



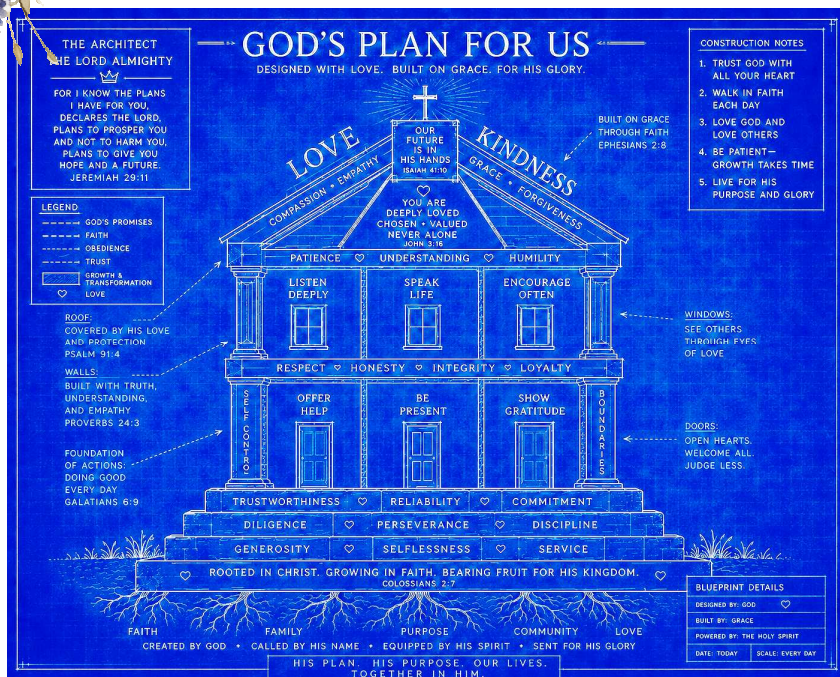
TÕE TERA / THE SOWER - AUG/SEPT 2026

ST. PETER'S ESTONIAN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF TORONTO

EELK Toronto Peetri Kogudus



God's Blueprint for Life



817 Mount Pleasant Road
Toronto, Ontario M4P 2L1



416-483-5847



stpeterstoronto@rogers.com



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Kantselei Tunnid/Office Hours

Teisipäeval/Tues. 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Kolmapäeval/Wed. 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Neljapäeval/Thurs. 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Deacon Karl Paju

karl.paju@utoronto.ca
Neljapäeval/Thurs. 12:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Music Director & Organist

Erik Kreem erikkreem@hotmail.com

Church Administrator

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Juhatus Liikmed / Executive

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Mary Donaldson, Secretary
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Anne Liis Keelmann, Program Director
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Ilo Maimets, Archive Director
ilo@yorku.ca

Linda Laikve, Columbarium Director

Yesterday, while waiting in line at the grocery store, I met a kind woman. Although she looked exhausted after what seemed like a long day at work, her bright eyes and cheerful smile reflected a joyful spirit. Instead of complaining about the long lineup, she commented that everyone had probably had a busy day and that soon we'd all be home with the people we love.

In the checkout lane beside us stood a man with a very different attitude. He muttered under his breath about why the store was so crowded, criticized the cashier for being slow, complained about the rising cost of groceries, and grumbled that he couldn't stand being surrounded by so many people.

Life brings us into contact with all kinds of individuals. Some are encouraging, optimistic, kindhearted, generous, and eager to help others. Others are weighed down by negativity, bitterness, resentment, and constant dissatisfaction.

When people meet us, what kind of person do they encounter? Are we someone they hope to see again, or someone they would rather avoid?

As Pastor Puusaag often reminds us, the word **BIBLE** can be remembered as **Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth**. God's Word gives us clear guidance for living in a way that blesses those around us. Galatians 6:10 (NIV) encourages us, "Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people."

Please donate to secure the future of St. Peter's with cash or cheques. E-mail transfers accepted at stpeterstoronto@rogers.com

Romans chapter 12 expands on this calling by showing us what a Christ-centered life looks like and how we are to treat one another:

A Living Sacrifice

12 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. **2** Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will.

Humble Service in the Body of Christ

3 For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. **4** For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, **5** so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. **6** We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; **7** if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; **8** if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

Love in Action

9 Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. **10** Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. **11** Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. **12** Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. **13** Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. **15** Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. **16** Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

17 Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. **18** If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. **19** Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. **20** On the contrary:

"If your enemy is hungry, feed him;
if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.
In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head."
21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

As you start each day, ask yourself, in the eyes of God, will I be a blessing to others this day?

Inspired by a story by Jay at maudchurch.org



Armas Taevane Isa,

Tānan Sind selle rõõmu eest, mida Sa annad, kui võin teenida Sind ja teha Sinu tahet. Tānan, et Sa kutsud mind olema Sinu kätteks ja jalgadeks selles maailmas, jagades armastust, lootust ja halastust neile, kes seda kõige enam vajavad.

Issand, täida mu süda rõõmuga, mis ei sõltu olukorradest, vaid sünnib teadmisest, et teenin Sind. Anna mulle alandlik meel, ustavad käed ja armastav süda, et iga sõna ja tegu tooks au Sinu nimele.

Kui töö muutub raskeks või tee tundub pikk, tuleta mulle meelde, et ükski armastusega tehtud tegu ei ole asjatu. Uuenda mu jõudu oma Püha Vaimu läbi ning lase mul kogeda rahu ja rõõmu, mis tulevad Sinuga koos käimisest.

Kasuta mind oma riigi ehitamiseks. Lase mul olla valguseks pimeduses, lootuseks meeleheitel olivatele ja julgustuseks neile, kes on väsinud. Õpeta mind teenima rõõmsa südamega, sest suurim privileeg on olla Sinu kaastööline.

Olgu kogu mu elu tunnistuseks Sinu headusest, armust ja ustavusest. Jeesuse Kristuse nimel, amen.

NEWS / UUDISED

June 6 - AGM

On Saturday, June 6, the annual meeting of the Toronto St. Peter's Congregation was held. Interest in the life of the congregation was evident from the strong attendance, both from those present in person and from proxy representation.

Following the opening prayer by Deacon Karl Paju, the Chair of the Congregation Council, Thomas Arget, addressed the meeting and provided a comprehensive overview of congregational life and upcoming building upgrades.

Reports on their respective areas were presented by Treasurer Toomas Trei and an auditor representing Pahapill Associates; Program Director Anne Liis Keelmann; Guild President Aida Shelton; Archive Director Ilo-Katryn Maimets; and Columbarium Director Linda Laikve.



Back row from left: Toomas Trei, Thomas Arget, Linda Laikve; front: Anne Liis Keelmann, Mary Donaldson, Deacon Karl Paju, Ilo Maimets. (Missing Tiitu Roiser)

A new Congregational Council was also elected. At the subsequent council meeting, the members divided responsibilities as follows:

- Chair: Thomas Arget
- Vice-Chair and Treasurer: Tiitu Roiser
- Secretary: Mary Ots Donaldson
- Program Director: Anne Liis Keelmann
- Archives and Heritage Director: Ilo-Katryn Maimets
- Columbarium Director: Linda Laikve
- Building Maintenance Director: Toomas Trei

The meeting concluded with a prayer by Deacon Karl Paju followed by refreshments and coffee in the guild room. We thank all the volunteers who helped ensure the meeting ran smoothly.

June 11th - Lõbus Pärastlõna

The final **Fun Afternoon** before the summer season took place on June 11. It was a pleasure to see not only our regular guests but also new participants. The joy of reconnecting and spending time together created a warm and heartfelt atmosphere for everyone.



Ilo Maimets prepared the program in which poetry and song were intertwined. Shared songs touched the hearts of those present and reminded them of their childhood.

Poetry was presented by Ilo Maimets, Anne Liis Keelmann, and Maimu Mölder including Paul-Erik Rummo's poems. Following the cultural program, Maimu Mölder led a quiz prepared by Erika Jõgi and Aime Nurmse. The questions covered both general knowledge and topics related to St. Peter's Church and its history.

We look forward to more such events after our summer break.



June 13th - Toronto Estonian Men's Choir 75th Anniversary Concert

The Toronto Estonian Male Choir celebrated their 75th anniversary with a concert at St. Peter's.



The choir was established in 1950 with 17 singers at the initiative of August Kiilaspea. Its motto was composed by Roman Toi. Under the former leadership of Avo Kittask, it is currently being conducted by Erik Kreem starting last fall.

The diverse program featured works that are staples of the male choir repertoire as well as pieces performed less frequently. The second half of the concert was a tribute to Arvo Pärt, who celebrated his 90th birthday last year.



June 14th - Joint Cemetery Services

On a rainy Sunday, June 14, we gathered in the Columbarium of St. Peter's Church to commemorate the victims of the June deportations. This was followed by cemetery memorial services held jointly with the St. Andrew's Congregation at Mount Pleasant Cemetery and York Cemetery.



St. Peter's Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church of Toronto
EELK Toronto Peetri Kogudus
817 Mount Pleasant Road, Toronto

EESTI TAASISEISEVUUSE AASTAPÄEVA
JA MUSTA LINDI PÄEVA TÄHISTAMINE
KOOS VANA-ANDRESE KOGUDUSEGA
JA KÜLALISTEGA

23. augustil, 2026.a.

11:30 e.l.



Esinevad

Baltimore-Washingtoni

Eesti Segakoori lauljad



Järgneb kohv ja suupisted alumises saalis.

Vabatahtlik annetus.

Palume registreerida einele 13. augustiks

416-483-5847 või stpeterstoronto@rogers.com

Kõik teretunud!

Global Recognition: Established by Eastern European refugees in the West during the 1980s, the day is formally recognized by the European Union (known as the European Day of Remembrance for Victims of Stalinism and Nazism) and Canada (established as a National Day of Remembrance).

New Faces at the Archives

You may notice increased activity in our church archives this August as we welcome a visiting archivist from Estonia. Kaia Ivask, Deputy Head of the Tartu User Services Department at the National Archives of Estonia (Tartu), is visiting our church through the sponsorship of the Estonian National Archives.

Kaia will be providing guidance and advice on the care and organization of our church's archival materials. Leading this project will be Ilo Maimets and Mary Donaldson, working alongside Kaia with the support of other volunteers.

As a reminder, if you have photographs, documents, or other historical materials at home that you believe would be appropriate for our church archives, we encourage you to donate them to the church. Your contributions will help preserve our congregation's history for future generations.

What is Black Ribbon Day - August 23rd ?



Black Ribbon Day is an international day of remembrance observed on August 23rd for the victims of totalitarian and authoritarian regimes, specifically those of Stalinist, Communist, Nazi, and Fascist ideologies. It serves as a solemn reminder of mass deportations, exterminations, and the ongoing need to defend human rights and democracy.

The date was chosen to commemorate the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact on August 23, 1939. This infamous non-aggression treaty between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union secretly divided Central and Eastern Europe, paving the way for the outbreak of World War II.

Significance and Observance

The Baltic Way: On August 23, 1989, an estimated two million people in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania joined hands in a massive, peaceful human chain across the three countries. This historic protest demanded the restoration of freedom and was a defining moment in the collapse of the Soviet Union.



Church archives workers in 2001

There was a new family that had just moved into town. Their son came to Sunday School but seemed upset. His teacher asked him if anything was wrong.

The boy replied no, that he was going to go fishing but his dad told him that he needed to go to church instead. The teacher was very impressed with the boy's parents and asked the boy if his father had explained to him why it was more important to go to church than to go fishing.

The boy replied, "Yes he did. My dad said that he didn't have enough bait for both of us."

Invitation - Heritage Designation Celebration – September 20th, 2026

Please join us on **Sunday, September 20**, at 11:30 a.m. as we celebrate the official **Heritage Designation** of our church.

This significant milestone recognizes the historical and associative, design, and contextual value of our church. We celebrate our rich history and enduring contribution to the life and history of our community. Together, we will give thanks for those who have come before us, celebrate this milestone, and look forward with hope to the lasting legacy of our church within our community.

This special occasion will also include a **Commemoration of the Great Escape**, honouring the courage, faith, and resilience of those whose stories continue to inspire us today.

The service will be led by **Deacon Karl Paju** and **Pastor Ando Kass**. We are also honoured to welcome several distinguished guests and community dignitaries, who will bring greetings and congratulations in recognition of this important milestone. The celebration will also feature inspiring performances by guest choirs, adding to the joy and significance of the day.



We warmly invite everyone to join us for this memorable celebration as we give thanks for our rich heritage, remember the past, and look forward with hope to the future. Fellowship and light refreshments will be served in the large hall following the service. We ask that you please register your intent to attend the fellowship gathering **by September 10th** so that we may adequately prepare for the number of guests attending. Luncheon entry: Voluntary donation.

Kutse kultuuripärandi staatuse omandamise pidulikule Jumalateenistusele - Toronto Peetri Eesti Evangeelse Luterliku Koguduse nimel on meil suur au kutsuda kõiki osalema pidulikul jumalateenistusel, millega tähistame meie ajaloolise kiriku ametlikku pärandkaitse alla võtmist.

See oluline tunnustus kinnitab meie kiriku ajaloolist, kultuurilist, arhitektuurilist ja kogukondlikku väärtust. Tähistame meie koguduse rikkalikku ajalugu ning selle püsivat panust kogukonna ellu ja ajalukku. Üheskoos täname neid, kes on meie ees käinud, tähistame seda tähtpäeva ja vaatame lootusrikkalt tulevikku, mõeldes kiriku kestvale pärandile meie kogukonnas.

Tähistamine hõlmab kultuuripärandi nimetamise pidulikku jumalateenistust, sõnavõtte auväärsete külaliste ja kogukonna juhtide, kirikujuhtide ning meie kogukonna esindajate poolt. Üritusele järgneb kerge lõunasöök ja suupisted. Palume registreerida 10. septembriks.

"Go up to the hills and bring wood and build the house, that I may take pleasure in it and that I may be glorified, says the LORD." "Minge mägedele, tooge puid ja ehitage koda üles, siis on mul sellest hea meel ja ma ilmutan oma auhiilgust, ütleb Issand." Haggai 1-8.

"The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, says the LORD of hosts. And in this place I will give peace, declares the LORD of hosts." "Selle koja tulevane hiilgus saab suuremaks, kui oli esimesel, ütleb vägede Issand, ja selles paigas ma annan rahu, ütleb vägede Issand." Haggai 2-9

Heritage Designation Background Information

Heritage Designation of a property is a decision made entirely by the City of Toronto. The background to this process goes back several years. In 2018, Toronto City Planning adopted the *Midtown in Focus: Final Report*, which included the Yonge-Eglinton Secondary Plan. As part of that study, a Cultural Heritage Resource Assessment identified 817 Mount Pleasant Road as a property with potential cultural heritage value.

In St. Peter's case, on September 28, 2020, after learning of the intended sale of the church property, a concerned congregation member, together with 58 supporters, submitted a Heritage Property Nomination Form to the City. The Congregational Council (juhatus) at that time was not aware of this submission until later. The individual who submitted the nomination is a dedicated life-long member of the church and currently serves on its Board. In addition, online petitions calling for the preservation of the church attracted more than 1,300 supporters. Many individuals, including other members of our congregation, also wrote to the City encouraging officials to protect the building.

The nomination then proceeded through the City's heritage process, which included several public meetings and opportunities for community input. During this process, the building was added to the City's Heritage Register as a "listed" property. Because more than two years passed without designation, the property was removed from the Register in June 2025. Despite that, the City continued to believe the building warranted formal designation.

Heritage Preservation Services, a City of Toronto department staffed with highly qualified specialists in evaluating buildings for their historical, cultural, and architectural significance, prepared recommendations for Toronto City Council. The Toronto Preservation Board, made up of citizens and heritage experts, reviewed the information and provided advice. Based on these recommendations, Toronto City Council passed a by-law on June 25, 2026, officially designating 817 Mount Pleasant Road as a heritage property.

The evaluation of St. Peter's was completed independently by Heritage Preservation Services with a strong focus on objectivity and using eight (8) standardized value measures. St. Peter's juhatus and staff were asked to verify relevant facts, confirm St. Peter's connection to Toronto's Estonian diaspora, and identify religious artifacts to be preserved to retain the church's historic authenticity.

The current juhatus, or those preceding it, had no influence on Heritage Preservation Services' evaluation, their recommendations to the City, or Toronto City Council's final decision to pass a bylaw on June 25, 2026 designating 817 Mount Pleasant Road a heritage site.

St. Peter's met or exceeded all of the City's criteria on its own. Its architectural majesty, the beauty of its unique yet elegantly simple sanctuary, its story, and its prominence as an enduring symbol of the Toronto Estonian community speak for themselves.

Heritage Designation for St. Peter's - Esteem, Recognition and Preservation

Heritage designation brings esteem and community recognition to St. Peter's while protecting the church's historical, cultural, and architectural significance. At the same time, it provides our congregation with a sense of security and permanence in knowing that St. Peter's will continue to be there for them as Pastor Oskar Puhm envisaged it, as a "house of the people" for worship, special religious occasions and family celebrations, and community activities.

At the same time, Heritage Designation makes several important benefits available to St. Peter's. These include the following:

- The City of Toronto Heritage Grant Program to help with conservation and maintenance costs.
- Grants for restoration can help us preserve the building while reducing the financial burden of major repairs.
- Flexibility in meeting some present-day Ontario Building Code regulations by recognizing the challenges of complying with some of these in a historic building.

Historic buildings serve as important community landmarks and enhance surrounding neighbourhoods. For St. Peter's, this community presence can support its rental marketing strategy by attracting attention, inviting inquiries about usage possibilities, and adding value to the church's appeal as a venue for other congregations seeking a home, for christenings, weddings, funerals and other celebrations, concerts, special events, and community activities.

Opinions on property value, based on recent legal consultations, are somewhat mixed. Heritage Designation could reduce a property's short-term purchase appeal; however, predicting future market value is speculative at best, especially in Toronto's real estate market. Against this, history suggests that we can remain confident that St. Peter's property will remain a valuable asset. Its prime main-street address, its lot size, its proximity to public transit, and its location in a fast-growing part of the city make it a high-demand property today, and this bodes well for the future.

Although none of us can predict what the future will bring, we remain committed to maintaining St. Peter's as an active and vibrant place of worship. We will continue seeking opportunities to increase rental income and explore other sources of revenue to support the ministry of our congregation.

We also recognize that the future of our church is a shared responsibility. We invite our congregation members to share their ideas or suggestions that could help strengthen our ministry, identify new opportunities, and support the long-term sustainability of our church. By all of us working together and drawing on the gifts and perspectives of our congregation, we believe we will be in the best position to build a vibrant and sustainable future for St. Peter's.

St. Peter's Congregational Council

Confirmation Classes Are Beginning

St. Peter's confirmation program is intended to help individuals be mindful of their relationship with God, to understand and strengthen it, and to embrace living a Christian life - it is a meaningful journey, a rite of passage, an accomplishment to the benefit of the student, the family, and the church. It represents a personal commitment to grow in the knowledge, love, and practice of our faith through learning about the Bible, Sacraments, Creed, Lord's Prayer, and 10 Commandments. When you are confirmed, you gain a new identity as a full member of the Church.

Calling everyone interested to register for Confirmation classes. The first class will be held in the fall. Please register by September 20th.



*St. Peter's Estonian
Evangelical Lutheran
Church of Toronto*

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Kogudus*

*Confirmation
Classes*

Confirmation classes to begin in the fall.
Registration on Sept. 20th or via
416-483-5847 at any time.

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If you are more fortunate than others, build a longer table not a taller fence.

St. Peter's Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church of Toronto

EELK Toronto Peetri Kogudus

Sunday School

**Registration September 20th.
1st class on October 18th.**



If you are interested in bringing your child to Sunday School, please register your interest with the church office at 416-483-5847 stpeterstoronto@rogers.com

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Sunday School & Moms, Pops & Tots

Registration for both groups begins September 20th and the first classes will be held on October 18th. Sunday School lessons with Leena Gates-Kass will be offered in English.

You may begin registering your child/children with Tiina at 416-483-5847 or stpeterstoronto@rogers.com.



Moms, Pops & Tots

This group meets in the downstairs hall of the church during church services. It is a drop-in play group so you can come and go as you please.

Registration Sept. 20th - First get-together Oct. 18th.

St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Toronto

CHURCH SERVICES & EVENTS / JUMALATEENISTUSED & ÜRITUSED*

*New events may be added to the calendar—please check our church website for any additions. www.stpeterstorontoestonianchurch.ca/event-calendar

- Aug. 5 12:00 noon Wednesday - Guild meeting. New members very welcome! Planning for upcoming events.
- Aug. 23 11:30 a.m. Estonian Service with Deacon Karl Paju celebrating the anniversary of Estonia's re-independence and Black Ribbon Day with the Vana-Andres congregation. Guest choir: Baltimore-Washington Estonian Mixed Choir. Please register by August 13th to attend the light luncheon following the service. Luncheon Admission: Voluntary donation.
- Eesti taasiseseisvuse aastapäeva ja musta lindi tähistamine koos Vana-Andrese kogudusega - Baltimore-Washingtoni Eesti Segakoor.*
- Sept. 2 12:00 noon Wednesday - Guild meeting. New members very welcome! Planning for upcoming events.
- Sept. 6 3:00 p.m. Sunday Estonian service with Karl Paju at Ehatare. Everyone welcome.
- Sept. 20 11:30 a.m. The Great Escape and Heritage Designation Celebration with Deacon Karl Paju and Pastor Ando Kass. Greetings and remarks from dignitaries. Featuring Estonia Choir and Toronto Men's Choir. A fellowship luncheon reception to follow. Please register by Sept. 10th to attend the luncheon at 416-483-5847 or stpeterstoronto@rogers.com. Luncheon entry: Voluntary donation.
- Sept. 20 Registration for Confirmation, Sunday School, and Moms, Pops, & Tots.

Church Office Hours:

Tues. 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Wed. 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Thurs. 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Deacon Karl Paju's Office Hours:

Thursdays from
12:00 noon to 3:00 p.m.

To request prayers, please contact St. Peter's office.

Eestpalved võib igal ajal kirjalikult esitada kiriku kontoris: stpeterstoronto@rogers.com

If you have not already done so, please ensure that the church has your up-to-date contact information.

*Kui teie ei ole juba teinud, palun saatke oma kehtivad andmed (postiaadress, epost, ja telefoninumber) kiriku kantseleisse:
416-483-5847.*

There was this little boy who was scared of the dark. One evening his mother asked him to go out onto the back porch and bring her the broom.

The little boy said, "Mama, please don't make me go out there. It's dark and you know I'm scared of the dark."

His mother smiled at him and said reassuringly, "There's no need to be afraid of the dark. Jesus is out there and he'll look after you and protect you."

The little boy seemed unsure and said, "Are you sure Jesus is out there?"

The mother said, "Yes, I'm sure. Jesus is everywhere and is always there and ready to help when you're in need."

The boy thought for a moment, then went to the back door and opened it a tiny amount. He looked out into the darkness and called out, "Jesus - if you're out there, please pass me the broom."

