



July 2021

St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church

65 Walnut Street

Winnipeg, Manitoba R3G 1N9

Tel: 204-775-6477

Email: stpetersoffice@mymts.net

Website: www.stpeterslutheran.ca.

Pastor: Rev. Bjoern Meinhardt ~ 204-792-3346

We Must Obey God Rather Than Men

For the Holden Evening prayer service in June, I based the meditation on this well-known verse from Acts 5. In this newsletter I provide you with an extended version, which addresses the current claims by various (local) religious communities that their religious freedoms are being violated. Below are my thoughts on the topic. They are also an invitation for discussion on my reflection.

In Acts 5:29, we hear that Peter and the other Apostles stood up and declared, "We must obey God rather than men." What a bold statement from Jesus' disciples in turbulent times. In order to understand this verse we need to take a look at the context, that is the opening chapters in the Evangelist Luke's second tome, the book of Acts.

As promised by Jesus, the gift of the Holy Spirit emboldened the disciples after their master's departure on Ascension Day. The once timid bunch of Jesus' followers, who had been hiding behind closed doors, now stepped into the open space to proclaim Jesus as the crucified and risen Lord. They spoke boldly of the things that they had "seen and heard" (Acts 4:20). They grew in numbers. Daily. Acts 4:32 states that they were "of one heart and soul."

Their public actions got them into hot water. When John and Peter healed a lame beggar, they told him, "Silver and gold, I do not have. But what I have, I give to you. In the name of Jesus, rise up and walk." This got them arrested. For invoking the name of Jesus they were put in prison. The Jewish authorities told them, explicitly, to not teach in Jesus' name. But they did anyway. And when they got in trouble again, they stood up and said, "We must obey God rather than men."

The disciples in the early church lived in turbulent times. So do we.

For more than a year now, a pandemic has caused a stand-still of life as we knew it. Repeatedly, there have been public lockdowns. There are still a lot of uncertainties so that our lives resemble a roller coaster ride: After a long and arduous ascent (as we made small improvements), we find ourselves plunging down (because of a worsening situation).

Restrictions have also been imposed on our religious gatherings. There are some who cry "foul play" and "injustice" because they feel that their religious freedoms have been taken from them. They feel stifled. Even persecuted. All of this seems like pure chicanery. They feel they have to disobey the authorities, and instead assume they must obey God and gather.

I think in their case they have no right to refer to this verse from Acts 5 for their defence.

The disciples back then were told that they could not preach in Jesus' name. Even though we haven't been able to gather for worship in months, there is nobody in the government who told us that we must not preach or hold worship in Jesus' name. To the contrary: We are allowed to offer religious services. In a new way. Not really ideal. But better than nothing.

If these ministers get punished – or even imprisoned – then it is not because they were preaching but because they were breaking health guidelines. Instead of keeping the people of their flock out of harm's way, they exposed them knowingly, unnecessarily, and willingly to the threats of a deadly virus.

They are certainly not suffering persecution for their faith. Common sense tells us that in these dire times we need to restrict ourselves from doing what we would like to do. (If, however, the government seeks to keep us from preaching after the pandemic, then it becomes a totally different matter, which we must not leave uncontested ...)

We must obey God more than men. This assumes that God has on his mind what is good, best for us.

At times, there are humans who claim that they have a word from God for us. How can we know that it is really from God ... or that it breathes the Spirit of God? I think we can measure their words by asking: Who is the beneficiary of their words?

Will they benefit the person who said them, allegedly claiming they were from God ... or are they meant for the well-being of God's children? Are these words spoken by a wolf in sheep's clothing or are they meant to keep the sheep of the flock in the presence of the Good Shepherd? Are they restrictive words, or are they life-sustaining, so that one is free to live and not hindered to live.

We can measure the value of these words against what the Prophet Micah (6:8) once said, The Lord “has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” ... Very true.

After the Apostles had spoken, Gamaliel, a wise Jewish leader in Jerusalem, gave the following advice, If the Apostles' “undertaking is of man, it will fail; if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them. You might even be found opposing God” (Acts 5:38-39). ... Very true as well.

Yes, this Jesus' movement prevailed for it is “of God.”

We must preach what we know about God's love. We must talk about the things that pertain to Jesus' death and resurrection. When pressed hard to give witness of our faith, Jesus promised us that the Holy Spirit would give us what we should say (Luke 12:12).

We must obey God rather than men. It is an invitation to us to talk about the things that God has done for us. It is a commissioning to follow Jesus and his example. It serves as an encouragement to speak up in times of adversity. It means trust in a God who stands with us and who walks with us. For unlike us created human beings, he is the God of salvation.

Yours in Christ,
Bjoern E. Meinhardt, Pastor

Man muss Gott mehr gehorchen als den Menschen

Für die Holden Abendandacht im Juni, habe ich meine Gedanken nach diesem bekannten Vers aus der Apostelgeschichte (Apg.) ausgerichtet. In diesem Gemeindebriefe biete ich euch eine längere Fassung an und gehe auf die Behauptung einiger Religionsgemeinschaften ein, dass zur Zeit die Ausübung unserer Religionsfreiheit verletzt werde. Hier sind meine Ausführungen zum Thema, die gleichzeitig eine Einladung zur Diskussion darüber sind.

In Apg. 5, 29 hören wir, wie Petrus und die Apostel aufstanden und verkündeten: „Man muss Gott mehr gehorchen als den Menschen.“ Was für eine mutige Aussage von Jesu Jüngern in turbulenten Zeiten. Um diesen Vers besser zu verstehen, müssen wir den Kontext betrachten und auf die Eingangskapitel vom zweiten Werk des Evangelisten Lukas – der Apostelgeschichte – schauen.

Wie von Jesus versprochen, wurden die Jünger nach der Himmelfahrt ihres Meisters durch die Gabe des Heiligen Geistes ermutigt. Der einst zaghafte Haufen von Jesu Jüngern, der sich hinter verschlossenen Türen versammelt hatte, trat nun in die Öffentlichkeit, um Jesus als den gekreuzigten und auferstandenen Herrn zu verkünden. Mutig sprachen sie von den Dingen, die sie „gesehen und gehört“ hatten (Apg. 4,20). Sie wuchsen zahlenmäßig; täglich. Apg. 4,32 stellt fest, dass „die Menge der Gläubigen ... ein Herz und eine Seele“ war.

Ihr öffentliches Auftreten brachte sie in Schwierigkeiten. Als Johannes und Petrus einen gelähmten Bettler heilten, sagten sie ihm: „Silber und Gold habe ich nicht; was ich aber habe, das gebe ich dir: Im Namen Jesu Christi ... steh auf und geh umher!“ Daraufhin wurden sie verhaftet. Weil sie den Namen Jesu angerufen hatten, wurden sie ins Gefängnis geworfen. Die jüdischen Bevollmächtigten sagten ihnen ausdrücklich, dass sie nicht in Jesu Namen lehren durften. Sie taten es trotzdem. Und als ihnen das erneuten Ärger einbrachte, standen sie auf und sagten: „Man muss Gott mehr gehorchen als den Menschen.“

Die Jünger in der frühen Kirche lebten in turbulenten Zeiten. Wir auch.

Seit mehr als einem Jahr kämpfen wir mit einer Pandemie, die unser Leben, wie wir es kannten zum Stillstand brachte. Wiederholt kam es zu öffentlichen Schließungen. Und es gibt immer noch so viele Ungewissheiten, sodass unser Leben einer Achterbahnfahrt gleicht: Nach einem langen, anstrengenden Anstieg (wir haben langsam Fortschritte gemacht), fallen wir in rasender Fahrt wieder in eine Schlucht (weil sich die Situation verschlechtert hat).

Auch unsere gottesdienstlichen und religiösen Versammlungen werden in Mitleidenschaft gezogen. Da sind einige, die rufen: „Foulspiel“ und „Das ist ungerecht“, weil sie der Ansicht sind, dass ihr Recht auf freie Religionsausübung von ihnen genommen wurde. Sie fühlen sich unterdrückt, sogar verfolgt. Sie denken, das sei eine heimtückische Schikane. Sie denken, dass sie die Vorgaben der behördlichen Stellen nicht befolgen müssen und geben an, dass sie stattdessen Gott Gehorsam schulden und sich zum Gottesdienst versammeln müssen.

Ich denke, in diesem Fall steht es ihnen nicht zu, sich auf die Verse aus Apg. 5 zu berufen, um damit ihr Vorgehen zu begründen und zu verteidigen.

Den Jüngern damals wurde ausdrücklich gesagt, dass sie nicht in Jesu Namen predigen durften. Obwohl wir nun auch schon seit Monaten nicht mehr zum Gottesdienst zusammen kommen konnten, gab es aber niemanden in der Regierung, der uns gesagt hätte, dass wir nicht predigen oder uns in Jesu Namen zum Gottesdienst versammeln dürfen. Im Gegenteil: Wir dürfen religiöse Handlungen abhalten. In einer anderen, neuen Weise zwar, die nicht ideal ist, aber immer noch besser als gar nichts.

Wenn nun andererseits Prediger (und „Gottesdiener“) bestraft – und vielleicht sogar verhaftet – werden, dann nicht deshalb, weil sie gepredigt hätten, sondern weil sie meinten, dass sie sich nicht an geltende Gesundheitsvorschriften halten müssten, womit sie den Leuten ihrer Herde möglicherweise schaden, indem sie diese wissentlich, unnötigerweise und bewusst einem tödlichen Virus aussetzen.

Das ist keine Verfolgung wegen ihres Glaubens. Gesunder Menschenverstand teilt uns mit, dass wir alle in diesen schweren Zeiten Abstriche machen müssen von dem, was wir gerne tun würden. (Sollte aber die Regierung nach der Pandemie unsere Verkündigung aushebeln wollen, dann ist das wiederum eine ganz andere Angelegenheit, die nicht unbeanstandet bleiben darf ...)

Wir müssen Gott mehr gehorchen als Menschen. Das setzt voraus, dass Gott weiß, was für uns gut bzw. am besten ist.

Manchmal geben Menschen vor, dass sie ein Wort von Gott erhalten hätten. Wie können wir wissen, dass es wirklich von Gott ist bzw. den Geist Gottes atmet? Ich denke, wir können ihre Aussage daran messen, indem wir fragen: Wer ist der Nutznießer ihrer Worte?

Kommen sie der Person zugut, die sie gesagt hat, und nur vorgegeben hat, sie wären von Gott, oder sind sie gedacht zum Wohlwollen von *allen* Gotteskindern?

Sind die Worte von einem Wolf im Schafspelz gesprochen oder sind sie darauf aus, die Schafe der Herde bei ihrem guten Hirten zu lassen? Sind es beschränkende Worte oder sind sie lebensfördernd, sodass man frei leben kann ohne von anderen daran gehindert zu werden?

Als Maßstab können wir darauf schauen, was der Prophet Micha (6,8) einmal sagte: „Es ist dir gesagt, Mensch, was gut ist und was der Herr von dir fordert, nämlich Gottes Wort halten und Liebe üben und demütig sein vor deinem Gott.“ ... Sehr wahr.

Nachdem die Apostel gesprochen hatten, gab der weise jüdische Gelehrte Gamaliel den folgenden Rat: Sollte das Unterfangen der Apostel das Werk von Menschen sein, „so wird's untergehen; ist es aber von Gott, so könnt ihr sie nicht vernichten – damit ihr nicht dasteht als solche, die gegen Gott streiten wollen“ (Apg. 5,38-38). ... Auch das ist sehr wahr.

Ja, die Jesus-Bewegung hat sich in der Tat gehalten, weil sie „von Gott“ ist.

Wir müssen predigen, was wir von Gottes Liebe wissen. Wir müssen über die Dinge reden, die mit Jesu Tod und Auferstehung zu tun haben. Für den Fall, dass wir genötigt werden, Zeugnis über unseren Glauben abzulegen, hat uns Jesus versprochen, dass es uns der Heilige Geist eingeben wird, was wir dann reden sollen (s. Lukas 12,12).

Wir müssen Gott mehr gehorchen als den Menschen ist eine Einladung an uns, über die Dinge zu sprechen, die Gott an uns und für uns getan hat. Es ist ein Auftrag für uns, Jesus und seinem Beispiel zu folgen. Es ist eine Ermutigung an uns, den Mund in Zeiten der Anfeindung aufzutun. Es bedeutet, dass wir dem Gott vertrauen, der an unserer Seite steht und mit uns geht. Als Menschen sind wir (bloß) Gottes geschaffene Kreatur. Er dagegen ist der Gott des Heils.

In Christo, euer
Björn E. Meinhardt, Pfarrer

Council Update

Submitted by Barb Schott

AGM results:

The congregational response to the voting by ballot was outstanding and we thank everyone who participated. Gudrun compiled the ballots as they came in and they were reviewed by council on June 10th. The results are as follows:

- 98 ballots were returned
- every category on the ballot was confirmed by a unanimous majority
- there were no additional comments made or concerns raised that needed to be addressed
- Of interest: 33 ballots arrived by mail, 44 by e-mail, 21 were dropped off at church

Message from outgoing president, Barbara Schott:

Congratulations and thank you to Michael Zacharias, our new council president! Michael is hardly “new” and well known to all of us having served the church and on council for many years, most recently as council president from 2015-2018.

It was a challenging year and I wish I could say that this past term had not been so circumscribed by Covid. I'll never forget having to make tough decisions in March when our world changed, just as the new term started. With God's help and an incredible team of people, it did not stop or define us and we were able to carry on with the ministry of our congregation. Though many of our church activities were suspended, council and staff were busier than ever, working through what felt like a constantly shifting kaleidoscope of information, with safety concerns the main priority. We were grateful for every opportunity to be open for in-person services, especially those special services in fall, the 90th Anniversary and Thanksgiving, and the Easter season this past spring.

If there are lessons to be gained from this year, if there is a "take-away" from all of this, for me it was to accept that we are not always in control and to have Faith, to trust where God takes us, to be patient and resourceful within the smaller lives we were forced to lead. Most importantly to find blessings and gratitude, every day, for everything we do have. What gave me so much hope is how positive and understanding and encouraging our church community was with the new ways of presenting and receiving ministry. Here I want to thank you, the Congregation, for your unwavering support of the church and one another. Many of you made the effort to reach out to one another to stay connected. Several individuals shared with me their delight that "so-and-so called on my birthday and I had such a lovely conversation - in all the decades I've been attending St. Peter's, I've never had a conversation with this person before." When we do come back together as a community, I am certain that we will be stronger and more connected than ever.

There are so many I need to thank: my fellow council members, for your contributions and insights and for agreeing to stay on well past your terms during this unusual year. To the executive - Klaus, Ralf & Martin, as well as Michael - who were there tirelessly to consult with about logistics. It was you who gave me courage and confidence when I often felt overwhelmed or uncertain! We were blessed to have a medical doctor, Dr. Martin Bunge, on council whose medical knowledge and experience kept us updated and guided our processes and helped implement the protocols that kept us safe. Pastor and Gudrun: it was your strength, resilience and constancy that kept things going; working together as closely as we did this year not only made things bearable, but a pleasure. To the new council members who agreed to come on board. I also want to thank everyone who works on the virtual services to provide content and creativity: Michael for the polished video productions, Lurveys and all the musicians, the readers and our youth, Jordan for being so flexible and accommodating.

It was an honour and a privilege to serve the congregation. Thank you for the opportunity and the support I received. It goes without saying that I won't be far away to continue to help where I can. I wish everyone a safe and enjoyable summer.

NALC Conference and Convocation: August 4 - 6th, 2021 in Corpus Christi, Texas:

We were advised by the NALC conference organizers, that in addition to our clergy, St. Peter's is entitled to send 2 lay delegates to the live conference in Texas. Normally we nominate delegates/representatives at our February AGM, but we didn't have information until recently and therefore we are making the announcement in the newsletter. We have funds in our budget and if anyone is interested in attending, please contact the church office.

Holiday Schedule:

*Council will not meet in July and meetings resume Monday, August 16th

*There will be no newsletter in the month of August and we wish Ortrud Oellermann, our editor, a well-deserved break

Message from the Incoming Council President

Now that our AGM has come and gone, we also have a new church council. I would like to extend my warmest welcome to our newest council members. All three have never before served on council at St. Peter's. They are Paul Bergsagel, Anneliese Hartfiel, and Andreas Steineker. With your various backgrounds and life experiences, you will help make decisions that will impact our church over the next few years. You will also learn some of the operations and inner workings of St. Peter's and I hope you'll enjoy your experience. Thank you for your willingness to serve on Council.

Remaining on council or extending into another term are Dr. Martin Bunge - thank you for returning as our recording secretary, Dylan Grymonpre, Edith Herbst, Erin Horton, Ralf Oppitz - who will continue as Treasurer, Gerhard Roehr who has been elected council Vice-President, and Georg Schreckenbach. We also have Steve Herbst remaining as our Membership Secretary and Klaus Albrecht will continue as Assistant Treasurer. Thank you all for your continued work on (and off) church Council.

Leaving Church Council are Brigitte Albrecht, Klaus Albrecht (Vice President), Barbara Schott (President), Kathleen Thorsteinson (posthumously), and Jake Wiens. Thank you for your service to St. Peter's and to church council. A special thank you goes to Dr. Bunge for his advice regarding Covid-19 and to our outgoing President, Barbara Schott. She joined council for the very first time 6 years ago and has been our president for nearly 2 ½ years. Barbara served that role with integrity and always has the best interests of the church in mind. She also does an enormous amount of work behind the scenes, and we thank you for that. I believe Barbara also made history here at St. Peter's by being our first female President.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who is involved in producing the online services. We have received so much great feedback. Here are some points of interest regarding the filming. (Maybe we can even share some bloopers or outtakes some day.) The services are being recorded on Thursday afternoons with a few people who play key roles every week during the filming process. Obviously, Pastor Meinhardt is there and has been doing an amazing job with this new form of worship service for us. Jordan O'Brien Moran continues to play our piano, Barbara takes care of the sound as well as the clicker for the screen. You may be surprised to know that even though we don't have congregation members present, we still use the large screen to keep us on track with the order of service. Pastor Tom Lurvey creates all the slides that you see each week and Linda Lurvey helps with preparing a lot of our special music. We also have our congregation members (too many to mention individually) that help with the readings and with special music. Most of the readings and special music are recorded at home and then the audio is emailed to us. Hopefully you wonder who will be doing the readings next week and when you hear their voices, you can recognize who they are and then visualize them reading at the lectern. A big thank you goes to all of you.

Our current plan is to resume in-person worship services on Sunday September 12, which is the week following the September long weekend. We want to be very cautious with re-opening, and since the summer is also the churches "slow" time, we feel that this will give more people time to get fully immunized. Opening of course all depends on any new health restrictions that may arise. We will have more information for you as we get closer to this date.

Pastor performed an installation ceremony at our June council meeting to welcome our new members, and this will be done again at some time in the near future with the congregation. It is with 11 members, that council will start the new term.

I look forward to serving as your Council President. I also hope and pray that we can safely see each other again soon and worship together as a church family.

God Bless,
Michael Zacharias
Council President

A big thank you also goes to Michael Zacharias who was not only present to do the filming at each recording session for the online services, but he also spent countless hours afterwards assembling the various parts into a coherent service.

| St. Peter's Ev. Lutheran Church WINNIPEG, MANITOBA | |
|---|---------|
| WEEKLY BUDGET | \$ |
| MISSIONS | \$ |
| DEVELOPMENT & BUILDING FUND | \$ |
| OTHER (please specify) | \$ |
| "All things come of Thee O Lord, and of Thine own have we given Thee" | |
| NAME | ADDRESS |
| PLEASE PRINT | |

Financial update: And now there is good budget news. Because of Covid 19, our church operating expenses are less compared to the “normal” years. Donations for the first five months in 2021 covered all our costs. This is the first time in many years that we do not have a substantial income deficit going into the summer months. As

always, please don't forget that our operating expenses do not take a summer holiday at the cottage. Your donation shows your ongoing commitment to your congregation. *Jerry Roehr*

John Longhurst: We received an e-mail which in part reads: *Recent events have caused us to feel disheartened, angry and sad--the discovery of the 215 unmarked graves at the former Kamloops residential school and the terrible murders of the Muslim family in London, Ont. And before that we had the tension over the fighting in the Middle East, along with concern about rising anti-Semitism and Islamophobia. There was much coverage in the media. But after the rest of the media moves on from these stories, we will still be following them and paying attention to the issues that concern all of the faith communities in the province.*

There is an update on the Crowdfunder to support religious content in the Free Press. *Lately, a total of \$8,114.99 has been donated. That's great news! The goal was \$10,000, so we are almost there. If you haven't already done so, I hope you will send out a note and link to your supporters, members or clergy inviting them to contribute and let others know about the opportunity to support religion reporting at the Free Press.*

Here's the link again: <https://fpnewsplatform.winnipegfreepress.com/pages/support-faith>

St. Peter's supports the Winnipeg Free Press Faith Page with an annual donation of \$ 500.00. *Jerry Roehr*



The Kesete family in front of their new townhouse unit in St. Vital.

From left to right: Furutuna, Shawit and Denait.



Submitted by Jerry Roehr

In June the final payment of \$ 24,00.00 for the St. Peter's Kitchen/Assembly Hall was sent to Kuwala. Payment for the second teacher's resident will be made at a later date.



Foundation work for the second teacher's residence is taking place. In the background is the first teacher's home. More resident people on the school grounds add to the "family" concept and provide more security. Henry Midzetseni supervises the grading.

Following the naming of the St. Peter's Assembly Hall and the second teacher's residence, Pastor Meinhardt was asked to write a statement or a comment of encouragement for the Kuwala 2020 annual report. The paragraph he submitted reads:

I think that the Kuwala school project is one of the greatest mission endeavours in which St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church has ever participated as a committed partner in ministry. It is exciting to see how a teaching environment was created - literally - out of nothing to offer the girls at Kuwala an opportunity to better their prospects for their future through a solid education that is grounded in Christian principles.

At the YouTube Sunday service on June 13, 2021, Kuwala, with pictures, was highlighted in the Stewardship Moment.

For those who have not done so, we need to remind our scholarship sponsors to submit \$1,200.00 for the 2021/2022 school year this month. We anticipate submitting all scholarship money in August for the 2021/2022 school year.

Congratulations

Andreas Detillieux and Kele Schreckenbach

On your grade Grade 12 graduation in June.
We wish you the Lord's abundant blessing for the next chapter in your life!

Special Birthday wishes go to

| | | | |
|--------------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|
| Siegi Kitzmann | July 2, 80 | Vivian Kleinholz | July 4, 80 |
| Eleanor Jaeger | July 4, 83 | Ursula Kiors | July 6, 95 |
| Guenther Knoblauch | July 6, 93 | Walter Kunkel | July 17, 89 |
| Melida Wuerfel | July 20, 87 | Egon Knudsen | July 22, 84 |
| Heinrich Schott | July 23, 93 | Alfred Kienetz | July 26, 86 |
| Olga Dobslaw | July 28, 86 | | |

May the Lord continue to bless you and keep you!

Wedding Anniversary

Congratulations Gerhard and Elfriede Hammerling on your 63rd wedding anniversary on July 26!
We wish you continued blessings. Thank you for being such a good example to all of us.

Elli Koelblin

Went to be with her heavenly home on June 4, 2021 at the age of 81.



Elli Koelblin with her daughter Monika

To view memorial service: Google Friends Funeral Service; scroll down to recent events; click on arrow-NEXT-lower right hand corner of photos to take you to the next page of photos; click on rose – Elli Koelblin; scroll down; click on “watch webcam”.

The Altar Triptych

A Reflection by Monika (Koelblin) Hochheim

With the recent death of my mother on June 4, 2021, it was suggested to me that in honour of her passing, and as a tribute to both of my parents, who encouraged me and sacrificed so much so I could pursue my passion for wood carving, that I write a retrospective on how I came to carve the triptych that frames the altar at St. Peter's more than 35 years ago.

As an only child, I was always encouraged to entertain myself in creative ways. Both my mother and father were hard workers, and creative and artistic in their own ways, taking pride in whatever they did with great attention to detail and beauty. Growing up, I enjoyed dabbling in different mediums of art. I never thought of myself as particularly talented, but I would often win awards and honours in my art classes. My folks nurtured and encouraged me in my efforts.

It was on a family trip to Germany, in the touristy town of Oberammergau - which was a wood-carving paradise - that I fell in love with the art of wood carving. I believe I was 13 at the time and I told my father that this was something I would one day do. Just prior to my graduation from River East Collegiate in 1978, I applied to three different wood sculpting schools, two in Germany and one in Switzerland. I was accepted by the one in Erbach/Michelstadt in Hessen, Germany and in August of 1978 I left for Germany. I found room and board in Michelstadt, close to the "Berufsschule fuer Holz und Elfenbein," and so my education and practise began.

I had just finished my first year exams when I received notification that my beloved father had suffered a massive heart attack. I immediately returned to Canada and was able to spend time with my father before he passed away a few weeks later, at the age of 45. Before he died, he made me promise to go back and finish what I had started. Though I could not see myself leaving my mother alone in her bereavement, she too insisted that I must fulfill my father's wishes and complete my education. Her love and sacrifice meant the world to me and I consider myself blessed to have been graced with such loving parents.

The altar carving at St. Peter's was made in memory of my earthly father, Reinhold Koelblin, and to thank and honour my Heavenly Father for giving me the gift of carving and employing that talent in His service. The wood I selected for the project is basswood, from the Linden tree, loved by Germans. It is a wood that is readily available and local to Manitoba, has a lovely grain, and a wood I already had familiarity working with from my classes in Germany. I chose the form of a triptych, which consists of three hinged panels, each one depicting an aspect of Jesus' last days on earth: the left panel depicts the washing of the feet, the centre panel the Lord's supper, and the panel to the right, the Ascension of Christ into Heaven. At the top of the center panel is the Luther Rose, framed with ears of wheat and grape vines which represent the bread and wine, the holy sacraments of Communion. The piece took approximately 500 hours to complete, every hour a labour of love, divinely inspired with God's hands guiding mine. 1985 it was installed at St. Peter's.

The message inscribed at the base of the centre panel are the words of our Lord Jesus: ***Follow me / Folge mir*** (Matthew 9:9). The Words are an invitation and a reminder; the visuals, symbols of hope and life everlasting. A friend of mine from my childhood remarked: "there isn't a time when I kneel for Communion and look up at Jesus' outstretched arms and read those words that I don't feel his immediate presence." I was deeply moved to hear that the carving speaks and touches those who see it.

Both of my parents were long-time members at St. Peter's Lutheran Church and I would like to thank the congregation for your love and support all these years, my gratitude for your messages of sympathy.



The Altar Triptych



A big thank you to Siegi Kitzmann, and Roland and Barb Schott for repairing the sprinkler system at St. Peters.



A reminder on options for making donations. (1) For those of you using the PAR system, we would request that you continue with it, as PAR provides excellent documentation for our office and records.

(2) For those of you wishing to use e-transfer for donations, please follow these instructions and let us know if you encounter any difficulties:

- e-transfers can be sent from your bank to giving@stpeterslutheran.ca . Your donation will be automatically deposited without a password being required.
- An e-mail notification is then sent to the church office, letting us know that your donation has been sent.
- Please note that your bank might charge you a fee to do this, but that fee would be equivalent/similar to cheque cashing charges and/or postage if you are mailing in your donation.
- the e-transfer option provides you with a “notes” or “message” section. We would ask that you use this to indicate:
 - a) where you would like your donation to go: weekly budget, mission, building, memorial, etc.
 - b) please indicate your envelope number, to make the work of our envelope secretary, Steve Herbst, so much easier.
 - c) With the help of David Budnick, who manages our church website, we will also add a link, on our website, to this donation option.
 - d) Here is a sample of a real-e-transfer donation. We have redacted or changed the names to ensure the anonymity of the donor, but everything else looks like what you would encounter.



Hi ST PETER'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH,

MR [Peter Walnut] has sent you \$100.00 (CAD) and the money has been automatically deposited into your bank account at RBC Royal Bank.

Message:

Hi Steve.

Please allocate \$50 to Weekly Budget and \$50 to Building Fund.
My envelope number is 104.

Thank you.
[Peter]

Reference Number: CA7u5y9S
Please do not reply to this email.

THIS IS A SECURE TRANSMISSION

There will be no August newsletter. Any submissions to the September 2021 edition of the St. Peter's Newsletter should be made 10 days prior to the first Sunday in September. So, submissions for the September Newsletter should be made by noon Thursday August 26, 2021. Submissions should be sent to Ortrud Oellermann at stpetersnews1@gmail.com