



*We are a welcoming, caring  
community, called by Christ, and  
enabled  
by the Spirit, to share God's love by  
living our faith*

## *Holy Week at Mount Zion*

### **Palm Sunday**

April 9            10 a.m.

### **Maundy Thursday**

April 13           7:00 p.m.

### **Good Friday**

April 14           10 a.m.

### **Easter Sunday**

April 16

Breakfast 8:30 – 9:45 a.m.

Service            10 a.m.

## What's so good about Good Friday?

By Tim Ehrlich

We are all familiar with the rhythm of Holy Week worship and the emotional roller coaster we are taken on in our spiritual journey. I am imagining how Jesus' followers may have experienced the events of Holy Week and put myself in their shoes. How terrible it must have been to have the spiritual rug yanked out from under them and be suddenly without direction and focus. I imagine they would not have referred to that Friday as good at all.

Palm Sunday kicks it off with praise and a joyous procession. Maundy Thursday we observe the Last Supper and

contemplate the promises of God to His people. There is a sober tone as we realize, as the disciples probably did, that this is real and imminent. Celebration has been replaced by foreboding as we begin to realize that events are coming to a culmination and we're not quite sure what that will mean.

Then we come to the sudden shocking turn of events in the garden of Gethsemane. How could this happen? There must be some mistake. Are we being abandoned? Hope has been obliterated. Which brings us to Friday. How can we in any way consider it "Good?"

Some sources have suggested that the word good is a corruption of God while others contend that good simply means pious or holy. German speaking countries usually refer to the day as "Karfreitag" where the word "kar" comes from the Old German word for care as in cares and woes. Other names are Stiller Freitag (silent Friday) and Hohen Freitag (holy Friday.) Any way you look at it there doesn't seem to be anything good about it in the sense that we normally use the word good.

I propose that we look past the grief and lamentation of loss. Perhaps we can actually take the word "good" literally. Throughout His ministry on earth, Jesus made promises. He promised that God would love us no matter what. He promised that if we followed Him we would join Him. He promised eternal life. He even said that when He leaves, He is going to prepare a place for us in the Kingdom of God. If we look at those promises not individually, but as a whole, we can see that Jesus has given us a wonderful gift – hope. Indeed, the three abiding gifts mentioned in 1



Corinthians are faith, hope and love. Love is often the focus of that passage but I propose that hope deserves equal billing. It provides a sustaining force that can carry us past loss, grief and any seemingly insurmountable obstacle.

That Friday in Holy Week seems so dreadful and stark that maybe it should be called Bad Friday. It is indeed a solemn time and requires deep reflection. We can reflect on the profound loss and emptiness, but we can also reflect on all the promises our Lord made to us and the precious gift of hope He left with us. That, it seems to me is good. Good enough that we can truly call it Good Friday.

## Our Lenten Journey

### continues:

With Soup Supper 5:45  
 Discussion 6 p.m.  
 Holden Evening Prayer 7:00 p.m.

**Wednesday April 5** *Part 5 Lutherans and Roman Catholics Together*

#### **Building Relationships for the Future**

What can we do at the local level to build trust, mutual respect and better understanding of one another?



## Holy Week

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CONGRATULATIONS!



Scott Knarr

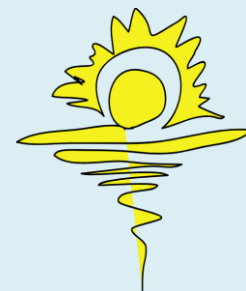
On your 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at  
 Mount Zion.  
 10 Years, it's hard to believe

Join Pastor Philip at this year's

**Interfaith Community Breakfast**, an annual event sponsored by Interfaith Grand River (IGR),  
 Interfaith Grand River is pleased to present:

**Dr. Peter Kuhnert, MD, MDiv, FCFP speaking on "**  
**Mental Health: Supporting Wellness in Community".**

Embassy Room, Bingemans in Kitchener, on Wednesday, April 26, 2017, starting at 7:00 a.m.  
 Tickets are \$25.00 each or a table of 8 for \$175.00. See Pastor Philip for tickets Last year  
 the Breakfast was sold out, so we encourage you to get your tickets early.



## Apple Tree Workshop –

*Learning how to “harvest” our assets:*



(l-r: Rev. Judi Harris, Susan Brubacher, Richard Brubacher, Jeff Pym, Karen Gastmeier, Pastor Philip.)

More than 50 participants from congregations throughout the Nith Valley, Two Rivers, and Grand River ministry areas gathered at Mount Zion on Saturday, March 4 with workshop leaders Jeff Pym and Riitta Hepomaki to explore new ways of using our congregational resources.

An exercise called “asset-mapping” generated nearly 1,000 blue paper assets among eight table teams. Each group then experimented with “connecting the dots” – gathering those assets into potential new outreach projects, or ways to strengthen existing ones.



## Ecumenical Study and Reflection

7:00 – 9:00 pm



**Together in Christ**  
Lutherans and Catholics Commemorating the Reformation

*To commemorate the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation this year, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada encourage the faithful to prayerfully reflect on the past 500 years; to offer thanksgiving to God for the progress made in our efforts toward reconciliation; and to pray for pardon and peace wherever our words or actions have fallen short of what Christ demands of us as Christians.*

**MAY 3, 2017**

### **Commemorating the Reformation**

Our Lady of Lourdes Roman Catholic Church  
173 Lourdes Street, Waterloo

**MAY 10, 2017**

### **Conflict breaks Communion**

Our Lady of Lourdes Roman Catholic Church  
173 Lourdes Street, Waterloo

**MAY 17, 2017**

### **From Conflict to Communion**

Mount Zion Lutheran Church  
29 Westmount Road, Waterloo

**MAY 24, 2017**

### **Growth in Communion Through Dialogue**

Mount Zion Lutheran Church  
29 Westmount Road, Waterloo

**MAY 31, 2017**

### **Commitment to Communion**

Our Lady of Lourdes Roman Catholic Church  
173 Lourdes Street, Waterloo

#### **FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:**

St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Kitchener: [pastor@stmarkskw.org](mailto:pastor@stmarkskw.org)

St. Agnes Roman Catholic Church, Waterloo:

[office@saintagnescatholicchurch.org](mailto:office@saintagnescatholicchurch.org)

Our Lady of Lourdes Roman Catholic Church, Waterloo:

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

Mount Zion Lutheran Church, Waterloo: [pmathai@mzlc.ca](mailto:pmathai@mzlc.ca)

Christ Lutheran Church, Waterloo: [pastordavid@christwaterloo.ca](mailto:pastordavid@christwaterloo.ca)

## Meet Mary and Carl Thompson:

### *we're so glad you "slept-in"!*

If Mary and Carl Thompson hadn't slept in one Sunday morning nearly five decades ago, Mount Zion might never have been blessed with two of its most active and versatile members.

After arriving in Waterloo in 1969 as newlyweds, and new University of Waterloo faculty – Carl in Civil Engineering and Mary in Statistics – the Thompsons used the opportunity to explore a number of local churches first before deciding which congregation would suit their differing faith backgrounds.

As Mary recalls; "one Sunday morning we had slept a little too long, and the only option to avoid being late was to attend the service at Mount Zion," which was closest to their Erb Street apartment.

Both were pleasantly surprised. "Mount Zion had the right combination of a beautiful liturgical service, an unpretentious building, and a pastor (Rev. Norman Lange) whose presiding and preaching we appreciated very much; and so we stayed."

While it was years before they became formal members, both put down deep roots in our congregation, which continue to this day.

Carl was born and grew up in Toronto, near Bathurst and Lawrence (now called Glen Park) and was raised Presbyterian. Mary was born in Winnipeg but raised in East York and Scarborough. Her parents' faith background was United but they preferred being Anglican, the denomination in which Mary was confirmed.

Mary and Carl attended the University of Toronto but didn't meet until graduate studies, far from home at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign. After long and active teaching careers, both are now officially "retired," although Mary continues doing some work for UW. The Thompson's three sons – Simon, Andrew and Alan – grew up in the Mount Zion congregation and all still live in the local area. They and their partners have

blessed the couple with four grandchildren, ranging in age from four to 11.



Mary is typically most "visible" of the two at Mount Zion, having served previously on Council and the Worship and Music Committee. She is currently a core member of the choir, Mutual Ministry group and the Service Committee, where she has been instrumental in supporting and engaging in indigenous ministries with Deacon Scott.

Carl has worked in many roles over the years, including with Mount Zion's Service Committee (then called Social Ministry), driving students to and from Open Sesame classes, and in a partnership with All Saints Anglican during 1979-1980 to welcome refugees from Laos. He currently manages the year-round grocery gift card program that raises funds for Open Sesame (why not buy one this week?), as well as Mount Zion's food vouchers. He has been a volunteer with Emmanuel United and First United churches, volunteers with Scouts Canada and the Kiwanis Club, and drives people to out-of-town medical appointments for Waterloo Home Support Services.

The Thompson family has experienced many changes at Mount Zion over the 48 years since they walked through the door on that fortunate sleep-in Sunday, but the qualities they liked back then have endured: "It still has beautiful services and fine preaching, and a simple and flexible worship space," Mary observed.

“Of course, now we know the people of Mount Zion much better, and can fully appreciate the courage, talents and dedication of those who built the church the

and those who have maintained this wonderful congregation through the years.”

Mary and Carl see a vision for now and for the future when looking ahead to what Mount Zion might be, or become, as the 21st century continues.

“These days we see a church and congregation with more intensity at what we might call the ‘core,’ and at the same time increasing connections to the community around us. It is becoming somehow less physical and tending to the virtual, in a new and inspiring way,” Mary reflects.

“We recognize that the future will hold other changes, but the mission will remain. We hope that at least for a while our sense of the history we are celebrating this year will endure, even as we find our place in an evolving social, political and cultural landscape.”

## Easter Breakfast



Again this year, we are having an Easter Breakfast at 8:30-9:45 am before the Easter Service at 10:00.

We will be having breakfast

casseroles, French toast, fruit salad, juice, coffee & tea. Please indicate on the sign up sheet on the bulletin board if you are attending and if you can assist with the breakfast (set-up, clean-up, bring prepared fruit for the fruit salad and/or make a breakfast casserole). This is a fund-raiser for the Youth Conference in Thunder Bay. Please plan to join us for food and fellowship on this very Holy Day. For more information contact Anne @ [annewoloner@hotmail.com](mailto:annewoloner@hotmail.com) or 519-743-2277).

**Youth Members** Please let Anne know if you can assist with set-up, cooking (most will be done in advance), serving and clean up. We will probably set up the hall the day before.



## Mount Zion Café

*Now Serving Lunch*

April 12 and April 26

from 10 AM,

with lunch at 11:30 AM – 12 noon.

Take part in any or all of the following activities:

- Short walk in the auditorium,
- coffee and goodies in the lounge,
- attend a very short educational presentation in the board room and
- stay for lunch, which will be available starting at 11:30.

Bring a friend or meet a new friend. Transportation will be available to those who need a ride. Please call the church office with a request for a ride. (519 886 5820)

***The Cafe - it's what you need in the spring - a little physical activity, a little mental activity, some social activity and as always, some good food!***



**The Mountaineer** Is a publication of Mount Zion Lutheran Church, 29 Westmount Road, Waterloo.

Editorial Committee: Dennis Eaton, Pauline Finch, Tim Ehrlich, Dave Heldman, Pastor Phillip Mathai, Karen Gastmeier

The Mountaineer is published nine times per year, **The Mountaineer is not published in January, July or Aug.**

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Back issues of The Mountaineer can be found at [www.mzlc.ca](http://www.mzlc.ca)

# Being of Use in Our World

Christine MacTavish, Church of the Good Shepherd

Over a year ago, I volunteered to attend a meeting with John Maine, the pastor of my church. He had just explained to the church board that a number of churches wanted to work together to support a refugee family and an exploratory meeting was being held.

I saw this as an opportunity to get involved; I was proud of the Canadian Government's commitment to bring 25,000 Syrian refugees to safety and I wanted to do my part. A decision was quickly made for us to become part of the Ecumenical Welcoming Partnership.

We initially thought that we would be sponsoring a Syrian Family, but learned that the quota had been reached and we would have to wait before more families were processed. There were, however, families from a number of other countries already approved and waiting for sponsors: Afghanistan, Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Iran, Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Columbia. How was it that I did not know how many countries needed help? And how come I did not know just how many displaced people there are in the world?

Since then, I have learned that there are over 65 million people around the world who have been forced from their homes as a result of conflict or persecution. Among them are more than 21 million refugees, over half of whom are children.

The family that we chose to sponsor came from their homeland of DR Congo via a refugee camp in Burundi and they arrived in Canada on August 3, 2016.

As a retired teacher, I am very comfortable with children and love spending time with them. But I knew that life in Canada would be a huge adjustment for them, and with so much to learn I knew it must feel overwhelming. I also knew that the children had grown up in quite primitive living conditions. And I would not be able to communicate with them. So it was with

considerable uncertainty that I began my relationship with them last summer. The fact that I was part of a large, supportive group, however, was very reassuring.

It did not take long to forge a bond with the family: Shinga, Esperance, Yves, Redard, Agape, Uwera and Blaise. From the moment I

met them, I was greeted with big welcoming smiles, open arms, and an invitation to join them – to sit down, to spend time with them, or to join

them for a meal. And as far as the children went, children are very much the same no matter where in the world they are from. I quickly learned that they loved to go to the park, to visit the animals and the skate board park in particular! They also loved to look at books, to be read to, and to draw or make things.

I am a member of the task force looking after Education and Language. As such, I have enjoyed the opportunity to: accompany the children to and from their school for the first two weeks; drive a child to a school sporting event; go trick-or-treating with the family; liaise with the staff of the children's school; take the children swimming on PD Days; register for, and accompany, the children to swimming lessons; help with homework and completing all those school forms that are sent home; and just be there for them when a need arises, which it does about once every week or two!

I set out with a goal of being of more use in the world, and wanting to help a family learn about life in Canada.

I ended up being part of a new family – a large family comprised of newcomers and other sponsors. A family with many 'Mamas', of which I am one, and many 'Papas'. And, while I have been able to help teach my new Canadian family, I have learned so much in return. Being a member of this large family has been a gift.



## From the Service Committee

### Adopt A Cause ..One Roof

On March 15th a meal was prepared in our Mount Zion kitchen and then delivered at dinner time for the youth at oneROOF



Youth Services.



oneROOF  
YOUTH SERVICES

We served bbq chicken, lemon-cumin rice, Caesar salad, mixed vegetables, rolls and butter, bananas, cookies, Nanaimo bars and cream puffs. Nine people from Mount Zion helped shop, prepare the food, deliver it and serve the meal to the youth. Twelve donations of \$20 each covered the cost of the meal. We prepared enough food to feed at least fifty people with the expectation that leftovers would be used for the following day's lunch or dinner. Many thanks were offered to us as we served the appreciative young people.

Daily needs at oneROOF include toiletries of all types. Over the past two months, we have collected toiletry items that filled three large grocery bags. These were delivered to oneROOF when we took the food over. Please continue to bring in toothpaste, toothbrushes, shampoo, soap, razors, etc. until Easter Sunday.

Donations have grown to \$1200 for the Capsule Bed. Our fundraising goal is \$2000 which will allow oneROOF to buy one capsule bed. The sense of security, safety, quiet, and comfort this bed provides is an exciting new concept for sleeping in a shared space.

### Potato Blitz Thank You

A huge thank you to all who contributed to the Potato Blitz to help the House of Friendship feed our neighbours in need. We raised a total of \$317.85 towards this worthy cause.

## Adopt A Cause and The Reformation Challenge

The second Adopt A Cause project the Service Committee will be promoting later in April is in response to our National Church's 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reformation Challenge. We are joining with Lutherans



Join the  
**REFORMATION  
CHALLENGE!**

across Canada  
to help  
provide  
scholarships

for schools of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land. These schools operate in the midst of the conflict in Palestine/Israel and are for children of all faiths, primarily Christian and Muslim. A scholarship of \$1400 will allow a student to attend school for a year. You will be hearing more about this worthy cause at a later date.



## Upon Request

**Pastor Philip has been asked to share the funny moments from his sermons....here is one.**

A new pastor was visiting in the homes of his parishioners. At one house, it seemed obvious that someone was at home, but no answer came to his repeated knocks at the door.

Therefore, he took out a business card and wrote 'Revelation 3:20' on the back of it and stuck it in the door.

When the offering was processed the following Sunday, he found that his card had been returned. Added to it was this cryptic message, 'Genesis 3:10.' Reaching for his Bible to check out the citation, he broke up in gales of laughter. Revelation 3:20 begins 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock.' Genesis 3:10 reads, 'I heard your voice in the garden and I was afraid for I was naked.'

## TRC Call to Action #48

By Scott Knarr

*The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 382-page summary of its final report includes 94 compelling recommendations. The task now is their acceptance and implementation, and the reorientation of Canadians' strained attitude toward reconciliation. Deacon Scott will look at a few of these recommendations over the next few months.*

### TRC Call to Action #48

*48. We call upon the church parties to the Settlement Agreement, and all other faith groups and interfaith social justice groups in Canada who have not already done so, to formally adopt and comply with the principles, norms, and standards of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a framework for reconciliation. This would include, but not be limited to, the following commitments:*

- i. Ensuring that their institutions, policies, programs, and practices comply with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.*
- ii. Respecting Indigenous peoples' right to self-determination in spiritual matters, including the right to practise, develop, and teach their own spiritual and religious traditions, customs, and ceremonies, consistent with Article 12:1 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.*
- iii. Engaging in ongoing public dialogue and actions to support the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.*
- iv. Issuing a statement no later than March 31, 2016, from all religious denominations and faith groups, as to how they will implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.*

### Scott Writes....

Call to Action #48 is a very important one, and it commits our church to following the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, an international agreement which recognizes the inherent rights of Indigenous peoples to self-determination. This framework encourages us to consider ways in which our dominant culture's viewpoint does not respect the language, culture and spiritual practices of Indigenous peoples. Because we have been educated and live within the mainstream culture our ways of thinking about and knowing the world have primarily been constructed in a colonial mindset.

Decolonization is the practice of thinking critically about why we say, do, or believe certain things about the way the world has been shaped.

ELCIC National Church Council took this Call to Action seriously, and in March 2016 made a statement of response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The statement begins by recognizing that we are all treaty people. Each Canadian benefits from the treaties which have been made with the original inhabitants of our territories, and each Canadian should take responsibility for living up to the intent of these treaties. Specifically, Lutherans are concerned about how we invest, manage and steward our resources and National Church Council has undertaken to review the investments of the church to ensure that the principles of free, prior and informed consent are upheld.

“Recognizing that we have benefitted from our colonial history and identity, the ELCIC commits to offering care in appropriate ways and at appropriate times.

We believe that prayer, worship, scriptures, listening, empathy, spiritual care and theological reflection can support healing journeys. We affirm



that giving up colonial domination and attitudes is one type of healing journey.”

[www.elcic.ca/Documents/StatementonCalltoAction48.pdf](http://www.elcic.ca/Documents/StatementonCalltoAction48.pdf)

It can be challenging to move from theoretical statements about decolonization to practical ways we can challenge our ingrained mindset. The greater awareness of Indigenous cultural practices, and the explosion of Indigenous literature in Canadian bookstores, as well as media such as APTN (Aboriginal Peoples Television Network) and the internet have allowed alternative voices to flourish. From music to film to visual arts we are witnessing a renaissance of cultural identity. As Canada marks 150 years, we have a responsibility to recognize and celebrate the contributions of our First Peoples to the success and struggle of life in this harsh climate. If Canada today is seen as an enviable place to live, it is a reality that owes an awful lot to the dispossessed Original Peoples who have paid a very high price for their generous welcome. Reconciliation requires an honest truth-telling of our story, and respectful listening to those voices who are difficult to hear. To be a treaty partner means to be part of a sacred covenant relationship that will endure. It means to treat one another with respect and generosity of spirit, to share lands and resources so that every person is cared for and has access to water, food, education and health care. And, at the end of the day, isn't this really our “Canadian Dream”?



May 4  
Spring Hymn Sing  
2:00 to 3:00 p.m.  
Mount Zion Sanctuary

## Council News

You will be hearing a lot about \$10 in the next few weeks.

Council introduced the \$10 Challenge at the annual meeting. In the following few weeks we want to tell those of you who were not at the meeting all about it. We have created a small home-made brochure included in this Mountaineer and last week's Sunday Bulletin. It will tell you all about it.

For those of you who have already adjusted your PAR or added \$10 to your monthly envelope, I want to say thank you for being part of the \$10 Solution.

At our February meeting we welcomed **Dorothy Hobson, Pauline Finch, David Murrison, Richard Heimbecker** to our council table. They join **Rita Schaus, Alfred Durichen, Stephanie von Schilling, Anne Woolner** and **Karen Gastmeier** to make up a full council of nine members.

Elected to offices were **Rita Schaus**, Secretary, **Stephanie von Schilling**, Vice President and **Karen Gastmeier**, President. **Richard Brubacher** was appointed Treasurer.

New members learned that council is committed to developing our leadership with events such as the Apple Tree workshop. Mount Zion was well represented at the event with 22 participants attending.

From Pastor Philip's report we learned that there were three funerals in the month of February and Doug Rodenburg transferred to a church in Guelph and Vi Rank transferred to Mount Zion from St. Peter's Lynwood.

Council voted to transfer 50% of all new rental income to the Capital Account.

Council voted to purchase 100 Inshallah Song Books with funds from the memorial account.

We were also delighted to have Brooklyn Lane, our seminary student with us for our meeting.

## Turning “olden” into “golden” ...

### *How conversation and listening grow through faith*

Dave Heldman with Pauline Finch

When you reach the age of 70 and beyond, what does it mean to you?

Are you “old”? Are you “mature”? Or are you in your “golden years”? The dictionary defines “old” as a description for things which have existed or been in use for a long time. In our society, calling a person “mature” is a polite way of saying they are no longer young. But for most of us, “golden age” means a time when life is at its best.

So, whatever age you are, has this time met with your expectations????

When we were young, it seemed as if no challenge was beyond us; the world was our oyster and we were determined to be a big and successful part of it.

Our education for this life happened in many ways. There was the formal environment of school classrooms; learning and working at a trade; carrying on a family business; or starting at the bottom and working up the ladder to a successful career.

Depending on our attitude, working life was a continual challenge of learning and adapting and could be tough going at times. But now we can look back and remember the joy and fulfillment of achieving some or all of our goals, whatever they were. Maybe our goals also changed as we lived and grew.

But when we reach the age of 70 and beyond, the world wants to tell us that the aspirations and expectations of the past are no longer relevant and should be discarded. Why must that be so?

If our attitude is focused in a healthy and hopeful direction, we can do many things we did in the past; we might not be as quick, but we get it done, often just as well as our younger colleagues. Yet some older folks resist being fully involved in life, or avoid trying new ventures because they feel their future time is limited anyway, so why bother?

Where does that kind of defeated reasoning come from? Do we really want to stop using the skills and interests we’ve accumulated when we have so much to offer our families, friends, and society as a whole? How often do we stop to realize just how much knowledge and the experience we have acquired over the past 70-plus years?

It’s not enough to sit in a chair and reminisce about what we used to do, or the knowledge we acquired in order to do it. Deep down, I think we all want to share what we’ve learned and experienced with others.

Figuring out how to do this can become a stimulating daily challenge. What ways can we find to share a bit of past wisdom or insight with people who could use it in coping with present-day issues?

For example, when taking a walk and meeting up with a neighbour, does your conversation usually begin and end with the weather, or perhaps the latest exploits of the neighbour’s dog? What different directions might that conversation take if you visited someone who was bedridden, shut-in, or perhaps mobile but lonely?

In today’s technology-driven world where more and more people spend hours texting silently into cell phones, and hear only through ear buds, the art of good conversation is becoming a rare skill – something we “old” or “mature” folks are more likely to possess than the younger population.

Don’t let that well-trained ability atrophy! There are many local organizations where your verbal and listening skills would be challenged and valued. If you want a “captive audience,” for example, volunteer as a driver for the Canadian Cancer Society; they are always in need of people to transport patients to and from appointments. Good conversation can be a calming and nurturing experience for them.

What about having real conversations with children, grandchildren, even great-grandchildren? And not in front of a screen, but face-to-face. You may be surprised to find there’s no end to the number of topics that arise, especially from ever-curious younger children.

Of course, half the art of good conversation lies in being a good listener. Much of what we bring to an engaged or active way of listening has very deep roots in our personality and mannerisms, which play an important part in daily life.

Most of us by now have learned (perhaps with difficulty along the way) that we can choose to be positive or miserable, no matter what curves life throws at us. For me, this part of good listening is grounded in faith; Jesus taught us how to live both by example and by his teachings.

In 2007 when Mount Zion marked its 50th anniversary, a visiting guest pastor led us in worship that was deeply searching, but often humorous as well. One phrase that really caught my attention was; “the opposite of faith is certainty.” Just think on that for a moment ... How many times in a day do you rely on “faith” for what you do? And how many times in a day are you “certain” about it?

Secular society conditions us to believe that certainty is a good thing, no matter what. But if we go back to scripture, there are numerous examples where faith, not certainty, was the game-changer in people’s lives. The familiar passage from Matthew 1:18-24, beginning “this is how the birth of Jesus Christ took place...” tells how Joseph had to act decisively on faith – not on law or social tradition – when he learned his virgin wife was pregnant.

If he had done the “certain” thing, Jesus might never have been born and the Bible would not be anything like we know it today. What would you or I do in Joseph’s situation?

We don’t know what kind of conversationalist Joseph was, but he set certainty aside and listened to divine wisdom. Considered “old” for his time in history, Joseph let faith take him into a bold and courageous new venture, helping raise the human son of God. Knowing his limitations and the uncertainty of time, Joseph still engaged in life, passing a carpenter’s wisdom on to his miraculous son.

Something to think about, whether we see ourselves as “golden,” “mature,” or just optimistically “old.”

## ***A note from Finance***

Our financial status for the first two months in 2017 reflects a minor deficit of \$1,776 in the “Ministry & Mission (current) Account”. For this period of time, results are favourable to plan due to some unbudgeted one-time items. Overall, receipts are \$5,762 better, and disbursements are \$2,047 below plan resulting in a favourable variance of \$7,808.

	Actual	Budget	Better/ (Worse)
Receipts	\$44,886	\$39,124	\$ 5,762
Disbursements	<u>46,662</u>	<u>48,708</u>	<u>2,047</u>
Deficit	(1,776)	( 9,584)	7,808

### Comments:

- Member regular envelope contributions were \$2,391 below plan
- Facility and parking income was \$743 higher
- Endowment fund income of \$4,815 was applied to Ministry & Mission account
- Grants of \$2,500 from Synod in support of Mt Zion Café were received
- Disbursements were below plan by \$2,047

Your support of Synod Benevolence and other designated needs including our Adopt A Causes was \$18,648. Member support was \$7,148 which compares to \$7,205 in the prior year. The additional \$11,500 was contributed as grants of \$9,000 to Open Sesame, and \$2,500 to Refugee support.

## Financial Update – 2 months ended February 28, 2017

By Richard Brubacher – Treasurer & Chair, Finance Committee

The summaries below reflect the actual cash flows for the two months ended February 28, 2017, and the position of our bank accounts. Comparative data is displayed for our budget commitment and the prior year.

### Mission and Ministry Account - Cash Flow Basis

	2 Months - 2017		Comments re: Differences to plan	2 Months
	Actual	Budget		Last Year
<b>Cash Inflow</b>				
Receipts from Members	29,365	32,056	- worse than plan (\$2,691)	31,134
Receipts from Facility Rentals & Parking	7,663	6,920		6,730
Other Receipts - (Plate, Endow. Int., grant)	7,559	148	- incl. \$4,815 Endow. Int., \$2,500 grant	1,620
Deficit Reduction Response	300	-		110
<b>Total inflow</b>	<b>44,886</b>	<b>39,124</b>		<b>39,594</b>
<b>Cash Outflow</b>				
Disbursements - Staff & operating costs	46,662	48,708		40,944
<b>Total outflow</b>	<b>46,662</b>	<b>48,708</b>		<b>40,944</b>
<b>Net Cash (Outflow)/inflow</b>	<b>(1,776)</b>	<b>(9,584)</b>		<b>(1,350)</b>
Cash balance (overdraft)	14,591	7,325		29,467

### Benevolence Accounts - Cash Flow Basis

	Actual	Budget		Last Year
<b>Cash Inflow</b>				
Receipts from Members - General Benev.	4,274	4,900		4,645
Receipts for designated appeals	14,374	-	- Incl. SynodGrants \$9,500	7,560
<b>Total inflow</b>	<b>18,648</b>	<b>4,900</b>		<b>12,205</b>
<b>Cash Outflow</b>				
Payments to Synod	4,274	4,775		4,645
Payments to other designated appeals	14,374	125		7,560
<b>Total outflow</b>	<b>18,648</b>	<b>4,900</b>		<b>12,205</b>

### Capital Accounts - Cash Flow Basis

	Actual	Budget		Last Year
<b>Cash Inflow:</b>				
Receipts from Members	846	1,488		1,132
Transfers from Memorial Funds	-	-		-
<b>Total inflow</b>	<b>846</b>	<b>1,488</b>		<b>1,132</b>
<b>Cash Outflow</b>				
Capital Expenditures	-	(1,800)		-
Funds lent to other accounts	-	-		-
<b>Total outflow</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(1,800)</b>		<b>-</b>
<b>Net Cash (Outflow)/Inflow</b>	<b>846</b>	<b>3,288</b>		<b>1,132</b>
Cash Balances	34,953	37,395		50,007

### Rental Property Account - Cash Flow Basis

	Actual	Budget		Last Year
<b>Cash Inflow:</b>				
Rental Income from Tenants	6,740	3,200	Increase due to delinquent rent paid	1,916
Transfers from Capital Account	-	-		-
<b>Total inflow</b>	<b>6,740</b>	<b>3,200</b>		<b>1,916</b>
<b>Cash Outflow</b>				
Current Expenditures - Properties	2,158	4,645	upgrades deferred	3,242
Capital Improvements to Properties	-	-		224
<b>Total outflow</b>	<b>2,158</b>	<b>4,645</b>		<b>3,466</b>
<b>Net Cash (Outflow)/Inflow</b>	<b>4,582</b>	<b>(1,445)</b>		<b>(1,550)</b>
Cash Balances (overdraft)	(20,483)	(26,510)		(38,992)