

St. Matthew's Messenger

Lent/Easter 2010

From the Pastor's Desk:

Paul writes in his First Letter to the Corinthians, chapter 1, "For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God... For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles..." He continues in chapter 2, "I have decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified."

St. Mark, in his gospel writes, "Then he [Jesus] began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed and after three days rise again." Peter did not want to hear such "nonsense" from his Lord and master and rebuked Jesus. But Jesus rebuked Peter and called him "Satan"! Jesus proceeded to instruct them about the meaning of discipleship, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and the sake of the gospel, will save it."

At the center of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is his suffering, death and resurrection. This is clear in the four Gospels and the whole body of Paul's letters. It is central to our creedal confession, "I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried... On the third day he rose again." Luther and the reformers made the distinction between the "Theology of Glory" and the "Theology of the Cross", that is, a theology based on human effort and achievement and a theology based on the saving acts of Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection. One of the modern manifestations of the "Theology of Glory" is the "health, wealth, entertainment and feel-good gospel" of pop culture's Christianity Lite. Any so-called "gospel" without the cross of Christ at its center is not the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It may be inspirational speaking, but it is not the Gospel of the cross and resurrection of Holy Scripture.

While the way of the cross is at the center of Christian theology, it should also be at the center of our spiritual and devotional life. Indeed, the Holy Eucharist -- the Sacrament of Holy Communion -- is the living memorial of Christ's death and resurrection. His crucified and resurrected Body and Blood come to us anew every time we gather together around the altar and receive it in the forms of bread and wine. It is our spiritual food.

There is a popular devotion called "The Way of the Cross", which Christians have prayed for centuries to center their lives in Christ's passion and resurrection. When Christians occupied the Holy Land it was almost obligatory for every believer to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem at least once in his or her lifetime to walk the way of the cross, that is, to walk literally the same path that Jesus walked to his death on Calvary. It was particularly meaningful to make this pilgrimage during Holy Week! After Jerusalem fell to the army of the great Muslim conqueror Saladin in 1187 AD, Christians could no longer walk the way of the cross in the Holy Land. So "stations" representing Jesus' walk to Calvary were set up inside churches and the devotion was prayed at the stations. The devotion is still very popular-- and not just for Roman Catholics.

The topic for our Wednesday evening Lenten devotional this year is "The Way of the Cross". My meditations, within the context of Prayer at the Close of the Day (Compline), will be based on the 14 stations of Jesus' journey to the cross. This is a devotion which all believing Christians should find meaningful -- including us Lutherans who coined the phrase "Theology of the Cross", and who are particularly influenced by Paul's theology.

Lent is a rich season filled with opportunities and potential for growth in Christ and the mystery of his passion, death and resurrection. Coupled with your personal Lenten disciplines, I pray that the meditations on the Way of the Cross will bring you deeper into the joy of the resurrection on Easter Sunday. May God grant a good Lent.

Yours in Christ,

Pr. Eric Mathsen+



On the lighter side

While I sat in the reception area of my doctor's office, a woman rolled an elderly man in a wheelchair into the room. As she went to the receptionist's desk, the man sat there, alone and silent. Just as I was thinking I should make small talk with him, a little boy slipped off his mother's lap and walked over to the wheelchair. Placing his hand on the man's, he said, 'I know how you feel. My mom makes me ride in the stroller too.'

Out bicycling one day with my eight-year-old granddaughter, Carolyn, I got a little wistful. 'In ten years,' I said, 'you'll want to be with your friends and you won't go walking, biking, and swimming with me like you do now. Carolyn shrugged. 'In ten years you'll be too old to do all those things anyway.'

* * *

Working as a pediatric nurse, I had the difficult assignment of giving immunization shots to children. One day I entered the examining room to give four-year-old Lizzie her needle. 'No, no, no!' she screamed. 'Lizzie,' scolded her mother, 'that's not polite behavior.' With that, the girl yelled even louder, 'No, thank you! No, thank you!'

Just before I was deployed to Iraq, I sat my eight-year-old son down and broke the news to him. 'I'm going to be away for a long time,' I told him. 'I'm going to Iraq.' 'Why?' he asked. 'Don't you know there's a war going on over there?'

* * *

Paul Newman founded the Hole in the Wall Gang Camp for children stricken with cancer, AIDS and blood diseases. One afternoon he and his wife, Joanne Woodward, stopped by to have lunch with the kids. A counselor at a nearby table, suspecting the young patients wouldn't know that Newman was a famous movie star, explained, 'That's the man who made this camp possible. Maybe you've seen his picture on his salad dressing bottle?' Blank stares. 'Well, you've probably seen his face on his lemonade carton.' An eight-year-old girl perked up. 'How long was he missing?'

* * *

His wife's grave side service was just barely finished, when there was a massive clap of thunder, followed by a tremendous bolt of lightning, accompanied by even more thunder rumbling in the distance. The little old man looked at the pastor and calmly said, 'Well, she's there.'

Lenten Schedule 2010

Tuesday, February 16 – Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner/Mardi Gras
6:00 – 9:30 PM - Luther Hall
Adults - \$10.00 Children (12 and under) - \$5.00

Wednesday, February 17
12:15 PM - Imposition of Ashes
7:30 PM - Imposition of Ashes with Holy Eucharist

Wednesday in Lent (February 24, March 3, 10, 17 and 24)
12:15 PM - Prayer
7:30 PM - Prayer and Meditation on
“The Way of the Cross”

Sundays in Lent
9:30 AM - Sunday Church School
10:30 AM – Holy Eucharist

During Lent the church will be open Monday through Friday from
11:30 AM to 1:30 PM for prayer and meditation.

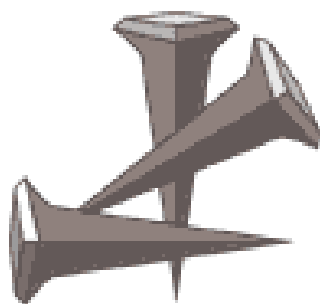
Individual Confession during the season is available for those who
desire it by appointment with the pastor. Please call the church office
to set up an appointment.

*The Church will be open
for prayer and meditation
Monday through Friday
during the season of Lent
from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm.*



Individual Confession is also available.

Please call the Office to arrange an appointment with the pastor.



HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE 2010

March 28th – Palm Sunday Liturgy

10:00 am – Outdoor Procession with Palms

10:30 am – The Great Procession & Holy Eucharist

April 1st – Holy Thursday Liturgy

7:30 pm

April 2nd – Good Friday Liturgies

3:00 and 7:30 pm

APRIL 4TH – EASTER SUNDAY

8:00 am – Holy Eucharist

10:30 am – Festival Choral Eucharist

Why Go To Church?

A Church goer wrote a letter to the editor of a newspaper and complained that it made no sense to go to church every Sunday. "I've gone for 30 years now," he wrote, "and in that time I have heard something like 203,000 sermons. But for the life of me, I can't remember a single one of them. So, I think I'm wasting my time and the pastors are wasting theirs by giving sermons at all."

This started a real controversy in the "Letters to the Editor" column, much to the delight of the editor. It went on for weeks until someone wrote this clincher:

"I've been married for 30 years now. In that time my wife has cooked some 32,000 meals. But, for the life of me, I cannot recall the entire menu for a single one of those meals. But I do know this: They all nourished me and gave me the strength I needed to do my work. If my wife had not given me these meals, I would be physically dead today. Likewise, if I had not gone to church for nourishment, I would be spiritually dead today!"

When you are DOWN to nothing... God is UP to something! Faith sees the invisible, believes the incredible and receives the impossible! Thank God for our physical AND our spiritual nourishment!



Easy Shepherd's Pie

Ingredients:

- 1 ½ lbs. ground round beef
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1-2 c. vegetables, chopped carrots, peas, corn, green beans, etc.
- 1 ½ - 2 lbs. potatoes (3 big ones)
- 8 TBS butter (1 stick)
- ½ c. beef broth
- 1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- Salt, pepper, other seasonings of choice, to taste

Directions:

1. Peel and quarter potatoes, boil in salted water until tender (about 20 minutes).
2. While the potatoes are cooking, melt 4 Tablespoons butter (1/2 a stick) in large frying pan.
3. Sauté onions in butter until tender over medium heat (10 mins). Cook carrots with the onions. Add corn or peas either at the end of the cooking of the onions, or after the meat has initially cooked.
4. Add ground beef and sauté until no longer pink. Add salt and pepper. Add worcesterchire sauce. Add half a cup of beef broth and cook, uncovered, over low heat for 10 minutes, adding more beef broth as necessary to keep moist.
5. Mash potatoes in bowl with remainder of butter, season to taste.
6. Place beef and onions in baking dish. Distribute mashed potatoes on top. Rough up with a fork so that there are peaks that will brown nicely. You can use the fork to make some designs in the potatoes as well.
7. Cook in 400° oven until bubbling and brown (about 30 minutes). Broil for last few minutes if necessary to brown top.

Serves four.

We've got the cure for the Wintertime Blues. . . .

Mardi Gras!

Tuesday, February 16, 2010

6:30 - 9:30 pm

St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

3 Carhart Ave, White Plains, NY

Adults: \$10 Children (12 & under): \$5



Come celebrate the night before Lent with Fun and Festivities!!

**There will be a traditional pre-Lenten feast of
pancakes, sausage and bacon along with
some "Lusiana" favorites like Jambalaya and Shrimp Gumbo!!**

(Not to mention masks, games, beads & King Cup Cakes!)

Please R.S.V.P. by February 12th at 949-3577!

“Laissez les bonne temps rouler!!”

Mardi Gras History

Also known as "fat Tuesday," this pre-Lenten festival is celebrated in Roman Catholic countries and communities. In a strict sense, Mardi Gras, or Shrove Tuesday, is celebrated by the French as the last of the three days of Shrovetide and is a time of preparation immediately before Ash Wednesday and the start of the fast of Lent. Mardi Gras is thus the last opportunity for merrymaking and indulgence in food and drink. In practice, the festival is generally celebrated for one full week before Lent. Mardi Gras is marked by spectacular parades featuring floats, pageants, elaborate costumes, masked balls, and people dancing in the streets.

Mardi Gras originated as one of the series of carnival days held in all Roman Catholic countries between Twelfth Night, or Epiphany, and Ash Wednesday; these carnivals had their origin in pre-Christian spring fertility rites. The most famous modern Mardi Gras festivities are those held in New Orleans, La.; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Nice, France; and Cologne, Germany.

The first American Mardi Gras was celebrated near modern-day New Orleans on March 3, 1699. It wasn't until the mid-1800s did official parade organizations start to form with the Mystick Krewe of Comus in 1856 and the Krewe of Rex in 1872. The tradition is still carried on in New Orleans with many other krewes represented on floats in a myriad of parades. The official colors of Mardi Gras are purple, green and gold (representing justice, faith and power).

Mardi Gras celebrations can start as early as January 6, on the feast of Epiphany. The festivities end at midnight on Tuesday--the day before Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent. Mardi Gras day falls on any Tuesday between February 3 and March 9. Like Ash Wednesday, the date Mardi Gras falls on depends on the date of Easter--always occurring 46 days before Easter.



Dear Members and Friends of St. Matthew's,

The sacred season of Lent is near, which means that it's time to announce our **EASTER FLOWER MEMORIAL FUND**.

If you would like to contribute to the Fund, please fill out the "tear-off form" at the bottom of this page and return it to the church in the envelope enclosed or place it in an offering plate at worship, no later than the **Fifth Sunday in Lent, March 21st**.

The names of those memorialized, as well as the names of the donors, will appear in the printed Easter program at both the 8:00 am and the 10:30 am Eucharists on Easter morning. Flowers will be brought to shut-ins following the Easter liturgies.

Yours in Christ,

The Rev. Eric A. Mathsen
Pastor



✂-----Cut and return-----

Amount of contribution \$_____

In Loving Memory of: _____

Donor: _____

(Please PRINT all names)

Kindly return the form to the church by mail or place in an envelope in the church offering plate no later than **March 21st**. Checks should be made payable to **St. Matthew's Lutheran Church** and marked "**Easter Flower Memorial Fund**" on the memo line.

The WELCA Corner

It looks like it will be another busy year for the St. Matthew's chapter of W.E.L.C.A. (Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America)! We opened this year with a fun luncheon at Buon Amici (which means "Good Friends" in Italian!) here in White Plains on January 16th. Everyone had a great time.

We will be helping out at the Mardi Gras making it a truly church-wide event! Come on out and have fun! There is something for everyone: pancakes and bacon and sausage as well as Cajun favorites such as jambalaya, shrimp gumbo and red beans!!

And remember, ladies, you can join W.E.L.C.A. anytime! We meet on the **FIRST TUESDAY** of the month at 10:00 am in Luther Hall and, for those who work during the week, we also meet the **FIRST SATURDAY** of the month at 10:00 am. Just call Rita Mathsen at (914) 949 – 1609 for further information!

WELCA Luncheon at Buon Amici's



Standing l to r : Christine Williams, Heidi Lemcke, Helene Fitzpatrick, Rita Mathsen, Mary Finnerty, Lori Ledyard, Shirley Anderson and Sharon Field. Seated: Helga Bormann, Toby Markey, Rosemarie Faigle, Joan Meyer, Susan Tedesco, Debbie Hart, and Joan Murphy

Upcoming WELCA Events:

Saturday, March 6th 10:00 am - regular meeting of both groups

Sunday, April 18th 12:15 pm - "Taps & Treats"

Join us for a snack and a show! Westchester's renown dance group, The Tapettes, will be performing at St. Matthew's. RSVP now for a light lunch and your tickets to a great show! Price for lunch and the show is only \$8.00!

Friday, June 11th 6:00 pm - Annual Spaghetti Dinner

Give Mom a break tonight and bring her and the rest of the family to the WELCA Spaghetti & Meatball Dinner! Cost is \$10 for Adults and \$5 for children 12 and under. Families of 4 or more pay one low price of \$25!

A visit from some friends!!



David T. Drysdale



John David Bryant

St. Matthew's has been blessed to have one of its "sons" answer God's call to the ministry and enter the seminary. David Drysdale and his wife, Karen, left White Plains for Southern Seminary in Columbia, SC, in 2008. Upon arrival they met their downstairs neighbor, John David Bryant, who also answered God's call and moved his wife, Harriet and their two sons, Sean and Stephen, to Southern to live the impoverished life of a seminarian. The two families became instant friends and have been a blessing to each other! St. Matthew's and WELCA have adopted both families and are trying to help them financially.

We are grateful that David was able to attend the Annual Meeting, and that he brought John David with him. John David, in turn, brought a lovely cross-stitched "Lord's Prayer" that Harriet had made as a gift to the congregation which we are having framed.

March 17th – St. Patrick's Day!



St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland, is one of Christianity's most widely known figures. But for all his celebrity, his life remains somewhat of a mystery. Many of the stories traditionally associated with St. Patrick, including the famous account of his banishing all the snakes from Ireland, are false, the products of hundreds of years of exaggerated storytelling.

It is known that St. Patrick was born in Wales to wealthy parents near the end of the fourth century. He is believed to have died on March 17, around 460 A.D. Although his father was a Christian deacon, it has been suggested that he probably took on the role because of tax incentives and there is no evidence that Patrick came from a particularly religious family. At the age of sixteen, Patrick was taken prisoner by a group of Irish raiders who were attacking his family's estate. They transported him to Ireland where he spent six years in captivity. During this time, he worked as a shepherd, outdoors and away from people. Lonely and afraid, he turned to his religion for solace, becoming a devout Christian.

Familiar with the Irish language and culture, Patrick chose to incorporate traditional ritual into his lessons of Christianity instead of attempting to eradicate native Irish beliefs. For instance, he used bonfires to celebrate Easter since the Irish were used to honoring their gods with fire. He also superimposed a sun, a powerful Irish symbol, onto the Christian cross to create what is now called a Celtic cross, so that veneration of the symbol would seem more natural to the Irish. (Although there were a small number of Christians on the island when Patrick arrived, most Irish practiced a nature-based pagan religion. The Irish culture centered around a rich tradition of oral legend and myth. When this is considered, it is no surprise that the story of Patrick's life became exaggerated over the centuries-spinning exciting tales to remember history has always been a part of the Irish way of life.)

Easy Irish Soda Bread

Ingredients:

- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 4 tablespoons white sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup margarine, softened
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1 egg
- 1/4 cup butter, melted
- 1/4 cup buttermilk

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 375°. Lightly grease a large baking sheet.
2. In a large bowl, mix together flour, sugar, baking soda, baking powder, salt and margarine. Stir in 1 cup of buttermilk and egg. Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface and knead slightly. Form dough into a round and place on prepared baking sheet. In a small bowl, combine melted butter with 1/4 cup buttermilk; brush loaf with this mixture. Use a sharp knife to cut an 'X' into the top of the loaf.
3. Bake in preheated oven for 45 to 50 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center of the loaf comes out clean, about 30 to 50 minutes. You may continue to brush the loaf with the butter mixture while it bakes.



Christmas Memories



Christmas Tree decorators 2009

*Bob Bormann, Joan Murphy, Devon Hart, Helga Bormann,
Rita & Pastor Mathsen and Sharon Field*



The beautiful crèche at St. Matthew's



Christmas Eve at St. Matthew's – O Holy Night!



Christmas Party



The tables are set – we're ready to party!



Merry Christmas everyone!!!



Ray Tedesco & Pastor do a duet



Abigail Rose has been a good girl, Santa!



Mr. & Mrs. Claus are ready for the kids!



Emily Freeman is in touch with her inner child!



Hmm.... are Santa's elves or Tyler, Kyle and Corey Field?!



Epiphany



Helene Fitzpatrick prepares the Church School School children with their song for Epiphany.



Kayla Kutka, Tyler Field, Corey Field, & Katrina Kutka follow the Stars to the manger on Epiphany!



The 3 Kings: Solomon Nduka, Bill Murphy & Ray Tedesco



The Kings have laid their gifts of gold, frankincense & myrrh at the manger.

Sunday Church School preparations before the Kings arrive:



Teacher Christine Williams with Luke Williams, Finnegan Byrne and Kyle Field helping with some last minute preparations.



*The Kutka ladies, Katrina, Kristin & Kayla, waiting to open their goodie bags!
What nice smiles!*

ST. MATTHEW'S MESSENGER

St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

3 Carhart Avenue

White Plains, NY 10605-1495

Church: 914 – 949 – 3577

Fax: 914 – 946 – 1055

www.St-Matthews-Lutheran.org

Lent/Easter 2010

Pastor: The Rev. Eric A. Mathsen, S.T.S.

Deacons: Bill Currie, Deborah Hart, Joan Mohr

Music Director and Organist: Dr. Jean R. Boehler

Director of Christian Education: Joan Mohr

Luther League Advisor: Kevin Currie

Administrative Assistant: Teresa Tomas

Sexton: Marcos Montiel

THE CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL

January 2011*

Bill Currie
Mary Finnerty
Susan Tedesco
Christine Williams

January 2012*

Werner Faigle
Patricia Gabriel
Susan Millette
Grant Schneider

January 2013*

Helga Bormann
Deborah Hart
Joan Murphy
Bob Troiano

* year term ends

FLOWERS

Anyone wanting to have flowers on the altar for any Sunday during the year, please contact the church office. The cost of the two arrangements of flowers is \$50 for a Sunday. After the Eucharist the flowers are taken to members in the hospital or to members no longer able to attend in person.

MEETINGS AT THE CHURCH

Please let the church office know of any meetings your organization or committee is planning at least two weeks in advance so they can be posted on the church calendar. This will greatly assist the church office in scheduling and preparing bulletin announcements.