LIFE @ ST. PHILIP'S

St. Philip's Lutheran Church | Toronto, ON

February 2025

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DATES TO NOTE:

February 2 – Beginning of World Interfaith Harmony Week; Interfaith Service @ 10am with Cat Criger speaking

February 5 – Winter Market @ Willow Ridge begins for 6 weeks

February 12 – Book Club Winter Market

February 13 – 50+ Valentine's Luncheon

February 15 – Confirmation Class

February 19 – Winter Market

February 26 – Winter Market

February 27 – Council Meeting

February 28 – Youth Retreat begins

March 1 – Messy Church

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:
Monday - Friday: 9 - 12

Time to get starstruck?

How do you heal? Among many things, I find healing in the stars. They bring me perspective — a sense of belonging to something bigger than our stressful, angst-filled world.

The stars are our old ones, our wise ones, for we as human beings carry their genetic imprint. Joni Mitchell sang the famous lyrics "we are stardust," and as it turns out, she was right. Human bodies are made of remnants of stars. Carbon, nitrogen, oxygen, iron, and sulfur - most of the materials that we are made of - come out of star dust. As Astrophysicist Karel Schrijver explains: "We have stuff in us as old as the universe."

We have much to learn from the heavens. There are two stages to the life of a star. The first stage is when a star is born. Gravity pulls gases towards a center core and the temperature rises. It is then that the star begins to shine, drawing energy toward the light, to its core, then radiating that light back out into the galaxy. This can go on for billions of years until the star's center can no longer hold. Its light goes out and it collapses under its own weight, drawing everything around it into a dark abyss.

Sometimes we draw our energy toward the light and reflect its warmth to all around us. Other times, we have lost all fuel; our light goes out and we collapse, emotionally or otherwise, into a dark abyss.

These days, it's easy to find ourselves in that abyss. And like the stars, the only thing between a heart that draws in the light and a heart that collapses into a black hole is a strong centre that can hold.

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We tend to put all kinds of things at our centre, such as ego, anger, status, and other people. Inevitably, there comes a time when these things can't hold anymore. The latch on your designer purse will eventually break. Human beings let you down. Like a dying star, we begin to collapse into the darkness, and our light goes out. We need to locate that strong centre.

What do you have at the centre of your life?
Is it strong enough to hold you through the good times and the bad?

If your light is starting to go out, get a little starstruck. Find a place where you can look up into the heavens. Then, remember the Creator of those stars is the ultimate centre that can hold. It is through that true centre that you, too, can hold strong in the hardest times, radiating light and warmth to all creation.

See you in church,
Pastor Tuula

50+

January Luncheon and Gentle Exercise

Sign up by February 11 for the 50+ Valentine's Luncheon:

- ✓ add your name to the sheet on the bulletin board
- ✓ or contact the office by phoning 416-622-5577
- ✓ or email stphilip@bellnet.ca

News From Council

January has been a very busy month for the Council. Two meetings were held to complete all the items on our agenda. As it was the last meeting before the AGM to be held on Feb. 23, time was spent on finalizing the budget that will be presented at that time. Our Treasurer and Financial Secretary, Gary Wuschnakowski, has done a tremendous job pulling it all together in a format that is easily understood. The agenda and nomination slate for the AGM was also discussed.

Gary presented a preliminary draft of an agreement between St Philip's and the Spanish congregation that will be housed at St Philip's. *Comunidad Luterana Fuente De Amor* is an entity of its own and the agreement is in essence a rental agreement.

The Council received a proposal from Madbakh to use the community kitchen at St Philip's as a small-scale community-based enterprise to produce sambosas and samosas for sale. Halima Saad, founder and Executive Director of Madbakh who has partnered with our church in a variety of endeavors for 10 years, Eunice Hogeveen and Raija Koski-Bruce attended our meeting and answered questions that Council had. Approval has been given to move forward with finalizing this initiative.

We are excited to host both these initiatives. The church will be bustling with activity, and it is felt that we are up to the challenge. Change can be difficult and sharing space will be challenging but with good communication and a desire to work together we know that we can accomplish great things.

The Office Administrator position has been posted, and we have received a huge number of applications. The team is arranging interviews, and we hope to have someone in place very soon.

We have been blessed with the number of members who have provided administrative services on an interim basis. Pastor Tuula, Sarah Pascoe, Perry Taylor, Karen Adolph, Raija Koski-Bruce, and Gary Wuschnakowski take turns in the office ensuring all is ready for worship, emails and phone calls are answered and financial matters taken care of. I too, have worked in the office each week and certainly have become aware of how many of you do so much to help Pastor Tuula, run our many programs, ensure the building is taken care of and people are looked after. A huge vote of thanks to all who have helped to fill this vacancy at the busiest time of year!

Mark your calendars now and attend the Annual General Meeting on Sunday Feb. 23 after church. Hear what we have accomplished and the plans for the coming year. Marcia P-D

Messy Church

The first Messy Church event of 2025 centred around the theme of "Salt and Light". Through the story and activities, we talked about being the "salt" and reflecting the light of God in the world. In keeping with the theme of "light", we ended the event with an outdoor celebration time including candles, a campfire, hot chocolate, and s'mores.

We're looking forward to our next Messy Church event on Saturday, March 1st from 4:00 - 6:00 pm. Everyone is welcome!

Messy Church 2025 Dates:

Saturday, March 1, 4-6pm
Good Friday, April 18, 11am-1pm
Saturday, May 24, 4-6pm

Messy Church...where faith, fun and food meet up.
Child friendly and adult approved.

Winter Market

We all know about the sharp rise in food insecurity in Toronto. With your help, we plan to run a 6-week winter market from Wednesday, February 5th to Wednesday, March 12th.

The market hours will be 4:00 - 5:30. The location will be the community room on the ground floor at 44 Willow Ridge. Volunteer commitments are for one of two shifts: 2:30 - 4:30 or 4:30 - 6:00.

Volunteer responsibilities may include setup and takedown of the market tables and display boxes, assistance with customer shopping, restocking produce, putting together recipe loot bags, weighing produce, checking out and managing the gift card draw. No special skills or experience required.

The residents at Willow Ridge are excited about a winter market. They say, 'it's great for our community with the crazy cost of food these days'. Volunteers value the opportunity to be part of this community.

If you are interested and able to volunteer on any of these dates, please send an email to eunice@innerviews.ca with the specific dates you can do and the shift you prefer.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

FEBRUARY 5 – MARCH 12

2:30 – 4:30 or
4:30 – 6:00

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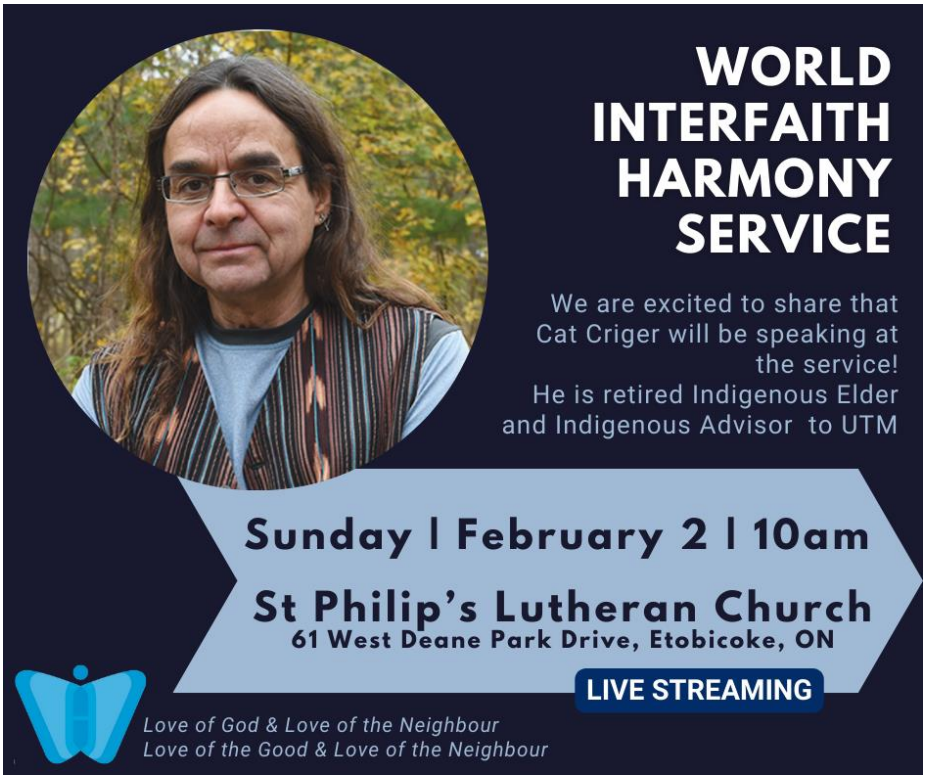
Mark Kieswetter,
Music Director Emeritus

Use your phone to scan this QR code and go directly to CanadaHelps to make a donation to St Philip's

Our Vision:

Freed by the grace of Christ, we seek to connect with God, neighbour, and self.

"February is a reminder that love, like winter, transforms everything it touches."