

**from Pastor Wengert . . .**

## **Top Twelve Reasons Why Saint Matthew's Worship is Out of this World**

### **#10 We Are Re-formed Every Week**

On Sunday, October 26 we will celebrate the festival of the Reformation. On that day: We *won't* celebrate that the church has splintered into many different denominations since the 16th century. What's to celebrate about that?

We *won't* celebrate Martin Luther as the founder of the Lutheran church. As Luther himself said, he was merely "worm fodder," and if the church depends on one mortal man, we're sunk.

What *will* we celebrate? That Christ re-forms the Church! Not just one time, way back in the sixteenth century, but every Sunday. If we understand the Church to be "...an association of faith and the Holy Spirit in the hearts of persons" in the words of one Lutheran confession of faith, then Church isn't a place, it's an event. Church *happens in and among us* when the Word is proclaimed and the Sacraments given. This true Church, with a capital C, is hidden by the external institution of church and also hidden by suffering. The festival of the Reformation celebrates that Christ raises this Church among us every week. He is the one who "re-forms" us into a new creation who trusts God and who serves brother & sister.

That means that the external, institutional church changes with the norms of the day and is always in need of change because it is made up of sinful people. But this visible church is never to be confused with the true Church, which is hidden in the hearts of the believers and that Christ re-forms every Sunday.

In the end, the Church is in Christ's hands. *That* is why we can celebrate on the festival of the Reformation!

### **STEWARDSHIP EMPHASIS ~ 2008**

#### ***Stories To Tell; Gifts To Share***

*"Declare how much God has done for you."* (Luke 8:39)

*"We cannot keep from speaking about what we have seen and heard!"* (Acts 4:20)

We all have stories to tell: humorous happenings, learning experiences, news about our families, triumphs and tragedies, and plans for the future.

And as the people of God, we have stories to tell about what God has done for us and about the difference that God's grace has made in our lives. Sometimes we are less aware of these stories until they are coaxed out of us—but they are there, part of whom we are.

That's not all. Whether we know it or not, we also have stories to tell about what God has done *through* us—stories about how God has used us to make a difference in the lives of others.

Getting to know those stories makes us even more aware of God's grace.

God has given us so much—and the gifts of God are for sharing. The Bible is a collection of stories about people with gifts to share—stories about people whose lives were so changed by God that they were able to make a difference in the lives of others.

During this fall's annual Stewardship campaign here at Saint Matthew Lutheran Church, we will be focused on *storytelling* and on *giving*—and thinking of both storytelling and giving as grateful responses to the grace of God.

*The Stewardship Ministry*

**Saint Matt's Fellowship & Parish Life Ministry  
presents  
Oktoberfest 2008**

**Happy Hour: 5:30 pm**

**Dinner: 6:30 pm**

**Featuring authentic German food, beverages  
and entertainment**

**Saint Matthew Fellowship Hall**

**Donation: \$20.00 per person**

**(Note: Adults Only)**

## **BILL LAWRENCE CALLED AS ASSOCIATE IN MINISTRY**

At a special congregation meeting following the 11 am worship service on September 14, Bill Lawrence was called to be an Associate in Ministry at Saint Matthew Lutheran Church. The vote was approved unanimously, and Bill immediately accepted the call! We will celebrate Bill's call at a formal Synod commissioning service to be held later this year. The congregation will be notified when it is scheduled.

While Bill's title will continue to be Parish Coordinator, he will now take on some new and important responsibilities. Below is a copy of his new job description, which was developed over the summer by a special task force, along with input and guidance from Bill, Pastor and Council. Please note that some of the roles that Bill had previously handled will now be covered by other members of the staff and congregation...details to follow.

Please join us in congratulating Bill, and wishing him all the best in his new role!

### ***Job Description: Parish Coordinator***

#### **Reports To:**

Primarily reports to the Pastor, but is also accountable to the Congregation Council and the Bishop of the New Jersey Synod.

#### **Principal Responsibilities:**

- A. With Council, provide leadership in the development of annual goals and then support all ministries as they strive to accomplish them, beginning with the 2008/09 goal of "Witness".
- B. Provide leadership via proactive liaison with assigned ministries: Parish Life, Property, Social Concerns and Spiritual Life (note: specific ministry assignments will be rotated from time to time based on needs).
- C. Expand and further develop leadership in ministry with the elderly
- D. Provide leadership in our "Invitation initiative" - with the goal of obtaining wider congregational participation in various ministries and activities, with a special focus on the coordination of the spiritual gift inventory process.
- E. In conjunction with Pastor, assist in leading small group ministries such as Bible Study, Home and Hospital Visitations, Lunch Bunch, Appalachia Service Project, etc.
- F. Supervise the Sexton
- G. Lead and coordinate efforts associated with the Saint Matthew web site.
- H. Transitional Responsibility: Coordinate with Pastor and Council through the transition so that tasks are reassigned. Provide a document to the Congregation Council which communicates these decisions by 11/1/08.
- I. Perform other duties as may be determined in conjunction with Pastor and Council.

## **CAPITAL APPEAL UPDATE!**

As of mid-September, **\$140,317** has been pledged by our church membership for the 3-Year Capital Appeal. This puts us well over the \$110,000 threshold needed for critical non-discretionary expenses and commitments of the church, including:

- H New roofing on the oldest “gym” section of the church building;
- H An updated telephone system in the church office;
- H Replenishment of the nearly depleted capital account from which monthly payments for the church mortgage are drawn;
- H Fulfillment of our commitment to the building campaign of The Lutheran Theological Seminary of Philadelphia;
- H Payment of last year’s deficit in our C&B operating account; and
- H The “special capital appeal” line item in our 2008 C&B budget which is needed to balance the budget (as approved at the January Congregation Meeting).

These pledges also put us more than half-way toward the overall \$275,000 campaign goal which includes discretionary, but no less important, needs of the church, including:

1. Complete retirement of the church mortgage;
2. Mission outreach to support our sister congregation, Bridge of Peace, in Camden as well as other outreach initiatives of St. Matthew, the Synod and the ELCA; and
3. Additional capital projects on church property such as enhanced lighting in the sanctuary.

The 3-year Capital Appeal will build a strong financial and structural base for Saint Matthew Church to pursue our Christian mission and ministry in the future. This is an opportunity for all of us to pull together as a unified church body in sharing God’s gifts. The goal is not just to raise \$275,000 over the next three years, but moreover to have 100% participation of our members in doing so.

As of mid-September, pledges have been received from 53% of our active Saint Matthew members. If you are among these contributors to date, thank you for your support of the capital needs and commitments of our Christian mission and ministry at Saint Matthew. If you have not yet pledged, please give your prayerful consideration to the needs of this important Capital Appeal.

the church office. Regardless of the amount pledged, 100% participation is our main goal.

Remember, giving to the Capital Appeal is separate from Regular Offerings for the Current & Benevolence (“C&B”) operating budget. Gifts to the “Capital Appeal” should be identified as such on the “Other” line on the face of your offering envelope.

***Tom Cassel and Faith Steinfort***  
Capital Appeal Co-Chairs

## Ministry of the Month

The Congregation Council has designated that each month during this program year - September through May - one of the ministries of the congregation will be featured.

During September Youth & Family Ministry was featured which includes the Sunday Church School and Vacation Bible School. The "signature" event was Rally Day on September 7. October's ministry is **Fellowship & Parish Life**, which includes WELCA and the OWLS. The featured event is the annual Oktoberfest.

Other ministries will include Worship & Music, Social Concerns, Mutual Ministry, Spiritual Life, Property, Evangelism and Stewardship in that order from November through May.

## Heartfelt Thanks

*The warm and loving response of our congregation family is greatly appreciated. We cannot fully express just how much each kind word, prayer, telephone call, visit, and every other loving act and assistance has meant to each of us, both during Oliver's illness and upon his death. **Family**, that is the one word that we can find to describe the way that each of you took us into your hearts and comforted us; and many of you continue to comfort us today. Only family could understand your pain and respond with the love that you have shown us. Thank you for being a part of our family and thank you most especially for being there when we need you the most. God's love continues to shine upon us through each of you. God bless you all!*

***The Thomas Family,  
Wilhelmina; Chip and Janal  
Nina and Laurel; Olivia and Victoria  
Ariel and David***

## St. Matt Players

present

### An Evening of One-Act Plays

**October 3 & 4, 2008**

**7:30 pm**

*Here's Mud in Your Eye Old Ymir's Clay Pot*

*The Apple Bite*

**Saint Matthew Lutheran Church**

**Tickets: \$10.00**

## OUR STUDENTS in COLLEGE

According to our records, the following members of our congregation are enrolled in colleges, graduate schools or other institutions of higher learning and we wish them well in their academic studies. We may have missed someone or have incorrect information. If so, we apologize and hope you will let us know so that we can make changes next month.

<b>Cassie Armstead-Williams</b>	Washington University School of Medicine
<b>Bryan Arruda</b>	Stockton State College
<b>Brendan Beckett</b>	Quinnipiac University
<b>Dan Burns</b>	Gettysburg College
<b>Mark Burns</b>	Mount St. Mary's (PA)
<b>Tom Cassel</b>	University of Pennsylvania
<b>Shane Clark</b>	Burlington County College
<b>Tyler Cram</b>	Boston University
<b>Jackie Davis</b>	Burlington County College
<b>Derek Ems</b>	John Hopkins University
<b>Stephen Gadomski</b>	Lafayette University
<b>Gwen Gibson</b>	Rowan University
<b>Aaron Graybill</b>	Rutgers University
<b>Whitney Jackson</b>	Thomas Jefferson University School of Medicine
<b>Virginia Jackson</b>	Thomas Jefferson University School of Medicine
<b>Taylor Jones</b>	Rochester Institute of Technology
<b>Ryan Kastner</b>	Salisbury University of Maryland
<b>William Killion</b>	American University
<b>Chad Lange</b>	St. Mary's College (MD)
<b>Tyler Lowy</b>	Burlington County College
<b>Wesley Lukridge</b>	College of New Jersey
<b>Katy Magauran</b>	Burlington County College
<b>Kristin McGuire</b>	Temple University
<b>Sara Morante</b>	University of MASS./Amherst
<b>Wylie Naylor</b>	High Point University
<b>Kenny Palmer</b>	Drexel University
<b>Alex Rosati</b>	Philadelphia University
<b>Kurt Schroeder</b>	Drexel University
<b>Brian Sena</b>	Stockton State College
<b>Nick Sena</b>	Seton Hall University
<b>Adrielle Slauch</b>	Pratt Institute
<b>Andrew Steele</b>	Wittenberg University
<b>Victoria Steele</b>	McDaniel College
<b>Emily Terpak</b>	Drexel University
<b>Melanie Trice</b>	Hofstra University
<b>Kirsten Van Fossen</b>	Harvard University
<b>Allison Westad</b>	Salisbury University
<b>Brian Widin</b>	Philadelphia University
<b>Jennifer Widin</b>	Albright College

**Jeff Zellner**  
**Karen Zellner**  
**Rebecca Zellner**  
**Serafina Zeringo**

Drexel University  
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute  
Cornell University  
Boston College

**MEND Dinner Dance**

October 25, 2008

6:00 pm

Riverton Country Club

\$150 per person

Tickets: See George Boehmler

**YOUTH NEWS**

**Youth Group Movie Night**

When: Saturday, October 4, 5:30 pm

Where: We'll start at Saint Matthew Church and end up at the Delsea Drive-in Theater

Who: All Saint Matthew youth and Prince of Peace youth

Cost: \$10 per person

Come for a night of fun at the Delsea Drive-in Theater! We'll be teaming up with the youth group of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Marlton for a fun-filled night. Feel free to bring your friends. Let Lee Zandstra know how many people you are bringing so that we have enough cars. It's a double show at the theater, so we'll be out until around midnight! If you have any questions, call Lee at 610-952-8705 or email at [lzandstra@ltsp.edu](mailto:lzandstra@ltsp.edu).

## HEALING PRAYERS

God desires us to be comforted and supported in his love. The laying on of hands and anointing with oil is one way Stephen Ministers extend God's love each Sunday. As lay ministers, we invite the congregation to come, and receive a sign of healing and wholeness for yourself or someone you love in the name of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit .

Offering healing prayers has become a powerful, spiritual blessing to each of us in Stephen Ministry. Most often we pray the Lutheran healing prayers we were given in February 2004 when we began offering the prayers during Holy Communion. Sometimes individuals will ask for a specific prayer - such as upcoming personal surgery - or for an ill loved one or a suffering family. Following the prayer, a Stephen Minister anoints the person's forehead with oil, making the sign of the cross and assuring forgiveness and healing in Jesus Christ for that person or for a loved one or friend.

To touch each person with love and sense his or her trust in the healing power of the Holy Spirit is humbling to share. Our family of faith in Saint Matthew Church is affirmed as we join together to proclaim the good news of God's eternal love and his desire for us to be healthy and united in the body of Christ.

*Sue Kuhn*, Stephen Leader

## THE OWLS

(Older, Wiser, Lutheran Seniors)

### *You Are Invited to a Saint Matthew OWLS Event*

Mark your calendar now for Thursday, October 2, at 12:00 noon at the church. The **OWLS** of Saint Matthew Church will be hosting a Horizons Speakers Bureau program of the New Jersey Council for the Humanities. Neill Hartley, an actor from the American Historical Theatre, will present *Ichabod Crane, Washington Irving and the Legend of Sleepy Hollow*. The public is invited to attend ~ bring your relatives, friends and neighbors to this exciting presentation. Bring sandwiches for yourself and each of your guests. Beverages and desserts will be provided. We are looking for a big turnout for this very exceptional afternoon.

Also save this date ~ **Thursday, November 6**. The **OWLS** will take a field trip to **Waterworks** in Philadelphia and have lunch at the **PUB** in New Jersey. A sign-up sheet for this trip is posted on the Saint Matthew bulletin board in the church narthex.

## ADULT FORUM for OCTOBER

**9:45 am in the church library on October 5, 12 & 19**

Last month Professor Tim Wengert and Pastor Bruce Davidson unfolded a Lutheran foundation for “vocation” and its application to life in society. This month we will receive reports from two parish service projects, prepare for a later session on Dietrich Bonhoeffer and hear from a top Lutheran theologian on living out this particular, intense vocation.

**October 5:** Servant Vocation: **Bosnia Servant Trip**  
Presenters: **Pastor Wengert and trip participants**

**October 12:** Servant Vocation: **Appalachia Service Project**  
Presenters: **Bill Lawrence and trip participants**  
**Synod Assembly:**  
Presenters: **Nancé Carlson & Bill Lawrence**

**October 19:** PBS video on **Dietrich Bonhoeffer**, a German theologian. The video was first broadcast in 2006 on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth.

**October 26: Vocation of Theologian** in the church lounge  
Presenter: **Dr. Robert Jenson**, Professor Emeritus of Religion, St. Olaf College;  
Director of Research, Center for Theological Inquiry, Princeton, NJ.

Dr. Jenson is a Lutheran systematic theologian who has had a significant impact on the church in our time. He is the author of many books and co-author of the text on “Lutheranism” (to which Professor Wengert referred in one of his sessions) and of Christian Dogmatics. He is a founder of the Center for Catholic and Evangelical Theology. He has been asked to speak on the very personal topic of how he has been led through a lifetime as a theologian of the Church. (A theologian often treads the uncertain territory beyond common agreement, seeking greater truth, for the benefit of the Church.)

**Note:** Recordings of **Professor Tim Wengert’s** three September presentations are available in the

church office.

## Pastor Jensen's Ordination Anniversary

As of this writing, many of us are looking forward to the celebration of Pastor Jensen's fortieth anniversary of ordination, which will be held Sunday, September 28. Visiting clergy will assist in the 10:00 am worship service. An arrangement of the hymn "O Day Full of Grace", written by **The Rev. Dr. J. Bert Carlson**, will be sung by the congregation and choir. Bert, an active member of the congregation, was asked to share his thoughts about the writing of the anthem:

*"When I learned of this planned celebration, I jumped at the chance to write an anthem for this service. Herluf Jensen is a friend since my coming to New Jersey in 1970. I still remember our meeting at a diner somewhere - I think I was dean of the Southwest District at the time - when I told him he was a serious candidate in the minds of many people to serve as bishop (then president) of the Synod, following Ed Ehlers' resignation. While he didn't believe me and scoffed at his friends then, history records. . . . . you know the rest.*

*Perhaps it was the commonality shared by two midwestern Scandihoovians dumped here on the East Coast, but it has been a friendship I have always treasured, and always will.*

*"O Day Full of Grace" is the hymn that most people associate as The Danish Hymn. To choose this as a basis for the anthem to honor Bishop Jensen's ministry was a natural choice for me. The tune is out of Danish hymnody, and the text speaks of the days full of grace because of the walk with Christ. In this setting, the hymn is used as an expression of thanks to God, honoring one whose walk through those days of grace has been a gift to me - as well as to many others.*

Following the worship service there will be a fellowship and a luncheon at Carlucci's Waterfront Restaurant in Mt Laurel. The program will consist of speakers who worked with Pastor Jensen and music by the Adult Choir, along with a power point presentation prepared by two of the Jensen's children. Bishop E. Roy Riley will be a featured guest.

## Communion Changes

In the design of our church the table altar is at the center of our worship and we gather around it, both while seated in the pews and when we commune at the altar rail. This intentional design brings us together as a gathered family to worship and share the joy of Christ.

Although long standing family members are very comfortable with this design and know how to move through the space, it has been noted that for visitors, the flow for communion is not self evident. We have all had the experience of watching someone new trying to decide when to stand for communion and in which direction to go. By directing the flow of communion, the ushers are able to provide a more comfortable experience for those who are new to our family.

We have used the usher-directed system since Christmas 2007 and have found it to be advantageous. Therefore, the Worship & Music Ministry has decided to continue the process. When invited, everyone should go out to the side aisles and then return to their pews by the opposite aisle. We hope that this helps us all use our "unifying space" more comfortably.

*The Worship and Music Ministry*

## **THE LUNCH BUNCH**

(a ministry providing a monthly lunch for the homeless  
at New Visions Community Services in Camden)

Thanks be to God that in spite of the closing of M&S Produce, we are able to continue this food ministry by purchasing the bulk of our supplies from BJ's and, with a bit of tweaking here and there, remain within our spending plan. That's good news! (Incidentally, I have contacted Wegman's to see if we can come to some agreement to purchase all of our Lunch Bunch supplies from their facility at a pre-determined price. I'll keep you posted.)

We had a great time at our September get together. The sandwich making crew really got into the music (*American Graffiti* soundtrack), and were gleefully singing along while creating their sandwich masterpieces. At one point, one person took a brief respite to demonstrate how to do "The Stroll", which was well received by all. We simultaneously served our neighbors and had good fellowship, not to mention, ice cream!

In case you aren't familiar with the Lunch Bunch, we meet in the Teen Den on the second Thursday of the month. Our next meeting will be October 9 at 7:00 pm. Join us as we strive to make a bit of progress in the battle against hunger by providing a cold lunch to those who come hungry to the New Visions Center.

If you cannot physically participate but wish to support this ministry, your dollars are always welcome. Costs are constantly an issue and your financial support is crucial to perpetuate this ministry.

The patrons at New Visions love your baked goods so place your cakes, cookies or brownies on a disposable plate or container and deliver them to the church office. We'll keep them in the freezer until the appropriate time. God bless you and THANKS a bunch - a Lunch Bunch.

*William Lawrence*, Parish Coordinator

## **Bosnia Presentations**

This past June **Pastor Wengert** and others from Saint Matthew Church traveled to Bosnia with a team from the New Jersey Synod. Learn more about the history of Yugoslavia (now Croatia, Bosnia/Herzegovina, Serbia, Macedonia, Slovenia, Montenegro, Kosovo), some present cultural similarities and differences, the 1992 - 1995 war and aftermath, and their experience with the Friendship Camps that they held.

**Sun 10/5, 9:45-10:45am (Adult Forum): Slide presentation**

**Sun 10/19, 4:00-5:30pm: Presentation & Bosnian refreshments**

**Sexuality Study  
Tuesdays in October 7:30pm**

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) Task Force for Studies on Sexuality has listened carefully to the responses from members of the ELCA to the three sexuality studies over the past seven years, including the feedback Saint Matthew offered. It is with this feedback and understanding of the varying opinions within the ELCA that the task force has created the Draft Social Statement on Human Sexuality.

Saint Matthew will hold four sessions on Tuesday evenings in October at 7:30 pm; half of the last meeting will be in developing the group's response to the ELCA.

**FLU CLINIC AVAILABLE**

**The flu season is coming!  
*Take time to protect your family and yourself.  
Get a flu immunization shot.***

Saint Matthew will host a flu clinic on October 19 from 8:45 am until 12:00 noon in the library. Flu vaccine is the best way to prevent catching or spreading the flu virus. The flu can lead to life-threatening illness, particularly for older adults and medically frail individuals. Even a mild strain of the virus can lead to weeks of illness or more serious complications. Although nearly everyone over the age of 6 months should receive an annual flu immunization, the Saint Matthew flu clinic can administer the vaccine only to individuals 10 years of age or older. The suggested donation is \$25 and the proceeds will benefit our Youth Group's attendance at the 2009 Youth Gathering Servant Trip in New Orleans. The vaccine is available to the public so please share this information with your neighbors, friends and family. Protect yourself; protect your loved ones.

**Rainbow of Hope  
presents  
A Fashion Show  
October 10, 2008  
6:15 pm  
Boscov's  
Tickets: \$10**

**Thank you from IHN client . . .**

*Words truly can never express the gratitude my grandson Andrew and I feel about the way we were welcomed into your hearts. For the first time in awhile, I really felt like a person, not a client. You have a group of beautiful people that are so caring, loving and giving. May God bless you all and keep you safe and healthy! You will always be in our thoughts and prayers.*

*Nancy and Andrew*

**Flowers, Shrubs and Grounds**

We give thanks to God for the continued efforts of those who keep our grounds and Garden of Remembrance looking so great from spring through fall! **Tami Jones** has done most of the work in the Garden of Remembrance, often assisted by **Debbie Zellner**. Our sexton, **Dave Rulon**, takes care of lawn mowing and much of the watering. **Doris Gilmour** (who has now moved to Pennsylvania), **Joyce Schultz** and **Joyce Valore** have been watering, planting and weeding since spring. When you see these servants of the church, please thank them for all of their efforts! *Brian Schultz*

**Knitter's Nook**

Two large bags of hats were delivered to the Neonatal Unit of Our Lady of Lourdes in Camden. The nurses were thrilled to receive so many brightly colored, well fitted hats. The babies benefit from this gift of love. A big THANK YOU to all who made it possible.

## CHURCH WOMEN UNITED

Circle Saturday, October 11, on your calendar. The State Unit of Church Women United will be at Saint Matthew Church for an Assembly of Women from all over New Jersey. It is a time of friendship and education. As the host church, we supply a light breakfast. People will be needed to help the day go easily. Donations of bagels, cream cheese, small Danish, orange juice, muffins and scones would be welcome. You can bake them or buy them. Please contact Mae Trebing if you can help, 609-239-4942; or email at [gtrebing@comcast.net](mailto:gtrebing@comcast.net).

## PLANNING AHEAD

The Camden Kids Christmas Party is on December 9. This gives plenty of time for you and your children to sort through books. The new school year is a good time to weed out never used books in your children's library (aka room). We welcome new and gently used books. The ages range from tots to teens. Each child from Camden attending the party receives a book to take home.

## WELCA Morning Circle

The circle will meet at 10:00 in the Shockey Lounge on Friday, October 10. Bernie Williams, Saint Matthew representative to the New Jersey Women of the ELCA 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Convention, will share with us the happenings of the convention.

## PASTORAL ACTS

### Funeral

#### **9/3 Oliver E. Thomas**

Oliver had been a member of Saint Matthew Church for thirty-two years. We extend our sympathy to his wife **Wilhelmina (Willie)** and their children and families: **Chip & Nina, Olivia** and **Victoria**; Janal & Laurel, Ariel and David.

## Volunteer Chaplain Aides Needed

Virtua Memorial Hospital of Burlington County is in need of volunteer chaplain aides. There are openings for trained lay visitors every weekday between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm. Following a training and orientation process, an aide may donate two to four hours each week to visit patients, offering them friendship and spiritual comfort.

An 18-hour training course will be offered on Wednesday and Friday, October 22 and 24, at the hospital from 8:00 am until 5:00 pm, with continental breakfast at 7:30 am. Call for an information package with details of the course and the process of volunteering in the hospital: Chaplain, Rev. Wendy Boer, 609-267-0700, Ext. 43281, or e-mail [wboer@virtua.org](mailto:wboer@virtua.org).

## Current Report from Dennis Murnyak

*(Saint Matthew Church has sponsored Dennis Murnyak as an ELCA missionary to Tanzania for twenty-five years. He has returned from the mission field and will be retiring at the end of this year. His wife Meredith died two years ago and he has remarried. His final report to the ELCA is available in the church office.)*

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! I am writing to give you an update from my last letter written from Tanzania. Since that time we have departed from Tanzania on July 2 and returned to the USA. The departure was not easy in that it was a lot of work to move from a country where I lived for 25 years. There was the house to move out of, belongings to give away, dispose of, sell, or ship to USA. There was work to finish up and responsibilities to turn over. There were farewells to friends and colleagues, and to the country we grew to love. It was an emotionally draining time.

Now perhaps is the more difficult time for us as I adjust to living in the USA after living and working in Africa for nearly 30 years. For Jesse as he adjusts to living and attending college in the USA, basically a foreign country for him. For Kari as she searches for a new job in a new place.

We spent July and August in Minnesota recuperating from the move and settling in to our house in Maple Lake. We got together with family and friends in the area and some missionary meetings in Wisconsin. On August 20<sup>th</sup> Jesse started classes at Minnesota State University at Moorhead where he is majoring in International Business. So far he seems to like it and is doing well.

Kari and I left our house on September 1 and started a slow road trip to North Carolina via Michigan, Toronto, NY State, CT, NJ, and Virginia reconnecting with family and friends in those areas. It has been a great time seeing people we hadn't seen in years.

We will get to North Carolina in a few days and Kari will be searching for work in the Research Triangle area. She has been applying to various places. Our plan is to be there until she finds something. We feel confident that God will open the doors for her and eventually me in finding meaningful employment.

Yours in Christ,

*Dennis Murnyak, Returned missionary from Tanzania*

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