

Parson to Person
Top Twelve Reasons Why Saint Matthew's
Worship is Out of this World

#9: We are *Theodidaktoi* (!) every week

“Now concerning the love of the brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anyone write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another.” (1 Thessalonians 4:9)

Paul appears to have coined a new Greek word in his letter to the congregation in Thessalonica, *Theodidaktoi*, which means *taught by God*. This letter seems to be the first occurrence of this word in history, but it's not the last time it helped to describe what happens in congregational worship!

What happened in Thessalonica also happens in Moorestown every Sunday (and Thursday during the summer!). God teaches us to love one another; that is, to care for one another. God himself comes to us during worship, through the word and in the meal, and changes our hearts once again. The sinner in us comes to worship asking “what's in it for *me*?” The believer that God raises up in us begins to ask “what's in me for *you*?”

From time to time somebody will ask me “Why don't you preach more about what we should do and not do as Christians?” The reason that I don't preach very much about this is because I trust that God changes your heart so that you ask that question of yourself. Likewise, Paul says “you do not need to have anyone write you.” We can trust that God's Holy Spirit will raise up the new creation in each of us, teaching us how we can better care for one another and the world God has given to us to tend.

Pastor Ingrid Wengert

Drama, Arts, and the Church

Scholars generally believe that the origins of drama date back

more than 5,000 years to a prehistoric ritual involving music, dancing, masks, costumes, and repeated symbolic actions. In Greece, beginning in the 6th century BC, the state organized annual dramatic festivals to honor their god Dionysus, taking their subjects from myth and history.

The Bible (*The Book of the Acts of God*) is the story of God's dealing - God's love affair - with His people. It is not full of lectures and monologues, but is the story of God's love told through stories about people - Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Elijah, Jeremiah, Jonah (for fish-lovers), John the Baptist. And then there are the twelve apostles, each one of them a story about God's love (Matthew the tax collector, Peter the Denier, to name just two). St. John begins his magnificent Gospel by calling Jesus "*the Word*" -God's supreme love for us, with Jesus acting out His obedience in death and at the Resurrection.

Drama and storytelling were always part of the unfolding of God's plan. Jesus used stories (parables) to teach, and used miracles to act out the love of God. His disciples continued to use these artful methods to spread the Word before the Gospels themselves were written down.

The tradition of classical drama disappeared with the end of the Roman Empire in the 5th century AD, and after almost 400 years a new tradition grew out of the rituals of the medieval Christian church. Certain sung passages from the

liturgy were elaborated into short dialogues based on passages from the Bible, and these dramas, performed first in churches and monasteries, spread throughout Europe from the 10th to the 13th centuries. Around 1200 AD these plays began to be performed outdoors, and gradually became more and more elaborate. Instead of single biblical scenes or stories, they often included several stories. In England religious plays presented major events from the entire Bible in long cycles, from the creation of the world to the last judgment. Although still sponsored, written and organized by church authorities, they involved entire communities in their staging and performance, which sometimes continued for several days.

In France, plays based on the lives and legends of saints rivaled biblical dramas in popularity and were called *miracle plays*, because they depicted the miracles performed by saints. Plays based on the Bible were called *mystery plays* (from *mysterium*, the Latin for service or office), so called because members of the trade guilds performed them. Another popular type of religious drama of the times was the *morality play* that taught religious lessons using allegorical characters such as Good Deeds, Riches, or Vice. The most famous morality play is *Everyman*.

The miracle play and mystery play came from dramatization of the liturgy of the Roman Catholic Church. Starting with simple texts, they soon added dialogue and dramatic action. Eventually the performance was moved to the churchyard and the marketplace. Given in Latin, the play was preceded by a prologue or by a herald, who gave a synopsis, and was closed by a herald's salute.

When a papal edict in 1210 forbade the clergy from acting on a public stage, the presentation of the plays passed into the hands of the town guilds. The vernacular language replaced Latin, and the acting became more

dramatic. These plays were given on church festival days, particularly the feast of *Corpus Christi*, lasting from sunrise to sunset. Each guild was responsible for the production of a different episode. With simple costumes and props, guild members performed on stages equipped with wheels; each scene was given at one public square and drawn on to its next performance at another, while a different stage succeeded it. Named after the towns in which they were performed, the principal English cycles were the York Plays, the Towneley or Wakefield Plays, the Coventry Play, and the Chester Plays. Many people are familiar with the Passion Play of Oberammergau, the best-known modern example of the miracle play.

Today drama continues as an important element in the congregation. Churches use music as storytelling; anthems are common in all traditions; and longer cantatas have been a long-standing favorite for choirs. Liturgical drama tells the message of Christ in words and body motions and carries on the storytelling traditions of Christ and His early disciples.

Each of us is told to “go into the world, preaching and teaching and baptizing in the Name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit”, and when we do this by using a variety of creative talents and methods, we carry on as our Lord told us to do: “go”!

Saint Matthew Lutheran Church will be presenting The St. Matt Players Oct 3 & 4 in their first three one-act plays. This band of people (ages 10-70+) refuses to let age, experience or anything stop them from spreading the word of God in a new and fun fashion for the congregation. They will offer you stories that are humorous and serious. They may laugh at themselves or at you, but always in *Christian love*. We ask you to remember that any and all messengers, be they prophets, teachers, or great preachers, and *all God's* children are holy when the WORD is spoken.

Nancé Carlson, Director

A day in the life of . . .

The Mutual Ministry Committee had the “enlightening idea” of having staff members tell something of what we do in our jobs/ministries. For some reason the “church ladies” or office staff were selected to “go first”! So here we are, Kim and Rozella, telling you a bit of what it’s like in the church office during a day’s work. We didn’t plan ahead for a particular day but one morning decided that we’d write about that day - and what a day is was!

We’ll set the stage by letting you know what we had planned to do that day. Kim was posting the previous Sunday’s offerings, wrestling with multiple “fund raising categories” and keeping them separate: the Kiddie Carnival, the Bosnia Dinner, the Bosnia pretzel sale, the Jensen Fund - all of these in addition to regular weekly offerings. It was like trying to keep track of whose on first - or second - or third! She was also working on the Sunday bulletin and “What’s Happening” page. Rozella was putting finishing touches on the monthly newsletter, and then copying it, attaching address labels and separating it into zip codes for mailing. In between she was writing and editing mini biographies for the candidates for Congregation Council and trying to obtain the ones she didn’t have.

In spite of our best intentions of accomplishing our goals for the day, they were delayed many times by these various interruptions:

- someone who had reserved our sanctuary for a recital came in to request what she needed for the set up

- because of “squeals” in the copier, a Canon technician stopped to listen while the *Messenger* was running. (It was only one of countless problems since leasing the new copier the year before.)
- a parishioner brought a report, requesting that we type it as well as make copies for the group
- a supervisor from a sports team at the high school stopped by to complete required paper work for a benefit car wash in our church parking lot
- someone from the Tuesday Maintenance Group came to “tack down” cable from the computer router to the telephone system.

Oh, yes, and in the middle of all of this, former members of the congregation stopped by for a visit. Since they live far away now, it was great to see them and there was a lot of “catching up” to do.

The afternoon continued as the morning, with multiple “performance tasks.”

- after installing a much needed new and updated telephone system, the technician had requested we get something called an “I. P. address” and our computer technician said we had to call the phone company. Rozella did this and, in the process, switched phone carriers as had been previously planned - a lengthy transaction after finally getting a “real person”.
- telephone technician returned to complete our telephone installation and said we needed an “internal” I. P. address, not an “external” one as we had secured. Fortunately Rozella had kept the technician’s paper work which proved there was nothing about the “internal” aspect of it
- called back computer technician for “internal I.P. address”
- a phone call from someone (not a member) whose mother had died. His aunt (mother’s sister) had been a member here and he wanted to know when she died and what funeral home had been used. (Of course we had to find the record.)

- someone needed a key and when we went to the key box, there was no key to open the lock. (Someone “walked off” with it!)
- a congregation member came to use our phone to make a couple personal phone calls because she was nearby!

So what do we do all day? Our answer could never be, “Not much!” or “We do our nails!” Somewhere we try to find time to eat our lunches and go to the bathroom - even if it isn’t until the middle of the afternoon. We think of our work as a ministry and in the interruptions of our days we often feel we have been helpful to someone. It might mean, however, that we must put off that day’s goals to another day or stay later in the office to complete them.

Kim Bohley, Office Secretary

Rozella Bower, Office Manager

ADDRESS CHANGE

Susan McLaughlin retired from the Department of Community Affairs of the State of New Jersey on July 31, had settlement on her Moorestown house on August 1 and moved to Avalon, NJ. Susan had worked for the township of Moorestown and the state for a combined total of thirty-two years. She has been an active member of Saint Matthew Church for thirty-four years, during which she served in various leadership capacities.

During the decade of the 90's, when Susan held the office of Vice President of the Congregation Council, the council reorganized and the constitution was changed so that the Chief Lay Officer became known as the President of the Council. (Until then, the Pastor served as President of the Council.) She was the first woman to serve in that capacity and provided strong leadership during a period of turmoil within the congregation.

As Chair of the Memorial Fund Trustees, Susan was instrumental in eliminating the debt owed to the Memorial Fund

by the church due to borrowing funds whenever there was a financial shortage.

She represented Saint Matthew in the community by serving as President of Church Women United for the Moorestown chapter. In addition, she was active in the women's group at Saint Matthew Church and became a Stephen Minister in the first class to complete the extensive training. She has actively participated in worship as a reader, a communion assistant and an usher.

Susan says she is happy to be retired and is looking forward to doing some different things. She and her husband Hugh had spent many week-ends and vacations at their home in Avalon, which they replaced last year just a couple months before Hugh's death from cancer. Her new address is 1759 Dune Drive, Avalon 08202. Her telephone number is 609-967-3125. She is not ready to give up her membership at Saint Matthew just yet because she will be back on some occasions. Her son Gregory lives in Delran; son Jason, who was married last fall, lives in California. Both were confirmed here.

We wish Susan God's peace and many blessings in her retirement years.

PROPERTY MINISTRY

The Property Committee worked on several projects over the summer months. At the request of Worship and Music and the Altar Guild, an overhead fan was installed in the sacristy, primarily by Skip Nice and Duane Gustad. It was a complex project that took several weeks to complete. Material costs for this project came from a grant from the Memorial Fund. Bud Maycott installed a new chimney cleanout in the Education Wing boiler room. He also stripped the finish from the communion rails and put 2 coats of polyurethane on them. The casement window air conditioner in the Sunday School Superintendents office was

removed and refurbished. This again was a complex project since it required working from the roof of the narthex as well as from the office. Some termite damage in the church office ceiling was repaired. Two choir loft chairs were refinished by Paul Otto. Two pedestal fans were purchased for the choir loft to improve the ventilation in the area.

Ray Kuhn repainted the yellow markings in the parking lot, since the color was fading. Brian Schultz repainted the blue handicapped markings in the parking lot, as well as some white lines that were also fading. Dave Rulon repainted the curbs in the parking lot.

The annual cleaning of the pews, altar kneelers and church carpets is scheduled for August 26th as of this writing. This is a major annual expense in excess of \$1,100.

We experienced three minor breakdowns of the sanctuary air conditioning unit during the summer due to 2 blown fuses and a blocked condensate line. Each of these breakdowns was fixed within 24 hours by the Property Committee, saving St. Matthew at least \$300 for service calls from a HVAC contractor.

Utilizing a grant from the Memorial Fund, a new toilet was purchased for the church office and it was installed by the Property Committee.

Brian Schultz

Adult Forum

Sunday Mornings at 9:45 in the Church Library

Topics will continue the subject of *Vocation: "What would God have me to be and to do?"* Professor Timothy Wengert, Ministerium of Pennsylvania Professor of Church History at The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, will give his wise and thorough understanding of Luther's outlook the first three Sundays of this month.

Pastor Bruce Davidson, Director of the NJ Lutheran Office of

Governmental Ministry, has been invited to speak on our political vocation in connection with the upcoming elections on September 28. This will add to our celebration of Bishop Herluf Jensen's life in ministry, which included strong actions in support of social justice and his participation in 1960's civil rights demonstrations in the South. On that day the Adult Forum will be at 8:45 am, BEFORE the single service that morning. September 7:

Vocation: Good Trees Bear Good Fruit

Tim Wengert, Presenter September 14:

Vocation: Good Lutherans Change Dirty Diapers

Tim Wengert, Presenter September 21:

Vocation: Government Is Not a Dirty Word

Tim Wengert, Presenter September

28: *(Note: 8:45 am) Our Political Vocation*

Bruce Davidson, Presenter

YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Youth Gathering Update

Ready to get excited about spending a week with 35,000 of your closest Lutheran friends next July in New Orleans at the Youth Gathering? Our first official meeting is *Sunday, September 7 at 10:45 am* in the Teen Den. Registration forms and the \$125

deposit fee are due to *Lee Zandstra* by September 14. The forms were sent out but if you need an extra, pick one up anytime in the Teen Den. We will be registering our group from Saint Matthew on September 15. Every month we will have one meeting to discuss timelines, the gathering theme of *Jesus, Justice, Jazz*, fundraisers, and other details. Check out the official Youth Gathering website at www.elca.org/gathering. If you have any questions about the first meeting or the Gathering, contact Lee anytime at Lzandstra@ltsp.edu or 610-952-8705. (See other information on the Youth Gathering elsewhere in this *Messenger*.)

Youth Group

Youth Group is starting up again on *Wednesday, September 3rd at 7:00 pm*. Come and enjoy some time of food, fun, and help brainstorm activities for the next year! Our first event will be Friday, September 19th for our annual Lock-In. Contact Lee anytime with any questions or suggestions: Lzandstra@ltsp.edu or 610-952-8705.

Family Bingo Night!

Come for a fun filled night of Bingo on *Friday, September 19th at 7:00* in the Fellowship Hall. There will be food, fellowship, and fun for all ages, with small prizes for winners. The Youth Group Lock-In will begin as soon as Bingo is over. Invite your friends and family and check the weekly inserts in your bulletin for more details!

The \$1 per card will benefit the Youth Gathering trip for our youth.

Family Bingo Night

**Friday, September 19
7:00 pm in Fellowship Hall**

**Food, fellowship, and fun for all ages
Small prizes will be awarded to winners**

\$1 per card

Proceeds will benefit Youth Gathering

NOTES FROM BOSNIA

By Ingrid Wengert

We were surprised to experience culture shock. The element of surprise occurred because it was after we *returned* from Bosnia! We had so quickly grown

accustomed to walking everywhere in each town, seeing children every day and eating somewhat exotic but delicious food.

We are very grateful to the congregation for enabling us to take part in the servant trip. There were thirty-one people from Lutheran congregations around the synod who traveled to Bosnia June 21 – July 6. We hosted day-long camps in sixteen towns and worked with over 2300 children! We formed relationships with our fourteen interpreters, almost all of whom were Muslims from Sarajevo who had lived through the 1992-1995 Bosnian war, including the 3- year siege of Sarajevo. We visited Srebrenica which has once again been in the headlines because one of the people responsible for the slaughter of 8,000 men and boys there, Radovan Karadzic, has recently been found. We visited concentration camps in two cities, rested at a monastery located on a breath-taking peninsula, and formed friendships with two thousand children. It was a difficult, wonderful and amazingly profound experience.

Please come to one of the presentations we'll make in October, listed below. We will share the history of Bosnia, the war, the friendship camps, and our profound experience with the congregation.

Bosnia Presentations

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 our experience with the Friendship Camps that we held.

Sun 10/5, 9:45-10:45am (Adult Forum): Slide presentation
Sun 10/19, 4:00-5:30pm: Presentation & Bosnian refreshments

Celebrating the Fortieth Anniversary

*of the Ordination of
Pastor Herluf Jensen*

Sunday, September 28, 2008

8:45 am: Adult Forum

The Rev. Bruce Davidson: "Our Political Vocation"

10:00 am: Worship Service

at Saint Matthew Church

(only one service; no Sunday Church School)

12:00 noon: Fellowship

1:00 ~ 3:00: Luncheon & Program

Carlucci's Waterfront Restaurant

876 Centerton Road, Mount Laurel

RSVP by September 14

(see reservation cards in packet mailed to each household)

Cards and Notes for Pastor Jensen

*The Jensen Anniversary Committee
is compiling notes, cards and letters for him.*

*Anyone wishing to send a message
in honor of the 40th anniversary of his ordination
(whether or not you are attending the luncheon)
should send (bring it to the church office
by September 19*

*A special thank you ~ to Dave Rulon for helping Susan
McLaughlin move furniture she donated to Lutheran Social
Ministries. Some of it was going directly to a needy family in their
new home and other pieces were going to storage for later use. Thanks
also to Susan for her generous donations. Dr. Elise
Korman*

*RUSSIAN CHOIR TO PERFORM
AT SAINT MATTHEW CHURCH*

LYRA, a professional choir from St. Petersburg, Russia, will be appearing at Saint Matthew Lutheran Church, 312 Chester Avenue, Moorestown, on Sunday evening, September 21, at 7:30 PM.

LYRA is a choir community formed by professional musicians of St. Petersburg, all graduates of the St. Petersburg Conservatory. Their members sing regularly in St. Petersburg churches and musical theatres. Through their concerts, they introduce the music of the Russian Orthodox Church as well as the rich heritage of Russian folk music to audiences throughout the world.

LYRA's programs open with the music of the Russian Orthodox Church, all performed without accompaniment, and then features a collection of Russian folk music, performed in the native costumes of Russia.

In 2001 LYRA was honored by receiving the Montreux (Switzerland) international choral festival diploma, and in 2005 they were a winner of Colerain International Choral Festival in Northern Ireland.

Lyra's concerts feature music of composers well-known to audiences: Bortnjansky, Tchaikovsky, Rakhmaninov P. Tchesnokov, A. Gretchaninov, Igor Stravinsky and other little-known but remarkable composers of the 18th to the twentieth centuries.

The concert is free and open to the public; a freewill offering will be taken.

Further information can be obtained by calling the church office at 856-235-2055.

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.

Currently, synods across the country are holding hearings as an opportunity for members of the ELCA to provide comment on the draft and to listen to others share their perspectives. The task force will then consider these comments when creating the proposed statement, which is the text that will come before the ELCA Church Council and the August, 2009 Churchwide Assembly.

You have two opportunities to read the Draft document, understand it more fully, and listen to one another's perspectives:

- A New Jersey synod hearing will be held at 2:00PM on Saturday 9/20 at Resurrection Lutheran Church in Hamilton Square, NJ.
- 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.

Council Corner

(This monthly segment is intended to be a conduit from your congregation leaders to regularly highlight a few key events – acknowledging there is much more happening, as detailed throughout the rest of this Messenger – and to emphasize current news that is noteworthy.)

“NO, it CAN’T be! Summer just STARTED.”

Yep, it’s true...time for back-to-school. While you remove all the tags from the new school clothes and supplies, allow me to highlight some of the latest news from your Council.

An Exciting and Busy Month Ahead

Of course there is the normal flurry of activities for September:

Rally Day, SCS and Adult Forum kick-off, return to regular meeting schedules, etc. On top of all that, a couple very special activities are planned for this month:

AIM Call Meeting for Bill Lawrence, Sunday, September 14. Following the second worship service, The Rev. Tracie Bartholomew, Assistant to the Bishop, will conduct a special congregation meeting with the sole purpose of holding an election to call William Lawrence to serve as an Associate in Ministry in our congregation. This is the culmination of years of preparation by Bill, including completion of a post-graduate certification program at the Lutheran Theological Seminary of Philadelphia. (More details are found elsewhere in this *Messenger* and will be included in a separate letter to the congregation.) Please come and participate in this important process, and – *if all goes well* – join us for a reception to follow.

The celebration of the 40th Anniversary of Pastor Jensen's Ordination, Sunday, September 28. For this special occasion, we have modified our schedule to just one worship service at 10:00 am to be followed with a banquet at Carlucci's Waterfront Restaurant in Mount Laurel. The Rev. Herluf Jensen was ordained here, at Saint Matthew, in 1968 and served as our pastor for ten years. He then served as Bishop of the New Jersey Synod for thirteen years until he retired in 1991. (Learn more about him by reading the July/Aug. *Messenger* article.) For many, many years he has had an interest in Camden and its youth. Please share your God-given gifts by donating generously to the newly-formed *Pastor Herluf Jensen Fund* which will support the work of the Hopeworks 'N Camden organization that empowers the youth of Camden through technology and a supportive learning environment. Join us for worship and the celebration to follow. **NOTE:** Space at the luncheon is limited and going quickly, so please RSVP soon if you haven't already.

Come One, Come All

Just a reminder that all members are welcome to visit Ministry and Council meetings, normally the first and third Mondays each month, respectively. Please come - if you have specific questions or suggestions; if you're a mentor or confirman; if you're interest in serving; or, if you're just curious about what goes on "behind the scenes."

In His service,
Max Frable AIA, President

REPORT OF TASK FORCE FOR ASSOCIATE IN MINISTRY

Recently, an Associate in Ministry (AIM) Task Force was established to develop an appropriate job description for *Bill Lawrence*, in conjunction with his pending call as an Associate in Ministry here at Saint Matthew Church. The Task Force developed a job description through our meetings and numerous discussions, including helpful input directly from both Bill and Pastor Wengert. Special thanks go to the following people for serving on this task force: *Mary Beckett, Cathy Roberts, Dallas Dorward* and *Bill Acheson*.

Following the 11:00 am Worship Service on *September 14* we will joyfully hold a special congregation meeting to call Bill. Insofar as this is a rostered position, Tracie Bartholomew from the New Jersey Synod, ELCA office will officiate the meeting. The new job description will be available at that time. Please join us!

HELP NEEDED FOR OCTOBERFEST

The Fellowship and Parish Life Ministry is looking for people to help in planning the Oktoberfest, which is scheduled for Saturday, October 18. Anyone interested may sign up on the bulletin board in the church narthex or contact Brandie Plasket, 856-437-6633, bplasket@upenn.edu. This is a popular fun-filled evening for adults and more help is requested.

THE LUNCH BUNCH

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

When I returned home from the Appalachia Service Project trip in early August, I learned that our main food supplier, M&S Produce had ceased operations. Thankfully, I was able to investigate several other opportunities and have found a feasible alternative supplier. We purchased supplies there for our August lunch preparation and it looks as though it will work out with a bit of tweaking here and there. Nevertheless, please keep this ministry in your prayers. Blessed are the flexible....

We welcome you to be a part of this ministry. Our meetings take place in the Teen Den on the second Thursday of the month. The next meeting will be September 11, at 7:00 pm. If you cannot physically participate, but wish to support this ministry, please consider making a financial contribution. Costs are always an issue; more so now that we have to depend on alternate suppliers.

Our patrons love your baked goods, so...if you'd like, 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 till the appropriate time.

God bless you andTHANKS a bunch ... a Lunch Bunch!

William Lawrence
Parish Coordinator

Thank you . . .

Many thanks for the calls, cards, flowers, notes, prayers and visits. A special thank you to the Sunday Church School for their handmade cards. I am grateful for your caring and kindness and especially grateful to Pastor Wengert and the church staff.

Thankfully, Oliver Thomas

APPALACHIA SERVICE PROJECT

*(The Appalachia Service Project (ASP) is an ecumenical ministry that serves the rural poor in the Appalachian mountain area, **making homes warmer, safer and drier.**)*

Lenore, (Mingo County) West Virginia

Those servants attending this year's ASP trip were *Joel Boehmler* and *Maddie Galvin*, along with their friend *Dylan White*; *Ron* and *Jacob Brodie* and Jacob's friend, *Matt Lewis*; and *Bill Lawrence* - three adults and four teens.

We traveled to Lenore, West Virginia and spent the week at the Lenore K-8 School, sleeping on air mattresses on the floor and eating in the school cafeteria, which also served as our evening

gathering place. It was a rather nice facility and was climate controlled, which was wonderful.

We were blessed to serve a senior widow named Mary who lived in a single story frame home. Our mission was to finish up all the loose ends of the prior seven weeks of effort there. Our duties included trenching and sloping rain drains into a large French drain system which traversed the entire length of the rear of the house. (Another work crew on a previous work week had built this drain system to keep mountain rainwater runoff from entering the house.) We also repaired soffit and fascia boards; pieced together and hung gutters and downspouts on the side and front of her home; finished the installation of a shower surround in the bathroom; primed, cut, applied and finished painting molding for the bathroom floor and shower trim, along with various other odds and ends.

To our delight, the home was centrally air conditioned, because of Mary's multiple health issues. (On Thursday of that week, she had to travel to Charleston for MRI diagnostics – quite a trip for one in her condition). After fighting off yellow jackets while eating lunch on the front porch the first day, Mary insisted we eat our lunch around her kitchen table thereafter. So...the next four days we were able to cool off while sharing our lunch with Mary and munching on popcorn which she supplied.. We told stories of our respective lives with this delightful lady and she shared much of her life story with us. On Friday she provided delicious home grown tomatoes and cucumbers, accompanied by a tray of munchies, for our enjoyment. She was constantly thanking us for what we were doing for her.

Monday night was culture night at the center and we were fortunate to have a local resident (Glen) come in and share his musical gifts of singing and guitar/banjo playing with us. One song that particularly stuck in Ron Brodie's mind all week was "Home Grown Tomatoes," and the one lyric he kept repeating over and

over for the rest of the week was, “there’s only two things that money can’t buy, that’s true love ...and home grown tomatoes.”

Mary’s home was a good forty minute drive from the K-8 school and the daily commute was always interesting - made all the more so by the many one way bridges and tunnels we had to negotiate, not to mention the two-way winding mountain roads, which were not really wide enough for two cars to pass alongside one another. One old railroad tunnel in Dingess, WV (built in 1914) was eight tenths of a mile long, with nary a light in sight; that’s right, it was pitch black. Let me tell you it was a very interesting experience for anyone suffering from any bit of claustrophobia; and we travel through it twice daily. The tunnel protocol was - if you see headlights coming at you, wait on the other side until that vehicle, or vehicles, come through. Then when clear, - you entered your side with your headlights on, hoping all the while that no one was approaching from the other direction. Ah yes, what a stimulating way to begin each day! Nevertheless, one couldn’t help but be awestruck by how the two-way, single-lane "tunnel", "bridge", and “back road" etiquette was exercised by everyone to keep the road system functioning so safely and well. You get a crash course (no pun intended) and that's it.....a great way to get a lesson in patience.

On the way home to New Jersey, the teens commented that they were most surprised by the increasing level of generosity Mary showed toward our group as the week progressed. The way their minds work at this age, they couldn't believe that someone like Mary, who seemingly had so little, would offer so much to us each day. Joel explained, “in Mary's mind, having lived in that area of West Virginia for all but four years of her life, she believes that she is quite well off and has more than she thinks she needs (monetarily and spiritually), and, therefore, offered to us the level of kindness and generosity that she felt was appropriate for our needs.”

Joel also said, "... for me it was a motivating factor that Mary was so much like Hassie. (a woman we served in Jonesville, Va. in previous years). The way Mary treated us made me put forth extra effort, extra effort that I may not have put forth (fallible as I am) if the circumstances had been different."

Thank God we had a safe and productive trip. And, speaking for the entire team, we want to thank you for your prayers and financial support which enabled us to go and serve our neighbors in rural West Virginia.

William A. Lawrence,
Parish Coordinator

*Presenting
An Evening of One Acts
Featuring St. Matt Players
October 3 & 4, 2008
7:30 pm in Fellowship Hall
Refreshments
Tickets: \$10*

Plan to be entertained!

Are You 50 years Old or Older?

**Welcome to the OWLS Indoor Picnic
Thursday, September 4
12:00 noon in the church library**

The Older Wiser Lutheran Seniors invite you to the annual indoor picnic and to bring a “memento” from a favorite vacation spot. Call **Mary Cross**, 856.829.7028, if you will contribute a salad or dessert. Everything else will be furnished.

Rally Day Sunday, September 7, 2008

8:30 & 11:00 am: Holy Communion

9:45 am: Sunday Church School:
(meet in the sanctuary)

9:45 am: Adult Forum (in the library)
Professor Tim Wengert

Join a Choir!

Wednesday Rehearsals

5:45 pm ~ Children's Choir (begins 9/10)

(note change in time)

6:30 pm ~ Handbell Choir (begins 9/10)

7:30 pm ~ Adult Choir (begins 9/3)

See David Harp, Cantor for more info

Thank You from a Visitor

(*Pastor Wengert* received the following e-mail from a summer visitor in one of our worship services.)

Just a quick thank you for the wonderful welcome that was extended to me when I visited your worship service yesterday morning (7/20/08). It was truly a blessing to me to have the privilege of worshiping with your congregation. My home congregation is Bethany Evangelical Lutheran Church, located in the South Hills of Pittsburgh, PA, where I am the organist.

I was visiting longtime friends in Mt. Laurel, NJ for the weekend and decided I would take the opportunity to visit a local Lutheran congregation. I opened my laptop and went online on Saturday to locate a nearby church, and St. Matthew was the first one I found. I wasn't quite sure what to expect, but was secretly hoping that I might be attending a service in which one of the new liturgical settings would be in use (we are still using the first setting from the green hymnal at Bethany). So as I entered your building, I was delighted to hear your organist

playing "Glory to God" (the new first setting) as a prelude, and I was pleased to hear you announce that you were learning Setting One incrementally. Even better, the pew I happened to choose placed me immediately in front of a couple of women with beautiful voices (I knew as soon as I heard them sing that they had to be members of the choir). I do believe the Lord had a hand in guiding me to your church and to that particular seat!

I was so moved by your message and the worship experience, I wanted to express my gratitude. If I am in the area again in the future, I will certainly visit again. God bless you all in your ministry.

Mark Gulden

WELCA NEWS

(Saint Matthew Women of the ELCA)

Thanks to your generosity, the Women of Saint Matthew was able to ship fifteen Health Kits to Lutheran World Relief. These kits help people here and abroad who have experienced a disaster. (Hurricane Katrina was such an example of a domestic need.) They will continue to collect items for the kits from anyone in the congregation. Items needed:

- dark color hand towels
- dark color wash cloths
- bath-size soap bar (4.5 oz.) in original wrapping
- adult-size toothbrush in original packaging
- comb, wide tooth preferred, removed from packaging
- metal nail file or nail clippers with file attached (remove

packaging - no cardboard)

· bandaids

A bin is available in the church narthex for depositing items you bring. If you need more information, contact Mae Trebing, 609-239-4942; gtrebing@comcast.net.

Looking ahead - On Saturday, October 11, Saint Matthew Church will host a day-long state-wide meeting of Church Women United. Continental breakfast items and cakes for dessert at lunch are needed. People are also needed to assist with the elevator and with serving. Registration begins at 9:00 am. For information contact Mae Trebing, 609-239-4942; gtrebing@comcast.net.

Morning Circle - Friday, September 12. Contact Virginia Sheppard for details, 856-235-6255.

Hopeworks 'n Camden Creates Milestone

The non-profit organization, Hopeworks 'n Camden recently

presented officials of the city of Camden with the first accurate folding Camden street map in recent memory. (Hopeworks is the organization that will benefit from the Herluf Jensen Fund.) Five thousand copies have been produced by the organization which will be distributed free to the public. The map is paid for by ads sold by the youth to local companies. The ads were designed by the teens and are printed on the map. The maps will be available at various locations, including Camden churches and hospitals. Another 3,000 copies were purchased by a private business and administrators at Rutgers-Camden, who plan to distribute 2,000 to

incoming students. Through Hopeworks teens have worked on mapping projects for six years but this is the first to be printed for public distribution. The map was developed by a team who first plotted it last summer. They then worked with a Geographic Information System director and started with plain linework provided by the county. They checked street names and color-coded highways, proofed the map against existing maps and consulted aerial photographs.

Camden's Christus Lutheran Church Adds Ministry

Christus Lutheran Academy will open on Monday, September 8, as a new outreach ministry of Christus Church. Lynne Rogers, AIM, former principal at Urban Promise Academy, will be the principal. They will begin with a class of 10 or 12 high school freshmen and add one class each year after that. The mission is to provide excellence in both the academic and spiritual formation of the youth and to evangelize the neighborhood for Christ. The congregation is asked to pray for them as they seek potential students and plan to carry out this ministry. More information is at www.christusacademy.org.

**Bethel AME Church
512 N. Church Street, Moorestown
will host a
Health Fair & Senior Expo
Saturday, September 6, 2008
10:00 am - 2:00 pm**

**Health Screening
Vendors and Workshops
(see bulletin board in narthex for more information)**

Memorial Choral Concert at Rowan University

The alumni of Glassboro State College/Rowan University are planning a massed choral concert for Saturday, September 27, at 8:00 pm in memory of the late Clarence Miller, who directed the Concert Choir from 1956-1993. Approximately 200 voices will combine with orchestra to share compositions by William Dawson, Norman Dello Joio, Gabriel Faure, Randall Thompson, John Clements, Mozart, Howard Hanson and others. Tickets in advance are \$15, with the total amount benefitting the scholarship fund in Mr. Miller's name. Contact the box office no later than September 22 at 856-256-4579 to order tickets.

September Staff Anniversary

Rozella Bower ~ 27 years!