



Emmanuel News Notes

March, 2009

Pastor Lookingbill ponders. Lent

Dear Friends,

The Church calendar is divided into different seasons, highlighting for each year the beginning of the life of Jesus, the importance of his arrival as a human being among mere mortals, his ministry and teaching, his last week before crucifixion and death on the cross and then the Resurrection and the wonder of God’s gift of Life over death! Most of our summer is devoted to the age of the Church, what Christian folks have done having received the gift of faith and the means of Grace in Baptism and Holy Communion.

The forty days leading up to Easter each year (not counting Sundays) is celebrated as Lent, the “lengthening of days.” It’s true that each day after the winter equinox brings more light, and the Church celebrates this increasing light as a reminder of the Light that has come into the world through Jesus. St. John says “the true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.” And St. Matthew says “You are the light of the world,” meaning that the members of the Church are still bringing this Light to the nations. Lent is filled with the increasing light, but it is also remembered as a devotional time, a series of more than six weeks that reminds us of the Life Jesus offered for us, the suffering he endured for us and the glory of God’s promise of eternal Life without fear of death.

So, what are we to do with this season of Lent in the Church? Gone from most American Lenten practice is the fasting, giving up “something” for Lent that can be a daily reminder of what Christ has given up for us. There was a time when members of the Church would give up chocolates, sodas or even bread! That wasn’t too bad for a diet either! Where most Roman Catholics practiced meatless Fridays when I was in high school, even they have reduced the number of days for such discipline. Some of us in the Church try to think of something that we’d like to add to our lives instead of taking away; perhaps we’ll volunteer at a nursing home, or take a meal to someone we know to be sick or volunteer to feed the homeless. There are even some who promised themselves (and God) that they will pray more regularly, read the Bible during Lent and attend a Bible Study group! All those things are certainly available for those who want to remember Christ in a special way during Lent. We will have opportunities at Emmanuel for anyone who wants to practice a special Lenten discipline this year with Bible study.

For Martin Luther, Lent was a serious time of thought, prayer and serious reading of the Bible. The depth and authority of scripture is commanding in the life of a Christian, and the serious study of the Gospels is not only a way to unite with the Christians who have lived before us, it is more importantly a means to understand the purpose that our God has for all of humankind.

In a world that is filled with violence – wars, means of mass destruction, lies and economic recessions – a world that Jesus viewed from the ground up and not just from the heavens down, God sent a savior to shed Light on a darkening landscape. As the Bible says, even one burning candle brings light to the whole room! Even in a world of violence, amid the pain and hurt of death and separations, the light of the Gospels brings hope and joy to those who can hear that good news. When you visit someone in a nursing home, or someone in the hospital, or someone who has been displaced by a natural disaster or an economic disaster, you bring Light into a human life. And, as the surgeons tell one another, by a single act of skillful kindness, you have saved a whole world! Someone’s whole world is changed by even one act of compassion and generosity.

Where does the motivation come from to act in this way? Where does the thought come from to carry out such a grand scheme? Where does the generosity come from in a world that seems to overflow with evil thoughts and ugly gestures? Christ came to be born in a manger, a simple place where the world comes to feed. Jesus has fed his disciples with the bread and wine of ample

DATES OF NOTE

- March 8 Daylight savings begins
- March 8 Chili cook-off (page 9)
- March 12 Study with Har Shalom (page 2)
- March 13 Movie night (page 8)
- March 15 Confirmation classes lead worship
- March 15 Meeting for youth going to New Orleans
- March 16 Fun Bunch Lunch
- March 29 Holy Land symposium (page 5)
- March 20-22 Shekinah Retreat
- March 29-30 Confirmation Retreat at Hallowood

WORSHIP

Sunday 8:30 & 11:00
Sunday School 10:00 a.m.

living, faithful caring and gentle healing. As we live in Christ, we too carry the motivation, the insight and the generosity to build a community of God's eternal Love.

This Lent is another opportunity for us all to read Holy Scripture, to pray and consider devotions and to shower the world where we live with acts of caring kindness.

In Christ's Service,

Jan P. Lookingbill, Pastor

Wednesdays offer a chance to:

Study the **Gospel of Mark** MORNING BIBLE ENCOUNTER

Beginning this Lent, Pr. Lookingbill will begin a new study of the Gospel of Mark. Although this is the shortest of the four Gospels, Mark is a dynamic story of Jesus at work in a world that needs healing, vision, and God's power breaking in! Jesus is the Son of God, teaching about the Kingdom of God among the people of God. Join us on Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. in the Christian Education room; bring a lunch and enjoy a favorite dessert by one of the members of the group.

Study EVENINGS with DIETRICH BONHOEFFER

Pr. Lookingbill will continue a Wednesday evening study series based on Dietrich Bonhoeffer's book on *Life Together*, during Lent. The thrust of this Nazi-era Pastor and theologian's writing is that living in a Christian community is different from living in a neighborhood or a city. Based on our relationship with Christ, the Christian community is a living and breathing example of Christ's love for people, his compassion, and his healing for the pain and disappointment of life. We are able to gather diverse folks into one community through faith, living without fear and with a sense of joy in the differing talents of others. There is time for a day with others, as well as a time for a day alone. Join us on Wednesday evenings for supper at 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall and/or for study in the Christian Education room at 7:30.

Parish Life Expresses Thanks

Thanks to everyone who baked for the Congregational Breakfast and a special thanks to Patti Leppert and Barbara Coloney for helping to set up and to clean up afterwards. It is just such cooperation that helps to make everything work.

THE INTERFAITH STUDY WITH HAR SHALOM CONTINUES ON 12 MARCH

Rabbi Leonard Cahan and Pr. Lookingbill will continue their Interfaith Study on Elijah and Elisha at Har Shalom on 12 March at 7 p.m. At the last meeting, the stories of Elisha were studied in detail, noting that he was a prophet comfortable with kings and the common folks, able to visit the great cities as well as the small villages. The Bible reports that Elijah performed 8 miracles, but Elisha received a "double portion" and performed 16! What is the importance of Elijah's words in the last book of the Christian Old Testament, in Malachi? Join us in March for our next session as we deepen our understanding of the impact of these two visionary prophets and their influence on Judaism and Christianity.



Remember to set your clocks ahead on March 8. Daylight savings time begins at 2 a.m. on Sunday, March 8.

Emmanuel News Notes is published eleven times a year by Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 7730 Bradley Blvd, Bethesda, Maryland 20817, Telephone: (301) 365-5733; Fax: (301) 365-9236 Email: info@elcbethesda.org website: www.elcbethesda.org

Pastor:	Rev. Jan P. Lookingbill
Youth & Family Ministry	Rev. Robert L. Lewis
Council President	James McGee
Parish Administrator	Katherine Burrell
Director of Music	Dingwall Fleary
Joyful Praise (Children's) Choir	Susan Drumm

Emmanuel to Host Simulcast

As part of our Evangelism effort this year, on **May 8**, Emmanuel's Fellowship Hall will be the site of a one-day inspiring leadership Simulcast event. The speakers for this live broadcast from Atlanta will be:

Kevin Carroll, Former Nike creative team member, author, speaker

Linda Kaplan Thayer, Creator of Aflac ad campaign, CEO, best-selling author, *The Power of Nice*

Al Weiss, President, Walt Disney Parks & Resorts

John C. Maxwell, Leadership expert, best-selling author

Tony Blair, Former Prime Minister of the UK

Jack Nicklaus, Internationally acclaimed golf champion

Bill George, Harvard Business professor, Former Medtronic CEO, author

Liz Murray, Inspirational speaker, "Homeless to Harvard"

Mark Sanborn, Best-selling author, *The Fred Factor*

Ernie Johnson, Host, TNT's *Inside the NBA*

At the 2009 event, the speakers will address a variety of leadership topics including:

- How to converge people with organizational purpose
- How to overcome personal and professional adversity
- How to embrace change
- The keys to building strong teams
- Best practices for balancing the needs of customers, employees and company shareholders

The idea is for business leaders in our congregation to purchase tickets as well as invite and host other professionals they interact with on a daily basis. Many of these acquaintances would not set foot in a church were it not for a compelling reason. The core need of businesspeople is that they want to improve their positions and see immediate returns on time, talent, and investments. The Maximum Impact Simulcast will engage attendees at the heart of their need. Each speaker will illuminate practical principles and leadership insights which will help attendees advance their leadership capabilities. Evangelism will be providing a preview of the event along with highlights from the 2008 event on March 8 between services. <http://www.maximumimpactsimulcast.com/attend>.

Ticket prices for this day-long event will be offered for \$99 per person which includes a continental breakfast and catered lunch. We have a site license which provides Emmanuel with 60 tickets to sell and we need a sellout! The fee will be \$79 per ticket for those individuals or organizations purchasing 5 or more tickets. We will also be soliciting sponsorships from local businesses. All proceeds from the event will go to Emmanuel Lutheran Church. Please contact the church office, Kurt Einwaechter or Deborah Kalas to purchase tickets.

Christian Education Notes

SUNDAYS

Sunday School - 10 a.m. in the Atrium and Classrooms

The pre-K to sixth grade Sunday School classes will meet in the Atrium at 10 a.m. with opening songs and prayers. The seventh and eighth grade classes will meet in room 10 for a look at the week's scripture lessons and how they can be viewed in light of the previous week's events. The High School class will meet in the youth room and begin a study using movies, contemporary music and TV shows.

March 1 Regular Sunday School Lesson
 March 8 Regular Sunday School Lesson
 March 15 Regular Sunday School Lesson
 March 22 Regular Sunday School Lesson
 March 29 Group Opening on Interfaith Clothing Drive,
 Regular Sunday School Lesson
 April 5 Group Lesson for Palm Sunday

Bible Study - 10 a.m. in the Parlor

Kristi Johnson and Diane Swenson are continuing the Adult Bible Study during the Sunday School hour. You are welcome to join them anytime. Grab your cup of coffee and bring a Bible.

Adult Forum - 10 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall

The Adult Forum is an opportunity to have a Christian discussion on the issues of the day. All are invited.

CONFIRMATION

The Confirmation Classes meet on Monday afternoons from 4:30 to 5:45 p.m.

March 2 Prepare for Confirmation-Led Service
 March 9 Regular Classes
 March 16 Regular Classes
 March 20 - 22 Shekinah Retreat
 March 23 Regular Class
 March 29 - 30 Hallowood Retreat
 April 6 No Class

Other Christian Education Opportunities

Wednesday Morning Bible Study with Pastor Lookingbill 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Bring your lunch and enjoy a discussion on the book of Mark.

Wednesday evenings, Pastor Lookingbill will lead a discussion of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's book *Life Together*

Congregation meets, hears, and votes. Budget passes.

The congregational meeting held on February 1 considered the proposed budget for 2009. Reports from the treasurer, financial secretary, and the president painted a mixed picture. Income was generally ahead of last year for the first 10 months or so of 2008. As the general economy began to swoon, so did the offerings received here at Emmanuel. Had it not been for the the receipt of a generous bequest from the estate of a member, the financial picture at the end of the year would have been much worse. On the other hand, the year ended with a small surplus.

The new budget contains funds for necessities (mortgage, insurance, utilities) and a modest increase in compensation for our staff, funds for some needed maintenance and repairs, and funds for the continuation of our programs. It was emphasized that expending these program funds may be held to the minimum until it is clear where the finances of the congregation are headed.

When the vote was taken, the budget was approved without dissent.

Cranberry Book now leads us into Lent.

Emmanuel has used the Cranberry Book (the new hymnal) for about a third of the year. There are still many who are less than thrilled by this addition to our worship. Some of the discontent, of course, is due to the change from familiar liturgy to new settings. Some is from the physical makeup of the book. The pages are of very thin (although apparently strong) paper. The type faces are small and in the relatively dim light often present in the sanctuary they are hard to read—well hard for some of us. The changes in some of the rites (baptism, for example) seem unduly wordy and it is still unclear why the creeds had to be modified yet again (each succeeding worship book seems to find something to tweak in the creeds—some of us older ones still tend to think “quick and the dead” and we aren’t afraid to use the term “Holy Ghost” either).

It isn’t obvious why the color was chosen, but it is attractive. Unfortunately, the name “Cranberry” suggests a sour fruit and, so far, this worship aid tends to leave a fairly sour taste. It was really brought home not too long ago when the old hymn that begins “Joyous things of thee are spoken, Zion, City of our God...” was announced and then we discovered that it had been set to truly unfamiliar music.

Perhaps, as we get used to this book, its quirks and deficiencies will recede and its strengths will become more obvious to us. Let us hope so, because we’re likely to be living with this hymnal for another thirty years.

Lenten Devotional Book now available for use

The 2009 version of the Emmanuel Lenten Devotional is now ready and available to assist you in your Lenten journey. Members of Emmanuel, staff, and friends have considered texts from scripture and have meditated upon them. This thoughtful collection of brief meditations and prayer has been gathered with the idea of helping users to focus their thoughts as we prepare to celebrate Easter and all its glory.

Pick up a copy in the narthex and use it to think on things that might otherwise escape your notice. Being constant in prayer does not mean being constantly at prayer, but, rather, being in a relationship with God that is open and receptive. This booklet may be helpful.

OPERATION WELCOME HOME (MARYLAND) MARCH, 2009

Hundreds of US Sailors, Airmen, Soldiers and Marines return from the War on Terror every week through the gates of BWI airport. Operation Welcome Home (Maryland) averages about one welcome home per week. Volunteers package "goodie bags" for the troops. The troops come through Baltimore for connecting flights. Many of them are hungry, thirsty, and tired from their travels.. This small gift bag of water and snacks sends a meaningful message - They are OUR men and women, and we Thank God that they've come home safely. The Outreach committee has once again chosen this for our March program. Your response last year was overwhelming! We hope it is again this year! \$5 pays for one Goodie Bag. You may also include a personal note or card.

This program will run March 8 and March 15. Thank you for your generosity! Remember... it would be great to write a note and bring that with your donation.

I would like to cheer up our returning service men and women. I would like to contribute—

_____ \$5.00 to purchase 1 gift bag

_____ \$20.00 to purchase 4 gift bags

Another amount: \$ _____

Name _____

From the Council President:

Greetings

In my letter last month I lamented that offerings had dropped off a precipitous 30% in December. At the congregational meeting on February 1st, the congregation approved a budget that can only be called balanced because it:

- 1 Uses the surplus from 2008 to balance the 2009 budget
- 2 Does not fund reserves
- 3 Reduces raises for staff

In addition, the surplus from 2008 was only possible because one of our members left Emmanuel a generous bequest.

I want to thank each of the Council members for their support through some difficult discussions to reach agreement on the final budget that was presented to the congregation. I especially want to thank chair of the Finance Committee, Wayne Hunley, and Treasurer, Tim Hando, for the many hours they put into the various versions of the budget that we discussed.

The financial results from the first month of the new year remind us that December offerings were not an exceptional event and that Emmanuel is not isolated from the financial downturn that is hitting the nation. Offerings were down 20%.

But Ginger Boone reminds me that not all is bleak at Emmanuel. This year the congregation provided a record level of support to Gifts of Hope.

The congregation's budget struggles in recent years are also a reminder that the congregation relies on members who remember Emmanuel in their wills. Anyone who has any questions about how they can leave a bequest to Emmanuel should get in touch with Tim Hando or Bob Pillote or any member of the Endowment Committee. They will surely point you in the right direction.

You will likely be getting this newsletter just in time for the Treasures of Emmanuel concert on February 28th. This is one additional reminder of the gifts that we offer each other.

At the end of the month (March 29), Donna and I will be attending the synod event: "Lutheran Witness in Palestine: Grace Under Pressure." The Lutheran bishops had their annual convocation in Bethlehem and Jerusalem during the time of the assault on Gaza. We are anxious to learn from Bishop Graham's experience. The ELCA website has a lengthy report on their time in Palestine.

If the people in Palestine can find hope in a situation that appears bleak to those on the outside, we surely can find hope that Emmanuel will weather this financial storm.

Peace and Joy

Jim McGee

Synod Sponsors Symposium

On Sunday, March 29, the Metro DC Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) will host a symposium, Lutheran Witness in Palestine: Grace Under Pressure, from 2 to 8pm at Reformation Lutheran Church on Capitol Hill. The symposium will feature three primary speakers:

- * The Rev. Susan Wilder, Director of Middle East Policy at the ELCA's Washington office;
- * The Rev. Mark Brown, Lutheran World Federation representative in Jerusalem;
- * Bishop Richard Graham, Metropolitan DC Synod, ELCA, who recently traveled to Israel and the Palestinian Territories with the ELCA's Conference of Bishops

The purpose of this symposium is to describe Palestinian Lutheran life in its present reality and its hopes for the future; to present the perspective and programs of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in regards to the Middle East conflicts; to allow Bishop Graham to present reflections from his recent trip; to encourage responsible actions toward peace on the part of individuals and congregations; to pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

Bishops visit Holy Land

The Rev. Mark Hanson, Presiding Bishop of the ELCA, and the Rev. Susan C. Johnson, National Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, led a delegation to the Holy Land. The report which they issued begins: "After two years of planning, bishops, their spouses, and staff members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) traveled to the Holy Land for the **Bishops' Academy**, an annual gathering for study and worship. The trip was planned as a witness to God's will for a just peace for all people and as an expression of accompaniment with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL) and ministries of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF)." The full report and their comments upon that region of the world may be found in a link on our congregation's web site or at the ELCA website under Bishop's Statement. (<http://www.elca.org/bishopstatement>).

Parish Vital Records

Deaths

John Blum, 29 January 2009, friend of Dingwall Fleary

Barbara Herman, 30 January 2009, aunt of John Herman

Rose Lindner, 1 February 2009

Sarah Grodjesk, 4 February 2009, friend of Chris Twomey

Mayetta Olson, grandmother of Maria Green Cowles

Whither this newsletter? Are there things you'd rather see in *News Notes* than what you're getting?

Suggestions have been received which indicate that the newsletter is not necessarily providing the congregation with what it would like to receive. Would a general revamping of the publication help to make communication easier? Is the typeface too small, too large? Is it too full of trivial stuff? Would you rather have more graphics? Less?

One thought was that we needed more "gossip". By that, perhaps was meant that there should be more news about the members, what they're doing, where they've been, their new job, their new house, visitors, etc. It can be categorically said that there will be no gossip column about who was seen with whom or similar sophomoric stuff, but maybe human interest material would be welcome. If so, it is your responsibility to let the office know what's happening. The pastors are knowledgeable and often do know what's up, but the rest of us aren't always in the loop and we need to be told of events.

If you have thoughts about the *News Notes*, drop a note in the office. Katherine will make sure that whoever needs to deal with the item can do so.

Family Movie Night and Pot Luck Dinner

Friday, March 13, 2009 -- 6:30 p.m.

Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa

Whatever your hands find to do, do it with all your might.
Ecclesiastes 9:10.

It is a rare thing to find the sequel of an animation film better than the original, but we find it in *Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa*. Left marooned on the distant shores of Madagascar, the zoo animals (born and raised in New York) hatch a plan to get back home. However, this plan falls apart, literally, and they end up in the vast plains of Africa. The zoo-raised crew encounter species of the own kind for the first time. The zoo crew soon find themselves in situations that all of us can identify with - identity issues, parental issues, love, friendship, and peer pressure.

The reason I really like this film has to do with the life goal it promotes: Connect to the world around you and bring positive change to it. These stranded animals connect, discover new friends and move forward in the light of the new realizations. We can all learn something from them.

This is a wonderful movie for all ages. Bring a dish to share and a friend that will enjoy the movie with you.



Coming Soon

YOUTH ART SHOW SPRING 2009

Help to brighten the spring months by sharing your paintings and drawings with us for a display in the Fellowship Hall.

Deliver the artwork during the week of March 29-April 2. The display will be hung on April 2.

Please label each item with the name and age of the artist, title of the work, and the medium in which it was done. The pictures should be framed if possible.

Any questions? Call Carol Vorosmarti (301) 340-7326

Pastor Lewis——compassion

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We are four and a half months away from the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans where twelve of our youth will join 36,400 other Lutheran youth to learn about and live out compassionate justice. Compassionate justice, in a nutshell, is defined in the book of Zechariah chapter 7, verse 9. "Administer true justice, show mercy and compassion to one another."

For Christians, Jesus is **the** example of compassionate justice. Jesus' life of service, care, and compassion for those who were poor, sick, and politically oppressed gives us confidence that we who are baptized into Jesus Christ are called to ministries of compassionate justice. In the eighth chapter of the Gospel according to St. John, we find an incident where the scribes and Pharisees brought a woman caught in the very act of adultery before Jesus. Jesus realized that their intent was to test him more than obtain justice against a nameless adulterous woman. Jesus' nonverbal act of writing on the ground was a refusal to engage their question: "Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?" Jesus practiced a method of refusal and disengagement common to his culture. As such, his non-response was an act of resistance to this injustice. The persistent questioning of the scribes and Pharisees only provoked Jesus to speak a convicting truth: "Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." Then Jesus continued writing on the ground. Seeing that Jesus was dismissive of their questioning they went away one by one. When the woman was left alone, standing before Jesus, he stood up and invited her to speak: "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" She said, "No one, sir." And Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again."

This is just one example of compassionate Justice that Jesus offers for us to reflect upon. The very essence of His compassion is righteous caring. He is the model servant. In Jesus Christ we have the assurance that we can live out our calling "to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly" with God (Micah 6:8). In Jesus we have the reality of God's love and justice poured out around the globe. When the youth go to New Orleans, it will be Jesus working through them as they seek to serve God's people. These youth will learn through experience that they are empowered to serve with justice and love through the Holy Spirit, whom Jesus sent to be with us as we strive to be like Him.

It is the Holy Spirit who energizes our life of service in the manner of Christ. The gifts of the Spirit form and transform us for discipleship in daily life. In the Rite of Affirmation of Baptism, we are told that the Spirit of God invites us to re-enter the water of baptism everyday because we are called to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed, to serve all people, following the example of our Lord Jesus, and to strive for justice and peace (ELW 236). In New Orleans, the youth will learn an essential meaning of being baptized into the body of Christ living out justice in God's world. The Holy Spirit remembers us with a living God who reminds us that we are important to the divine plan of God's love and justice in the world. As such we realize that we belong to God's family even when we feel lost and worthless.

It is my hope that the youth who will be going to New Orleans the last week of July 2009 will learn to listen to the Spirit of Christ as they enter New Orleans, to be compassionate about serving as Christ served. It is my intention that we will enter New Orleans without the thoughts that we need to fix or make it better, but to be made open to new ideas about our environment, our experiences, and our means for living as the Body of Christ. Our baptismal vocation gives us courage to enter New Orleans with all its challenges. We will know that we are grounded in our baptismal worth in order to move outside ourselves and do God's work with our hands. Such courage helps us when we return to our communities with new experiences, practices, awareness, and deepened biblical insight. Together we will seek to live and serve with this mind of Christ!

PAX,

2009 ELCA Youth Gathering News

The twelve youth and two adults who will be attending the 2009 Youth Gathering in New Orleans this summer have been hard at work getting ready and fund raising. Fund raising has been a little slower this year than it was for the 2006 Youth Gathering, but we are hopeful that it will pick up. We are continuing our LYFE Assurance program where one would be able to donate by investing in the future of the church by investing in the training of youth leaders. We will also have several other fund raising events between now and the end of June. At the time of writing this, we still need to raise over \$12,000 for the Gathering; therefore, please consider helping the youth attend this important training and mission work.

Chili Cook-Off

Sunday, March 8, 5:30 p.m.

Come on out to taste some Chili (including a vegetarian chili), have some dessert, and enjoy great fellowship. We will also have some other food fare for those who prefer something besides chili.

Last year we had fourteen (14) entries and it would be great if we could add a few more this year. Contact Pastor Lewis about your entry into the cook-off.

Tickets will be on sale in the Narthex two weeks before, but you can always get tickets at the door. You can also contact Pastor Lewis in the church office for tickets during the week.

Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children 3- 12 with a \$25 maximum cap for families. Proceeds benefit youth programs. Bring the whole family. Bring a friend (or two).

Youth and Family Ministry Calendar

This calendar includes all Youth and Family Ministry Events, not only those for youth. Events advertised for "Youth" include those from 7th grade to 12th grade. Family events or "everyone is invited" are appropriate for all ages. Fun Bunch events are for older adults.

March 8, Sunday, 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

4th Annual Chili Cook Off

Come on out to taste some Chili (including a vegetarian chili), have some dessert, and enjoy great fellowship. We will also have some other food fare for those who prefer something besides chili. Tickets are \$10 an adult and \$5 for children 3- 12, with a \$25 cap for families. Proceeds go toward the 2009 Youth Gathering.

March 13, Friday, 6:30 pm

Family Movie Night and Pot Luck Dinner

This month's movie is *Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa*. Everyone is invited to come out to watch a great movie and bring a potluck dish to share. See page 8 in this issue for more information.

March 15, Sunday, Both Worship Services

Confirmation-Led Service

Come join us for this worship service and see what a pen and pencil can teach us about faith.

March 15, Sunday, After Second Service

Mandatory Meeting for Everyone Attending the 2009 Youth Gathering

Everyone who is attending the 2009 Youth Gathering should be at this hour-long meeting. We will have snacks available.

March 16, Monday, Noon

Fun Bunch Lunch

Everyone is invited to this catered lunch. We are asking for a donation to help with the cost of the lunch. Since this is the day before St. Patrick's, we will look at the tradition of honoring saints in the history of the church.

March 20 - 22, Friday - Sunday

Shekinah Retreat

This is the Synod-wide retreat for Confirmation-age youth. We will meet at the church on Friday at 4 pm to leave and return around 2:30 pm on Sunday.

March 29 - 30, Sunday to Monday

Hallowood Confirmation Retreat

This is the third of the three Confirmation Retreats for the year. We will leave the church after the second service and return to the church on Monday around 1:30 pm.

Mark your Calendars:

April 10 - Good Friday	April 19 - Shema, Synod-wide event
April 11 - Easter Vigil	for those in grades 3-6
April 12 - Easter	April 20—Important parent meeting

Important Meeting for the Parents of Youth

April 20, 2009 7 p.m.

We will have an important meeting for all parents of youth on Monday, April 20, 2009 at 7 p.m. It is our hope that at least one parent from each family who has children in grades 6 through 12 will be able to make this meeting. This meeting will discuss the youth program for the summer and fall. Please place this meeting on your calendar and watch for more information about this meeting later in the month and the April issue of News Notes.



The logo art for the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering was inspired by the fact that it will be in New Orleans, where they are still recovering from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. It also represents what we hope to learn about serving others in the manner of Jesus, and the promises of God's presence in the world.

The chaotic, dark, swirling on the left of the graphic reminds us of the darkness and confusion that we sometimes experience in the world. You can almost feel the powerful wind and destruction of a hurricane.

And in the midst of the chaos, confusion, and mess is the cross, drawing our vision to the light and hope of Jesus. It is Jesus who draws us into a life of compassionate justice wherever we are and whomever we're with. It is Jesus who sets us free into the world jazzed for justice, for kindness, and for humble walking with God.

Jesus - Justice - Jazz stands bold and connected to what seems confusing and disconnected. Our faith and our baptismal call to be bold, compassionate witnesses in the world are always connected and relevant to whatever is swirling around us.



A painter paints pictures on canvas. But musicians paint their pictures on silence.

LEOPOLD STOKOWSKI



Greetings!

The choir is still basking in glow of the extraordinary responses, reactions, and gracious compliments received for the cantata presented during our celebration of the Epiphany, which seems to have been only a few weeks ago.

With cantatas being the lead item in this month's column, I want to urge each of you to mark your calendars for Palm Sunday, April 5, 2009, when the Adult choir will present this year's Lent/Easter cantata, *Journey to the Cross*. Consisting primarily of newly written anthems and songs, this work recalls the final days of Christ's earthly life, as the writers have said, "... spanning the spectrum of human emotion from joyous hosannas . . . to painful rejections by his closest friends . . . moments of agony . . . to euphoric resurrections alleluias before a borrowed tomb." The presentation will again be enhanced by the accompaniment of a chamber orchestra.

On Easter Sunday morning, hymns and other music during the three services will be supported by trumpeter Dennis Sackman, a musician of whom I have grown very fond. For the past several years he has heightened the festive atmosphere of that special day in our church year, and I eagerly welcome his return.

Finally, organist Kristi Johnson and I accept, with humility, the positive feedback we've received regarding the service of Lessons, Carols and Hymns we introduced the first Sunday of February. We welcome any input or suggestions from you as to ways you think may make the service even more meaningful.

Until next time, I am

Faithfully yours,

Dingwall Fleary

dingwallfleary@verizon.net

March used to be pictured as windy. Well, it still is, but the symbols of gusty winds have changed. It used to be that men's hats were shown being blown away and women's skirts being wildly whipped by the wind. Nowadays, very few men wear hats and many women wear slacks. Other than kites flying and trees bending to the wind, we're left without a symbol. Is that a good thing?



March also was often shown as coming in like a lion and leaving as a lamb. The roaring winds in February certainly suggests that such a stereotype remains accurate. But March is a changeable month. We have had significant, nasty snowstorms in March and cold that nipped the early blossoms on cherry trees and such early bloomers. Some years, the marchers in the St. Patrick's Day parades were so cold that they appeared blue, not the appropriate green. Other years they had so much sun that they turned pink.



St. Patrick's Day is one occasion when lots of people elect to celebrate their Irish ancestry. Often, if they have no obvious ties to the Auld Sod, they invent them and adopt an Irish persona for the day. It must make the real Irish wonder sometimes.



March is also the birth month for two of the greatest composers of the 1700s. Georg Philipp Telemann was born on March 14, 1681 and Johann Sebastian Bach was born on March 21, 1685. And Telemann's great friend, George Fridric Handel was born on February 14, 1685. The three of them provided us with some of the most wonderfully enduring music. It is appropriate that they are remembered in the list of great souls who are honored by the church.

As most of us know, Emmanuel Music Director, Dingwall Fleary, is the conductor of two fine local orchestras with which he will be conducting concerts. The first by **The Reston Symphony** will honor the visionary who first conceived the idea of "planned communities" in the U.S., Robert E. Simon, Jr., who established the town, lending his initials to its name, RESTon. Former principal hornist with the National Symphony Orchestra, Ed Thayer, will be the featured soloist.

Date: March 15, 2009 *Time:* 4:00 PM *Place:* Reston Community Center, located at 2310 Colts Neck Rd, Reston, in the Hunters Woods Village Center.

Then, a family concert is planned with **The McLean Symphony** for the day before Easter. Featuring selections guaranteed to interest audiences of all ages, the guest piano soloist will be Carlos Alberto Ibay. Remarkable about this young man is the fact that he has been totally blind since birth, yet has garnered accolades for his performances all over the world. A special treat for children will be the appearance of nationally-known juggler, musician, comedian, Jonathan Austin, of Richmond.

Date: Saturday, April 11, 2009 *Time:* 3:00 PM *Place:* Alden Theatre of the McLean Community Center, 1234

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