

from Pastor Wengert

Parson to Person

On Your Mark, Get Set...Come! Evangelism 101

For the next six months I will write about evangelism, which is an area of special focus in the life of the congregation this year. In 2008, the Congregation Council decided that “witness” was one aspect of our mission statement¹ that needed further reflection and discussion.

Since this is the year of Mark² I thought that he might help us in this endeavor. Hence the title of this series – “On Your Mark, Get Set...Come!”

First off, what does the word “evangelism” mean? The Greek word from which the word originates existed before Jesus was born, but after his death and resurrection, Christians quickly borrowed the word and it has come to be closely associated with Christianity. In Greek, the word *euaggelion* means “good news” (*eu* = well/good; *aggelion*=message³). The English translation of *euaggelion* is “gospel” or “good news”. The English word “evangelism” was created in about the 17th century, but because we no longer use the root word “evangel” as the noun, the connection to “good news” has become obscured. Look at it this way: evangelism means “good news-ism;” evangelical is “good news-ical;” and to evangelize is to “good news-ize.”

Simply put, evangelism means “good news”. This is the heart of Mark’s writing and appears in his very first verse, “The beginning of the *euaggelion* (good news or gospel) of Jesus Christ, Son of God”! Rather than techniques or methods, the word really points to Jesus, as he himself IS the good news. Perhaps in no other experience are the message and the medium tied so closely together. Christ, the Good News, actually comes to those who hear the good news through the medium of the good news! This means that evangelism is not primarily a task to do, but rather, it’s really and truly good news.

Next month: *Hijacking the word “evangelical”*

¹“Saint Matthew Lutheran Church is a community of disciples reaching out through Christ in loving worship, witness and service.” I will use the words “witness” and “evangelism” interchangeably

²The gospel readings on most Sundays this year are selected from the Gospel According to Mark

³In Koine Greek, a double g is pronounced “ng”; thus, angel (messenger) is the root word

**You and your friends are invited for
sampling, mingling and fun
at
The Fifth Annual Saint Matthew
Wine & Cheese Tasting**

**Saturday, February 14, 2009
7:30 ~ 9:30 pm in the Shockey Lounge
Saint Matthew Lutheran Church
\$10.00 per person
Sign up in the narthex.**

*Enjoy wines and cheeses from around the world.
Surprise goodies!
Soft drinks available.*

Come and join our
Family Fastnacht Celebration

Tuesday, February 24, 2009

6:30 pm

(the night before Ash Wednesday)

Parade Supper, Children's Crafts, Fellowship

Free will offering for Appalachia Service Project

Sign up in the narthex or call the church office

Help is needed with set-up and clean-up.

Call Pat Broder 856-608-9310

**Ash Wednesday* Communion
Services**

**Return to the Lord Your God
February 25 ~ 12:15 and 7:30 pm**

**as always, ashes are optional*

All women are invited to the
Tenth Annual Mini Retreat
Sponsored by Saint Matthew WELCA

Saturday, February 7, 2009
9:00 am ~ 12:30 pm
Fellowship Hall
(including breakfast)

Presenter: Rev., Dr. Wil Gafney
Associate Professor of Hebrew and Old Testament
Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia

Donation: \$5.00

*Free will offering to help send adult chaperones from
Bridge of Peace Church to Youth Gathering*

Dr. Gafney is an ordained Episcopal priest and is a member of the historic African Episcopal Church of Saint Thomas in Philadelphia. She is also a member of the Dorshei Derekh Reconstructionist Minyan of the Germantown Jewish Centre. She is a former U.S. Army Reserve chaplain.

Dr. Gafney's research interests include feminist biblical studies, rabbinic studies and issues in translation. Her Genesis Bible study series was published in Abingdon Pastor's Bible Study, Volume III. Her book, *Daughters of Miriam: Women Prophets in Ancient Israel*, will be available at the retreat.

WELCA Morning Circle

The circle meets at 10:00 Friday, February 13, in the Shockey Lounge. **Jeanne Becker** will be the discussion leader on the topic, "Tongue Twister Teasers". Lunch afterwards will be at the Olive Garden, Route 38. Call **Virginia Sheppard** for reservations, 235-6255.

. . . *from the Parish Coordinator*
"Taking AIM" . . . at hunger

Welcome to a brand new series of articles on a very old subject from your newly called, commissioned and installed AIM (Associate in Ministry) Parish Coordinator, **Bill Lawrence**.

For the remainder of this program year - until the end of June - I will be writing a series of articles focused on the subject of hunger. At present, I'm not yet certain where this journey will take us; however, my goal is to increase our awareness and raise our sensitivities to this very chronic and alarmingly critical situation, and to develop an action plan to assist in some way.

I'm sure we've all seen the TV commercials pleading for our assistance to help alleviate the suffering of the children in some country miles and miles away. But...you know what? There is much suffering right here in our own back yards. And, believe me, it's not just the children who are at risk. I remember listening to Dr. Jorgenson, the professor for my last class at seminary, *Ministry with Older Persons*. Every week for the first five or six weeks when we gathered for class, Dr. Jorgenson would remind us that very probably, within a half mile radius of our respective places of worship, some senior citizen was subsisting on a diet of cat food in an effort to save money for much needed, expensive medications. When I first heard this I had trouble processing it. But... can you wrap your mind around this situation - the choice between pet food and people food in an effort to conserve dollars for medication. I can only imagine the various levels of hunger with someone in those circumstances.

I don't know about you, but I often take for granted that there's sufficient food in my home; not only necessary staples, but also treats of all sorts. I seldom give it a second thought. How fortunate am I? How fortunate are many of us? But, what of others? Let's put on our thinking caps and see how we can lend a hand in reducing the numbers of those who go to sleep at night with stomachs growling.

Peace, Bill Lawrence

MINISTRY OF THE MONTH
Spiritual Life

We live in a troubled time, one of conflict in the global world as well as in our country. As we welcome a new president, we are seeing a glimmer of change, a personal belief that we can do better, love our neighbors, and look toward a time of reaching out working for a better tomorrow. February is Spiritual Life Ministry Month - a time to share with you what this congregational ministry is responsible for in helping us all be "Little Christs" in our congregation, community, and larger world around us.

The congregation's spiritual growth travels many paths. During February you will hear about Spiritual Life Ministry and how you can be a part of our shared journey toward a deeper spiritual life. Many of our activities are for those who like to participate in groups: Adult Forum on Sundays (see schedule elsewhere in this Messenger), Men's Bible Study on Tuesdays, Saint Matthew Readers monthly, St. Matt Players, and ministries with Bridge of Peace Community Church in Camden.

For those who prefer to travel their spiritual journey alone, we offer daily Bible reading and completing the Bible in a calendar year; mentoring new members as they begin their spiritual walk at Saint Matthew; Stephen Ministry of one on one support (see article elsewhere in this Messenger); sending cards and notes to our homebound; or simply signing letters to members to share happy and sad moments in their lives. If you would like to join the Spiritual Life Ministry, contact **Nancé Carlson**, chair; **Tom Miller**, Council liaison; **Sue Kuhn**, Stephen Ministry leader; or the Pastor.

Nancé Carlson, chair

Stephen Ministry Is Loving, Caring and Safe

“Since God so loved us, we ought to love one another...if we love one another, God lives in us and His love is made complete in us.” (1 John 4:11-12)

Someone who is dealing with surgery, the death of a loved one, unemployment, separation or divorce, moving into a new town, victim of a crime, homebound, expecting a first child, caring for a special needs child or adult could use a Stephen Minister’s support. We in Stephen Ministry are here to assist you in time of a need such as this or perhaps something else.

A Stephen Minister listens to a care receiver with an open mind and in a confidential, caring and a trusting atmosphere. Our caregivers are trained by a Stephen Ministry Leader Team and commissioned by Saint Matthew Lutheran Church. He or she is someone following a call by God to bring Christ’s love and healing to another person.

Through consistent, weekly conversations with compassionate, skilled listening and caring, healing can and does take place. It might be a few months or many months of loving, follow-up care, but it is God’s love that facilitates and helps the healing whenever there is need. Stephen Ministers are following Jesus’s example of caring service. They are full of faith and trust God to guide them to help you in your time of need.

“How can I help you?”... “What do you want?”... “What do you need?”... “We can talk, read the Bible and pray together.”... “Would it be helpful to use a larger print devotional booklet or listen to the worship services on CDs?” These might be words spoken by a Stephen Minister in getting started with a care receiver. Together, with God’s help, change and coping become a reality.

Stephen Ministers continue the caring begun by Pastor Wengert and complement the overall caring ministry of our congregation. I invite you to consider and pray about becoming part of this valuable ministry either as a trained Stephen Ministry caregiver or as a care receiver when in need. Remember, we are here to help. To learn more, talk with Pastor Wengert or Sue Kuhn. We welcome your participation.

In caring love,

Sue Kuhn, Stephen Ministry Leader

February in ADULT FORUM

Cantor **David Harp** will conclude his series on Lutheran hymnody on February 1. Following that there will be a series on the environment, which actually began with Tanya Barnett’s presentation on January 4 and included information of the ELCA’s social statement, “Caring for Creation”.

February 1: “Singing the Faith” (concluding session); Cantor **David Harp**, leader

February 8: Environmental issues in the work place: **Wayne Becker** and **Brian Slaugh**

February 15: Environmental issues in the work place: **Tom Cassel**, **Max Frable**, **Dick Graybill**

February 22: “Greening the Congregation Handbook”: **Robyn Steiner**, leader

WORSHIP & MUSIC MINISTRY

As we begin the new year, we'd like to first look back at our Advent Season. On December 14th we were blessed with a marvelous concert, "This Night A Wondrous Revelation", orchestrated by our Cantor, **David Harp** and beautifully presented by our choirs. About 160 people thoroughly enjoyed the concert and then most equally enjoyed the fellowship of a pot luck dinner together.

Our three wonderful Christmas Eve services truly enhanced our appreciation of the season and the birth of our Lord. Heartfelt thanks to **Pastor Wengert, David Harp** and all who so graciously shared their time and talent with a grateful congregation.

We thank God for a generous congregation who provided an abundance of poinsettias this year. **Lynne Ganskopp** and her decorating crew used the plants to great advantage so that we were met with a beautiful display on Christmas Eve. We so appreciate Lynne's efforts each season toward making our sanctuary an even more beautiful place to worship.

As we noted in last month's Messenger, our hope is that each Sunday two bouquets will be donated by parishioners to enhance our altar area. For the past few years, the church has been subsidizing the flowers, if they were not donated. This has proven costly and it has been decided that only donated flowers will be purchased. Please see the flower chart on the bulletin board in the narthex and sign for donating flowers in memory or honor of a loved one or for a special occasion. The cost is \$25 per arrangement.

A final note...It was decided to move our wonderful Steinway piano into the library where it can be used for Adult Forum presentations, choir sectional rehearsals, OWLS meetings, play rehearsals and other events. We have needed a better instrument for these purposes and felt the Steinway would fulfill this need.

Chris Cassel, chair

Celebrate Valentine's Day with the OWLS

The Saint Matthew OWLS will celebrate Valentine's Day on **Thursday, February 5, at 12:00 noon**, with a luncheon at Bacio Restaurant, Chestnut Hill Plaza, on Route 130 North & Chestnut Hill Drive, Cinnaminson. A family style meal will include antipasti and a choice of chicken breast sauteed Marsala style, Francese Fillet of Sole, penne pasta in a Pomodoro sauce. Dessert is Bacio's homemade Tira Mi Su. Red and white wine will be available. The cost is \$25 per person, payable to treasurer **Bud Koch** by **Sunday, February 1**.

Saint Matthew Readers

The book group will meet Monday, February 23, at 7:30 pm to discuss *The Shack* by William Paul Young. Pastor Wengert will lead the discussion of this controversial book.

PROPERTY MINISTRY

During December and January the Property Ministry assisted Worship & Music with the annual Christmas decorations. This included set up and taking down of the Advent Wreath in the sanctuary, the Christmas tree in the narthex, the outside creche and figures, the inside creche and figures and the large wreaths in the sanctuary. The Epiphany star was hung in the sanctuary.

Visitor and Staff Parking Spaces

Our parking lot has 4 parking spaces reserved for visitors directly across from the main entrance to the church. We again ask all members of the congregation to use other parking spaces (65 of them) in our parking lot or in the additional spaces in the adjacent paved parking lot during any scheduled church service (Sundays, mid-week Lent, summer mid-week, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day and funerals). Visitor spaces may be used by members when there are no scheduled services.

There are 3 staff parking spaces across from the main church entrance and 2 spaces along the side of the building. Members **should not** park in the three staff spaces across from the entrance during the hours between 8:00 and 5:00 every week day (Monday through Friday) They are needed by the three staff members who work on a regular basis. The spaces along the side of the building are reserved for the pastor and the parish coordinator every day. We would appreciate your cooperation with this policy.

Brian Schultz, chair

Thank you . . .

. . .for decorating

*What a special blessing it was to have so many volunteers come to help with decorating our church just three days before Christmas. Many thanks to: **Chris Cassel, Jackie Diepold, Marge Dorward, Bob Ganskopp, Bill Grosspeter, Duane Gustad, Bud Koch, Ray Kuhn, Bud Maycott, Anne and Paul Otto, Cathy Roberts, Dave Rulon, Joyce and Brian Schultz and Joyce Valore.** Many of these helpers are from our Tuesday Maintenance Group, and I was very grateful for the tremendous amount of work they accomplished. I also appreciated those who donated greens, holly and magnolia leaves: **Chris Cassel, Jackie Diepold, Toni Hopkins, Ray Kuhn and Joyce Schultz.** A very special thank you to all who gave their time to beautify our church for the Christmas season. **Lynne Ganskopp***

(And once again, a special thanks to Lynne for all her work in planning and adding her “finishing touches” to the decorations. Rozella Bower, editor)

. . . for giving

We wish to thank everyone who gave so generously for the “Giving Tree” for Family Service of Burlington County. It was wonderful to see how quickly the names were removed from the tree. Before the 8:30 service, 80 tags with names decorated the beautiful tree. After the 11:00 service, the tree was bare. For many of the children, your gifts may have given them special memories to last a lifetime.

*Again, thank you for sharing your blessings, **Joyce Hagen and Vicki Seehafer***

. . . for cleaning the property

We give thanks to God for the members of the congregation who helped in the Fall Clean-up morning on November 22: **Bruce Arruda, Barry Grahn, Ed Hammond, Dennis Lawrence, Anne & Paul Otto, Mike Jacobs, Bill Lawrence, Bob & Lynne Ganskopp, Bud Maycott, Duane Gustad, Max Frable, Bud Koch, Charlie Lange, Sue Kuhn, Dave and Hollis Rulon, Rob and Bruce Swanson, Pat, Ron, Jacob and Samantha Brodie, Joyce & Brian Schultz, Dallas Dorward, Andrew Cross, George Boehmler and Pastor Wengert** We also thank **Brandie Plasket** who provided the light lunch on behalf of the Parish Life Ministry. **Brian Schultz**

. . for giving blood

The Red Cross Blood Drive on Friday, January 23, was very successful, thanks to all of you. There were 56 donors, 8 of whom were able to give 2 units so there were 64 units of blood products collected. The double donations are done by a special machine which takes the red blood cells out and then returns the plasma component back to the donor (which feels cold when no longer at body temperature). To give 2 units at once, a person must be of a certain height, weight and hematocrit concentration. I especially wish to thank the callers, **Jeanne Grayson, Nancy Nugent, Sue & Ray Kuhn, Joyce Schultz and Doreen Lawrence.** Thank you one and all.

Dr. Elise Korman

COUNTDOWN TO THE 2009 YOUTH GATHERING

New Orleans, Louisiana

July 22-26, 2009

Based on Philippians 2:1-8, the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering will look and feel like a servant school. At the center of the Gathering program is a deepening of our awareness of God's call to servanthood, and a deepening of the basic Christian practices by which we live our baptismal calling to servanthood throughout life. (from www.elca.org/youth/gathering.html)

Wow – with less than seven months to go, registration has now closed for the Gathering. That means more than 3,000 youth from across the country and beyond are set to join us in New Orleans this summer. Saint Matthew is sending 6 youth and 3 adults. We have also partnered with Bridge of Peace to help them send youth and adult chaperones who would not normally be able to attend.

We've been busy raising money for the trip; we estimate the cost at \$1,000 per person. In addition to several fundraising events, those who are interested in helping out may drop a donation in the offering plate or at the church office, labeled: YOUTH GATHERING.

But this isn't the only way you can help. We need EVERYONE in the congregation to pray for us, now as we plan and later as we serve in New Orleans this July. Thank you for your support!

SILENT AUCTION TO BENEFIT

“YOUTH GATHERING” TRIP

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA) will be holding a National Youth Gathering in July 2009 in New Orleans. Over 30,000 Lutheran youth will take over the city for a week of worship, service, and fellowship. Nine of our youth and adults have made a commitment to attend this youth gathering.

In support of this event, our Youth and Family Ministry is sponsoring a silent auction to be held February 22 through March 1, 2009. This is a new event for our congregation but an exciting one!

We are asking for the congregation's help in making this auction a success. We are looking for new items, small and large, and would greatly appreciate your participation. You can drop them off any time in the Teen Den in the basement, clearly marked for the auction. If you have difficulty getting them here, we would be happy to pick them up. Donations are due by Sunday, February 15, and are tax deductible. Please contact **Lee Zandstra** with any questions, 856-437-6633 or ltspgirl@yahoo.com.

The auction items will be on display, with a bidding sheet for each item. People should write your name and bid on the sheet for the items you wish to bid on. After the 11:00 service on March 1, the bidding sheets will be collected and the winners notified. Payment should be made by check, payable to Saint Matthew Church, indicating “Youth Gathering Trip” on memo line.

20th Annual

CONFERENCE ON CONGREGATIONAL MINISTRIES

Sponsored by the NJ Synod, ELCA

March 28, 2009; 8:00 am ~ 3:30 pm

Steinert High School, Hamilton Square, NJ

"Opening the Book of Faith"

Dr. Timothy Wengert, Keynote Speaker

Professor of Reformation History

The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia

3 Workshop Opportunities

including sessions on

Leadership, Mission & Ministries,

Justice & Peace, Serve Now!,

Children, Youth & Family,

Stewardship, Book of Faith,

Worship/Discipleship

Workshops for children

Lunch available

Registration forms coming soon

News from HOPEWORKS 'N CAMDEN

(excerpts from a thank you letter received before Christmas)

“Despite the looming possibility that this year will bring one of the highest homicide rates ever in Camden, Hopeworks has been overflowing with opportunities for learning, laughing and hoping. It would not be possible without the support of our website clients, our grantors, and individual donors. Thank you for the hope that you helped to provide to our youth!

Our Web and GIS Businesses continue to meet the needs of our clients, produce income, and provide jobs for our youth. The GIS team was busy producing, funding, and distributing the map of Camden...over 8,000 copies! The GIS business also made headlines with an interactive map produced for the Camden City Prosecutors Office, which allows residents to log quality of life issues with the city government.

The Web team has completed its first client video, a seven minute film for Big Brothers Big Sisters. Hopeworks was able to offer work opportunities in the Web Business to 28 youth in the summer. Two youth recently completed the training curriculum and earned jobs in our Web Business.

Our Hope Through School program has offered technology training and job opportunities, coupled with academic support. The youth learned video editing and wrote, recorded and edited short movies about their lives. (See www.hopeworks.org/film) Hopeworks continues to provide one-on-one academic work with our Hope Through School youth. This individual attention and focused work resulted in an average increase of 2 grade levels in their test scores.

Finally, and I believe most importantly, we are moving along in our plans for C.R.I.B.: Community Responding In Belief. The proposed residential program is targeted to Hopeworks youth 18 to 23 years old. It will seek to create a youth community where eight to twelve youth will live while continuing to work at Hopeworks, attend college, and have business internships.

Your support has helped make all of these things possible. I thank you and pray that you and all of your loved ones remain safe and blessed.”
Father Jeff Putthoff, Executive Director

Note this: A CD of the Power Point presentation given by Cynthia Jensen at the luncheon to honor Pastor Jensen in September is available in the church office. It needs to be viewed from a computer. Be sure to sign your name if you borrow it.

Used candles

The Altar Guild has a number of used altar candles which they would like to give away if someone wishes to have them. Contact Joyce Schultz or Cathy Roberts or the church office.

Community News

. . . from Bridge of Peace (our partner in ministry)

On January 11, the congregation remembered their baptisms and thanked God for the gift of being a family of faith marked with the cross of Christ forever. On January 6 (Epiphany) thirty-three children chose a gift which the Magi dropped off for them at Bridge of Peace. One of their new members shared the story from her homeland of the Dominican Republic which included putting out grass, water and mints for the magi and their donkeys as did others from Puerto Rico and Spain.

. . . from Rainbow of Hope

This organization that helps single mother families find housing and jobs is in need of mentors. They will attend classes for new families in the program. Contact Krista Richie, 856-667-4735, if interested.

. . . from New Vision Community Services of Camden

Alisa Reichert, a volunteer from Germany, is helping at New Visions until August 2009 and is also working at Christus Lutheran Church in Camden.

After months of renovations, there is a “new” kitchen at New Visions. Improvements include a double stove; flooring throughout the kitchen and eating area; two offices where the stage was in the main eating room; lockers for patrons; and a wheelchair ramp.

Last August the New Visions Board met with Lutheran Social Ministries of New Jersey to discuss partnership opportunities. Ms Carol Riley has been on extended medical leave and LSMNJ is now serving as interim director until such time as Carol returns or if a new full-time director needs to be found. **Lee Zandstra**, a member of our congregation is now serving in the capacity of interim director. She wrote recently in a newsletter article about her experiences, which is excerpted below:

Through my time at New Visions I have heard the stories of so many people struggling with their homelessness or the possibility of becoming homeless. Their ongoing battles with mental illness, drug and alcohol addiction, and poverty are visible on their faces and in their voices as they talk with me. In the midst of so many life obstacles our patrons have a place where they find rest, refreshment, and support. Not a day goes by that I ever question the necessity or mission of New Visions.

. . . from the Moorestown Board of Education

A symposium for Moorestown residents will be held February 24, 7:00 - 9:00 pm in the William Allen Middle School Media Center. “Defining the Leadership Challenge” will be presented by Dr. Michael Useem of the Wharton School and author of “Go Point”.

. . from Rainbow of Hope

A Fastnacht Tea with Silent Auction and Chinese Auction to benefit Rainbow of Hope will be held Sunday, February 22, at 2:00 pm at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 26 Forklanding Road, Maple Shade. The contribution is \$10.00 per person. Auction items include a weekend in the Poconos, a football autographed by the Eagles, and an authentic Flyers puck.

IHN HOST in FEBRUARY

It is our turn to host the guests of Interfaith Hospitality Network the week of February 8 - 15. Help is needed with preparing meals, staying overnight, acting as greeters, purchasing food for breakfasts and lunches, etc. See the sign up board in the narthex of the church and plan to help with this Social Concerns Ministry project.

The following letter was received from IHN of Burlington County:

On behalf of the Interfaith Hospitality Network of Burlington County, I would like to thank you for your generous donation which provided shelter, meals and services for a homeless parent or child! So far this year (December 2008) we received over 366 calls for assistance and provided meals, shelter and support to 25 homeless local families, including 55 children. No other resource would have been available for these families. Unfortunately we're seeing how much harder it is for our families to succeed this year as rents continue to increase. Two families had to move out of state recently. Although the many services provided by volunteers keep our program low-cost, donations such as yours are essential so that we can maintain required insurances, operate the IHN van, heat/cool the Day Center and all of the other essential expenses that add up year round.

We very much appreciate your support as we provide help, hope and safe haven for families seeking employment and housing in Burlington County.

Letter to the congregation. . .

Bill Lawrence was commissioned by Bishop Riley as an Associate in Ministry in our congregation on Sunday, December 21. We received the following letter from the congregation of Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church in Burlington:

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus,

*We send our greetings and congratulations to you on this special day in the life of your congregation, as you commission Bill Lawrence as your AIM in residence. Thanks be to God for the gifts, experience and commitment Bill brings to your congregation and community. We are remembering your congregation this day in the Prayers of the Church, and pray for many years of meaningful and loving ministry together with your new servant in ministry.
Grace and Peace, Pastor Harold Peeders.*

Auxiliary of Lutheran Care at Moorestown

Members of the Lutheran Care at Moorestown Auxiliary will be in the narthex between services on Sunday mornings in February to accept contributions to the Auxiliary. Your monetary gifts make possible the purchase of items that are useful for the residents. They also help with taking residents for meals at restaurants, for monthly birthday celebrations and for special occasions such as the upcoming Valentine's Day party. We appreciate your generosity in helping make life more enjoyable for those at Lutheran Care.

Elise Korman and Jan Miller, Key Women

The Little Lutheran is a colorful magazine for children 6 and younger that teaches through stories, songs, activities, prayers and ritual that Jesus is both savior and friend and reminds them how much God loves them. Individual subscriptions are \$24.95 per year (10 issues). If there are 6 or more subscriptions, the cost is \$12.95. Call 800-328-4648; e-mail subscriptions@augzburgfortress.org or call the church office.

Documentary with World Religious Leaders on DVD

In God's Name, the documentary featuring Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson and 11 other world religious leaders, which aired on CBS network television in December is now available on DVD. It explores complex questions of our time through the intimate thoughts and beliefs of 12 of the world's most influential spiritual leaders. Besides Bishop Hansen, they include the head of the Russian Orthodox Church, Pope Benedict, the Dalai Lama; the chief rabbi of Israel, the archbishop of Canterbury, the President of the Southern Baptist Convention; leaders from the Hindu, Shi'ite Muslim, Shinto, Sunni Muslim and Sikh religions. The DVD and a book of photographs is offered through *National Geographic* and is available at retail outlets across the country and online. Get more information about the program and a study guide at www.elca.org/ingodsname.

News from ELCA Global Mission Support

In a thank you for our support of Dennis Murnyak and Stephen Deal, we received news of the ELCA mission work through the Office of Global Mission Support. In Central Africa, "maboko na maboko" means "hand in hand." ELCA Global Mission personnel live, work and embody a mission model called *accompaniment* - a mutual relationship between companion churches, where we walk together, hand-in-hand with one another in mission.

Lutherans from the United States have been serving around the world for more than 160 years and have a history of working alongside other people of faith. This summer, the tradition continued as **80 new missionaries** completed missionary orientation. As of October, 268 missionaries now serve in 46 countries. They include 109 long-term missionaries, 16 contract missionaries, 33 2-year missionaries, 51 volunteer missionaries, 38 Young Adults in Global Mission, 1 global sabbatical professor, 15 global mission associates, and 5 seminary interns.

Semi-annual Meeting Report

The semi-annual meeting of the congregation was held Sunday, January 25, following the 11:00 worship service. Items for discussion included a report of the Capital Campaign, a review of last year's expenses and a presentation of the 2009 budget.

A total of \$155,553 was received in pledges and monetary contributions for the Capital Campaign. While it was not the total amount requested, it is enough to pay for non-discretionary items, which include repayment of monies borrowed from the Memorial Fund for budget deficit, mortgage payments for the property next door, the pledge to the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia building campaign, the new telephone system, and a new gym roof. If funds are contributed as pledged, there will be an excess for discretionary distribution. The Congregation Council brought a recommendation to contribute \$500 per month to Bridge of Peace Community Church in Camden (our partner in ministry) for the next 30 months and at the end of that term to give another percentage of remaining funds. A motion was approved to take another look at the contributions and expenses at next January's meeting before determining the final distribution of any excess funds beyond the 30-month distribution to Bridge of Peace. This motion was approved.

The treasurer's report was approved as presented. The year-end deficit for 2008 was \$13,842.00 (which will be covered in the Capital Campaign). The 2009 budget was also approved as presented. Because of the economic situation, there were no increases in salaries, ministry budgets and other items. In some instances, budgets have been cut, the largest being in Evangelism, which voted to eliminate the Kiddie Carnival in May (an expense of \$5000 in 2008); instead the church will have a booth at Moorestown Days in June.

Many thanks to our treasurer, **Tom Cassel**, and the Finance Committee for their diligent work.