Is No Such Thing as a Free Lunch

*"every gain is won at some cost"
because "the global ecosystem is a connected whole."*

- Buy organic where possible. Look for the label "100% Certified Organic".
- Buy local when available.
- Avoid



processed and packaged foods.

- Eat less meat and dairy. Farm animals, particularly dairy cows, produce methane.
- Don't consume any food that you know has been imported by plane (apart from fairly traded products)
- Buying minimally packaged foods makes a difference both to the amount of energy used in the packaging and in the methane resulting from



packaging materials sent to the landfill.

- Stop buying

bottled water.

- If you are going to eat beef, eat grass fed beef.
- Grow your own food

Week Five - Communications, Prayer and Spirituality

Join in with Grace Maglasey's prayer *We pray that those of us who farm should harvest a lot of food so that this year we will not have hunger. In the name of Jesus, Amen.*

- Reflect on ways to love our neighbours in our increasingly connected world.

- Encourage colleagues at church, work and school to join in the Carbon Fast.
- Climate change isn't a distant threat - it's affecting poor communities now. Pray for this important task of helping vulnerable communities adapt to the changing weather
- Tell politicians to take action on climate change today.
- If you don't already have them, ask for blue and green bins in your neighbourhood.
- Join or help to start up, a committee to lower your carbon footprint at your workplace.
- Could your church be greener? Talk to your church council and leaders.
- Have an embrace-the-silence Sunday. Turn off everything. No TV, no radio, no cars. It will be good for your soul.
- Vote for governments that are going to invest in the environment i.e., fund research and development into renewable energy, governments that are committed to improving public transit.
- Learn more about ways to tread lightly on the planet.
- Write a letter and demand that governments stop encouraging sprawl and instead make existing communities and housing attractive.

Volunteer Opportunity

Friendly visitors needed on a monthly basis.

Do you have 1-2 hours to share with our home-bound members?

Call Betty Behm
@ 519 896-2245

Around Mount Zion

News of our membership



And we mustn't forget

Congratulations to Dorothy Dotzenroth, and Don and Joyce Townson, all over eighty and celebrating birthdays this month. We delight in their celebrations and wish them many, many more.

Where Are They Now?

Some of you may recall our past field placement Sebastian Helmer. Sebastian participated in the life of our congregation from September 2006– April 2007. He served as an Assisting minister and worshiped with us through music as he shared his talent on the violin. Sebastian is on his internship this year at St. Philip's in Etobicoke and has announced his engagement Carey Meadows who is serving a Lutheran parish in Raglin/Maynooth. We wish Sebastian all the best.

Caring Connections

Update the Parish Nurse
Betty Behm

When I read the minutes from the last meeting for the Mountaineer and learned the focus was the book of Micah, I went "Oh no! More ethics!" I am up to my neck in ethical issues in my studies. The health care system is fraught with ethical dilemmas and this term we have looked at policies around the nursing shortage, end-of-life decision making, in vitro fertilization, the disposing of unused drugs into our water system, the anti-smoking laws, and organ donation.

Micah asks tough questions too. How can we, the church, change society's moral practices? Is our church teaching God's ethical demands effectively? Where are we when there are tough decisions to make? Are we sitting on the fence? It is both an obligation and a duty to commit to responding to these issues having given them due consideration.

Micah challenged the political and religious systems and pointed to a new age of change and salvation. We are called to do the same in order to preserve the moral fabric of today's society.

March 15, Blood Pressures can be monitored between the services.

March 15, Super Singles outing following the second service. Meet in the narthex to car pool to a local restaurant.

March 24, Young Mom's Group. Bring a snack for your toddlers.

Our New Parlour/Lounge

What a joy it was for council to meet for the first time in our beautiful new parlour. The parlour was a joint project accomplished by the Property Committee and paid for, in part, by the Funeral Committee and the quilters. The room was designed by member Monica Heinrich. The newly-dressed room will be used for meetings, Confirmation, funeral gatherings, bridal parties and other gatherings.

Supporting our Ministry

AS AT: Jan 31, 2009

<u>CURRENT</u>	2009	2008
Income	18,169	24,835
Expense	19,568	24,641
Balance	-1,399	194

<u>BENEVOLENCE</u>		
Synod	3,123	3,164
Global Hunger	607	361
Open Sesame	200	190
Other	595	2,614

<u>CAPITAL</u>		
Income	1,205	1,331
Expense	0	0
Mortgage Income	1,339	1,303
Mortgage Interest	61	128

What's on Council's Mind?

Council received a presentation from Synod at the January council meeting. The purpose of their visit was to involve us in their Mission Renewal. Benevolence givings have remained flat for the last 20 years. The visitors left some very good resources explaining how our benevolence donations are used. Council is planning on how best share this info with the congregation

Council approved changes to our **Corporate Bylaws** at the February meeting. The proposed changes were prepared by Alf Brunger who took on the task of reviewing our bylaws on request of council. The changes have been sent to synod office for approval. Upon the approval council will plan a general meeting of the congregation.

Council approved a request from Worship and Music to reorient the music area in order to accommodate the grand piano.

Scott and the Music Space Task Force and the Choir have been experimenting with the spatial layouts for the last year. They are proceeding in two phases. The first stage involves removing the carpet in the flexible seating area and the lower portion of the platform. The Second Stage will see the flexible extension of the platform towards the chancel.



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.

45Plus

WHEN BAD MEDICINE HAPPENS TO GOOD PEOPLE

Joan Brunger - Pharmacist

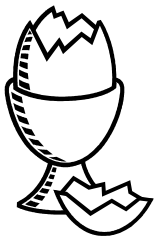
March 24, 2:00 p.m.

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*Please note that the March Meeting only will start at 2:00 P.M. ***

Clean out your medicine cabinet! Bring your old meds for safe disposal.

This information will be beneficial to all. Everyone is welcome. Please bring a friend.



Men's Breakfast

**March 14
March 28 ...**

**8 a.m. at Angies Kitchen
in St Agatha**

Women of Mount Zion

ANNUAL WOMEN'S RETREAT (at Camp Edgewood)

April 24 - 26

**Pastor Bonnie Schelter-Brown will lead the retreat
with the theme
"WISDOM ON THE WAY"**

Deadline for registration is April 6

Watch the Sunday bulletins for more information

**GIRL'S NIGHT OUT
May 29
(at the home of Anne Woolner)**

The Mountaineer

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March 15, 2009