



From the Pastor

Dear Members and Friends:

It's been a long time since we've had a newsletter from St. Matthew's, but thanks to the willingness and diligence of Harvey Andersen (and his hi-tech side-kick, Carol), the presses are rolling again.

As I write this, thousands are reeling from a devastating earthquake on Java, Indonesia; many in our country are mourning the deaths of loved ones whose lives were sacrificed in an increasingly unpopular war in Iraq; the earth and its creatures are aching from the wounds and changes brought on by global warming; and millions around the globe wonder from where will their next meal come?

In the midst of such destruction and death we hear the words of the Old Testament prophet Joel, preached anew on the first Christian Pentecost by the apostle Peter: *"In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams."*

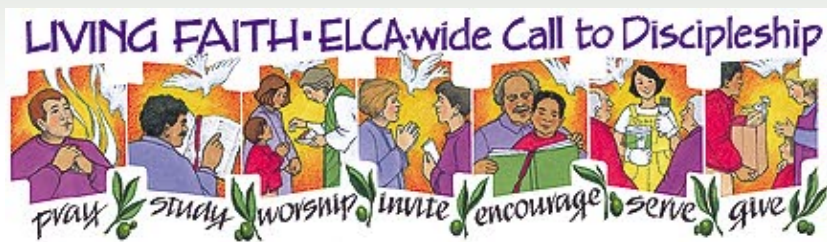
Only God knows whether these days are the last days in which we are living or not. But this we do know: that right now God is pouring out God's Spirit upon us and all flesh --- moving the people of God and the whole human family to see God's vision of shalom, dream God's dream of justice and right relationships in all the earth, and live into that reality. This is our call throughout the church year and especially during the season of Pentecost: that God would renew the face of the earth through who we are and what we do.

On Sunday, June 4th, we at St. Matthew's will join the Christian Church all over the world in celebrating the Festival of Pentecost, also known as the birthday of the church. We will give thanks to God for all the ways in which God's Spirit has been poured out upon the baptized ministers at St. Matthew's, hear a dynamic sermon from our friend and colleague, the Rev. Judith Spindt, and have a special recognition of how God has blessed our children, youth and young adults with God's Spirit.

Come join us for this celebration; come share the Spirit with us! Be sure to wear red, and plan on staying afterward for a wonderful coffee hour. And then make sure you've got your picnic gear ready because the next **Sunday, June 11th**, our worship time changes to **10:00 AM** and immediately after worship we will go to Cross Roads Outdoor Ministries for our Church Picnic.

On Sunday, June 18th our new vicar, Seminarian Marsha Anderson will be joining us for worship so she can meet her new church family that will accompany her as she learns to be a pastor; and on **Sunday, June 25th**, we will celebrate **Reconciling in Christ Sunday**, giving thanks to God for our witness and outreach among God's gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered children. The Spirit is indeed being poured out upon us. I look forward to seeing you in June.

**Yours in the Spirit,
Pastor Gladys**



New Jersey Synod 19th Annual Assembly
Living in God's Amazing Grace
May 12-13, 2006

Brunswick Hilton, East Brunswick, NJ

I had the privilege of serving as a voting member to the 2006 NJ Synod Assembly, along with Lydia Brown and Pastor Moore. It was my first experience attending the assembly in this capacity. I found it to be both informative and affirming.

2006 NJ Synod Assembly Highlights:

- The Assembly recognized retired pastors and their spouses; and congratulated several congregations throughout the Synod celebrating milestone anniversaries.
- Six resolutions were passed at the Assembly. Resolution #2 called upon our Bishop, Synod Council and Candidacy Committee to practice “disciplinary restraint” when dealing with gay and lesbian pastors in committed relationships. Resolution #4 called for comprehensive immigration reform.
- Six new members were elected to Synod Council, which handles the business of the Synod between Assemblies, much the same as our church council functions.
- In his report to the Assembly, Bishop E. Roy Riley, detailed the large number of new “focused” mission initiatives (including the Waterfront Community Church), that have begun in our Synod; many of them reaching out to the immigrant communities in New Jersey.
- Sixteen people, including Pastor Moore, were elected to represent the NJ Synod as voting members at the 2007 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.
- NJ Governor John Corzine addressed the Assembly on Saturday morning. He discussed steps his administration is taking to increase the production of affordable housing units and resources for organizations fighting hunger in this state. He spoke of immigration reform, health care, and US foreign policy. He promised to work with religious organizations to find ways to help the needy.

There were 454 voting members including 251 lay persons, 191 clergy, 2 lay officers, 8 associates in ministry, and 2 diaconal ministers. With Youth Convo, visitors, staff and others, the total attendance was 573. Next year the Synod assembly will meet in the same place—the Hilton, East Brunswick—May 31 to June 2, 2007.

Kim Griffin Aycox
May 26, 2006



CONGREGATION COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS, MAY 2006

- Deferred maintenance has taken a toll on our church building. Diane Kaese, forensic and historical architect, came to our council meeting and shared information about the major building items facing St. Matthew's, particularly structural shifting evidenced by numerous cracks and wall bowing. It was moved, seconded and adopted that we begin the structural investigation process per the draft proposal up to \$10,000.
- The Personnel Committee is preparing draft job descriptions of duties for the sexton and musician in an effort to regularize our staff positions, and provide staff support and evaluations for such positions.
- Gerry Bakirtjy has agreed to upgrade light fixtures in the old Bon Secours office and put on Craigslist. We're looking for a new tenant in that space.
- A new Stewardship Ministry Team has been formed and will be meeting monthly to begin a year-round stewardship emphasis at St. Matthew's. Members include: Barbara Bernstengel, Roger LaBiche, Stephanie Sheppard, Jill Trudel and Pastor Moore.
- St. Matthew's Barrow Mansion Work day is scheduled for **Saturday June 17th** from 9:30 AM to 3:00 PM
- Claudia Perry resigned from council and church at end of meeting.

Sharing our blessings.....



ST. MATTHEW'S RUMMAGE SALES

By Andrew C. Rhode, Jr.

With many fine donations from members and friends, we raised \$4,218 for the February and May Rummage Sales! We are most grateful for our sales and donations and for those who assisted us in so many ways. We are further thankful for the opportunity to share our surplus with other churches and organizations who serve those in need such as Delaney Hall in Newark where people come when released from prison, or a church in the Bronx where items are free. Please continue to support our Rummage Sale Ministry with your prayers, presence and donations.



St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, Jersey City, New Jersey Summer 2006 Calendar

JUNE

Sat. 6/3, 11:00-4:00: St. Matthew's Health Fair

Sun. 6/4, 11:00 AM: PENTECOST Ministry Recognition/Holy Communion (*Everyone wear red!*)

Sun. 6/11, Worship Time changes to 10:00 AM; 11:30- Church Picnic at Cross Roads Outdoor Ministries

Mon. 6/12, 7:00 PM: Congregation Council Meeting

Sun. 6/18, 10:00 AM: Meet our new Vicar, Marsha Anderson (After worship help move downstairs)

Sat. 6/24: 9:30 AM: **NJ Synod AIDS Conference** at Emanuel, New Brunswick. Come here special guest preacher from South Africa share experiences about organizing to combat HIV/AIDS.

Sun. 6/25, 10:00 AM: **Reconciling in Christ Sunday**; first downstairs worship in Bavendam Hall (through Labor Day Weekend)

JULY

Mon. 7/10 7:00 PM: Congregation Council Meeting

Sun. 7/16, 10:00 AM: Outdoor Worship in Angel Ramos Park

Thurs. 7/27-Sun. 7/30: ELCA Global Mission Event (GME) in Amherst, MA)

AUGUST

Sun. 8/13, 10:00 AM: Outdoor Worship in Angel Ramos Park

Sat. 8/26: Jersey City Gay Pride Festival

ST. MATTHEW'S HEALTH FAIR

By Andrew C. Rhode, Jr.

Despite a delayed start in contacting participants for this Health Fair, we are fortunate to have eighteen organizations who have agreed to be present or provide us with valuable information. North Hudson Community Action Center will be present with their Mobile Health Unit as well as the Hyacinth Foundation, CURVES for Women, Horizon Health Center and New Jersey Family Care to mention a few. We look forward to good weather, a great turn-out and many reports of participants' good health on Saturday, June 3rd. **We hope to see you there!**

**COME JOIN US AT ST. MATTHEW'S LUTHERAN CHURCH:
A Caring and Diverse Community of Christ, Growing Deep and Wide.**



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Living in God's amazing grace