



# Emmanuel News Notes

September, 2009

## Pastor Lookingbill ponders. . involvement and song

“O sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things” is the first verse of Psalm 98, the dedication Psalm used at Emmanuel in 1990! It’s amazing how songs bring to mind many memories and especially when associated with important events in life, how they bring back those same feelings of joy and astonishment! When we dedicated the new sanctuary at Emmanuel and recited that ancient psalm, there was a new joy and realization that God is present in this place now among us, in perhaps a new way. When Psalm 98 comes around in our liturgy, I am reminded of that new spirit and enthusiasm of the congregation when sharing something very special in our faith journeys and our songs.

When I was introduced to Sunday School at St. Mark’s Lutheran Church in Pennsylvania, I was first taught and then learned to enjoy “Jesus loves me,” and “This little light of mine!” There were motions too with the songs, like holding your arms together for love and holding up a finger for light! I can still remember that old Sunday School room, now demolished for the newer sanctuary for St. Mark’s, and the windows that depicted Jesus with little children. It brings a smile and a haunting remembrance of being with people who cared about me besides my parents and grandparents. Yes, I was “alone” in that Sunday School at 2 or 3, away from my family; but I felt that not only Jesus but all the Church was caring for me! The song and the tune remind me of Jesus and his love.

When Judy and I saw the “Jersey Boys” this summer in New York, the old songs they sang brought back memories too. Just by hearing the songs I was transported back to my teens and college years, remembering the girls and boys that I knew then, the ones I danced and sang with! The stage performance also told the background story of those guys from Jersey, with all their troubles and with all their talent. It wasn’t always a pretty life for them, and their devotion to one another varied from one to the next. Frankie Valli was determined to be successful and help out his friends; Tommy DiVito was mostly interested in what he could get for himself, without real concern for the other Jersey boys. Mostly Tommy got into gambling and debt; Frankie worked to pay off that debt! Their songs reflected this life of challenge and exhilaration: “Walk like a man” recalls the challenge to take responsibility for your life, not unlike the ancient prophet’s call to God’s people. And “Let’s hang on (to what we’ve got)” is a song to celebrate the great gifts of life, love and friendships, not unlike Psalm 98 when the psalmist says, “He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness . . .”

You can’t remember the “old songs” unless you’ve learned those songs! You can’t bring back memories where there haven’t been any experiences. You can’t feel that deep down love of Jesus for you unless you’ve felt the presence of that love of Christ through those who have taught you, nurtured you and celebrated with you. That’s what happens in our Sunday School rooms today, and there’s where the memories are built and the foundations laid for faith.

The Church and the Church School are one of the very important places that children and their families sing together and pray together with those faithful teachers that God has raised up to share their faith. It’s in the context of weekly classes and weekly Sunday worship that our faith community builds upon the music and liturgy of the whole Church and makes the history and teaching of Jesus Christ come alive for us today. It’s with deep appreciation that we install our Christian Education teachers each year, those who will study and prepare lessons and songs of Jesus and the light that he has shined in all of us. It’s with great anticipation each week that the teachers wait to see the smiling faces of the children, youth and adults who come to Church to sing God’s praise. I look forward to seeing each of you in Church!

So, sing to the Lord a new song this September, and join in the chorus of voices at Emmanuel who join in the unique experience of singing, then remembering, of learning and sharing, God’s amazing grace. The Church is a unique opportunity to learn about Jesus Christ and the amazing difference that faith makes in the life of one child, our youth and ourselves.

In Christ’s Service, Jan P. Lookingbill, Pastor

## DATES OF NOTE

- 8 Sept Joyful Praise Choir begins (page 5)
- 9 Sept. Bible Study begins (page 2)
- 13 Sept Church Picnic (page 5)
- 15 Sept Women’s Bible study (page 3)
- 20 Sept Baptismal reception (page 2)
- 20 Sept Spaghetti dinner (page 4)
- 21 Sept Fun Bunch Lunch (page 3)
- 26-27 Sept. MarLu Ridge Anniversary (page 4)
- 4 Oct Confirmation luncheon
- 4 Oct Adventure Club (page 4)
- 5 Oct Confirmation classes begin

## WORSHIP

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

## THE FALL BIBLE ENCOUNTER BEGINS ON 9 SEPTEMBER

Pr. Lookingbill will begin the Fall Bible Encounter on Wednesday 9 Sept. in the Christian Education Room. This fall the study will concern St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians. We will meet at **10:30 a.m. each Wednesday** to study together and share a brown bag lunch. Desserts are provided by the various members of the group each week to the delight of all who can attend. If you would like to join the group but need transportation, please contact the Church office or Pr. Lookingbill.

The Letter of Paul to the Corinthians is one of the most valuable letters he wrote to the early Church, and becomes one of the best examples of St. Paul's thinking for the life of the local congregation. Although there were clearly disputes and mistrust in the congregation at Corinth, St. Paul continues to encourage them to use their considerable talents and resources. St. Paul apparently wrote this letter from Ephesus (16.8), across the Aegean Sea in the early decade of the 50's A.D. before any of the Gospels were composed. His primary themes are those that have shaped the Christian Church throughout the centuries: The Hymn on Christian charity (love in Chpt. 13), the expression of the Cross in Christian theology (Chpt. 1), and the importance of the Resurrection (Chpt. 15). There are issues of marriage, pagan influences and principles in communal living, especially worship, that are basic to these letters of Paul. There is much that relates to our community of Faith today that we learn from studying this letter together. Join us each week this fall with your Bible and your questions.

## CONFIRMATION AT EMMANUEL

Confirmation Classes will start in October for those youth who have reached at least the 7th grade in school. Pr. Lookingbill and Pr. Lewis teach Confirmation each Monday afternoon from 4:30 to 5:45. Confirmation at Emmanuel is a two year program featuring weekly classes, regular worship with confirmands participating as acolytes, retreats, trips and Sunday School. The Classes use primary sources of information, including the Bible, Luther's Small Catechism and the history of the Reformation that Martin Luther started in Germany in 1517. The purpose of this Lutheran tradition of instruction is to prepare our young people to enter adult membership in the Church informed about the Biblical witness to Jesus Christ and the basic doctrines of the historical Church.

Please let the Church office know that you are planning to join the class this fall. There will be a Confirmation luncheon on 4 October for youth, parents and godparents to prepare for the fall classes. The first class will meet on 5 October.

### A RECEPTION IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL ON 20 SEPTEMBER

*In honor of the Baptism of their granddaughter, Leah Dae Offutt, Pr. Lookingbill and Judy will host a reception in the Fellowship Hall after the late worship service on 20 September. All the members of Emmanuel are invited to meet Drew and Jennifer Offutt and three-month-old Leah after her Baptism.*

## FIRST COMMUNION CLASSES BEGIN IN OCTOBER

Pr. Lookingbill will meet in October with those children and parents of the congregation who want to learn about Communion in the Lutheran Church. We will have three sessions in Pr. Lookingbill's office on 4 October, 11 October and 25 October. The three sessions are focused on the Biblical origins of Communion, the Lutheran practice of Communion and the local tradition here at Emmanuel for our celebrations. Parents and children are all invited to participate in the sessions. Questions are especially welcome as we prepare for the sharing of this Sacrament of the Church! It is the policy of the Church Council that parents, children and the Pastor together will decide when children are ready to receive Holy Communion. For those children who have already received Communion in other congregations, they should continue to receive our Lord's supper at Emmanuel. They too are welcome to join Pr. Lookingbill for the First Communion Classes. First Communion for those properly prepared will be celebrated on All Saints Sunday, November 1st.

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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

## A message from Lutheran Social Services:

We will be welcoming almost 200 refugees in the next six weeks and our storage facilities are nearly depleted! We are in desperate need of items to create a warm, welcoming first home for the refugees arriving in our community--a home that will help them rebuild their lives. We would really appreciate your congregation's support and prayers over the next several weeks. These are the items we need most:

*[These items may be gently loved, but please no stains, tears, bugs, or broken items.]*

- 200 -- beds (mattress, box springs, and frame) full and twin-sized only
- 70 -- pots and pans
- 80 -- kitchen or dinette sets with chairs
- 200 -- blankets and sheet sets
- 8 -- cribs
- 8 -- car seat of varying sizes (newborn-toddler)
- 8 -- strollers

*[Of the items below we may only accept new items.]*

- 100 -- cleaning supply kits (bucket, cleaning solutions, broom, sponges, etc.)
- 100 -- toiletry kits (full-sized shampoo, soap, toothbrush and toothpaste, brush and comb, feminine hygiene, trash can, etc.)

Any help you can give is much appreciated. Your donation will be put to good work immediately! Individual donations may be dropped-off at a location below or bulk/group donation pick-ups may be scheduled by contacting me by email at KhanN@lssnca.org or by telephone at (301) 562-8633 ext. 219.

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## Women's Bible Study Group Sets regular meetings

The Women's Bible Study group will meet on Tuesday, September 15, 2009, from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. in the Parlor. The Women's Bible Study group will regularly meet on the third Tuesday of each month. Our study will be the Paul's letter to the Romans. Come join our wonderful fellowship.

## Candle Wax Needed for Luminaries

Leave candle stubs and similar material in a plastic bag near your church mailbox. An obliging elf will transform them into luminaries.

## COMMUNITY-BASED SHELTER

### SERVICE AT CBS

It is fall, so it must be Community Based Shelter time and our opportunity to serve the homeless. We will spend a week contributing to and serving the Community-Based Shelter (CBS) in Rockville. It is an intermediate-level facility where residents are working to overcome the issues (alcoholism, abuse, mental illness, and the like) that made them homeless.

From October 4-10, Emmanuel members will make and serve dinners at CBS. We will also provide food for breakfasts, prepare bag lunches, and purchase supplies for the facility. It takes everyone's help to make all this happen.

We are in the process of calling Emmanuel members to prepare or serve portions of meals. If you would like to participate, please call Marijke Asser at 301-983-8996 to volunteer.

Service is a simple reflection of Christ's love for us. Please join us in service at CBS.

### "SUPPLIES" MINISTRY

The residents at the Community-Based Shelter (CBS) have clean, safe places to shower. However, they do not have all the supplies they need, and it is expensive for CBS to supply them. So, Emmanuel supplies toiletries and home supplies, as a part of the preparations for our shelter week.

On September 27 and October 4, we will collect these supplies in a box in the narthex. Won't you please select a few items from the list below and join our CBS ministry? They have lots of small hotel toiletries, but these larger items seldom get donated. Many thanks.

**SHOPPING LIST: Powdered laundry detergent, liquid hand dishwashing soap, bath towels/wash cloths, sanitary napkins/tampons, women's razors**

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## FUN BUNCH

September 21, 2009  
Noon

The Fun Bunch will meet in the Fellowship Hall for lunch at noon on September 21, 2009. Lunch will be provided (and we ask for a free-will donation to help cover the cost). This is our annual "What I Did This Summer" luncheon, so please bring some show-and-tell items such as pictures or souvenirs to share with everyone. Everyone is invited to join us for the Fun Bunch Lunch. A sign-up sheet will be in the Narthex.

## Mar-Lu-Ridge 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Weekend—September 26 - 27

Mar-Lu-Ridge, one of the great Lutheran Camps, is fifty years old this year and has a special celebration planned for the weekend of September 26 - 27, 2009. There are many ways that you can be involved. One way is to register to stay the entire weekend and have a great time the whole weekend, but you will have to do that quickly. If you cannot make the whole weekend, there are many other ways to get involved such as:

Saturday, September 26

Mini Decade-based Reunions start at 1:30 p.m. which will include activities and an opportunity to contribute to the MLR Story Corps.

Dinner at 5 - Chef Tim always has some great creations.

At 6:47 p.m. be at the power lines (aka Shock Rock) to see the sun set.

Sunday, September 27

At 2:30 p.m. the annual Walk-a-Ridge-a-Thon will begin!  
Don't miss it!

Dinner at 4:30 p.m.

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## ADVENT IS COMING and Contributors to the Advent Devotional booklet are sought

Never too early to prepare, and we'd like to hear from all of you who would like to write for us. In the past, we've asked Sunday School classes and Wednesday morning Bible Study, pastors and current and former Christian Education directors and Council members ... but we'd like to hear from you.

Please let Jane Rosenquist, jane.rosenquist@gmail.com, or 301-652-4269 know if you are able to contribute to this important effort. We'll need the copy by November 10th, and you will be contacted with an assignment based on a verse or passage appropriate to the season. We often follow the lectionary.

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## Beer, von Bora, and Conviviality

The Mens' Group at Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Bethesda, MD gets together periodically at local brew pubs in the Rockville, MD area for fellowship and conversation over burgers and beer. With respect to the beer, in recognition of Martin Luther's known enjoyment of beer, and the beer brewing skills of his wife Katerina von Bora, (lest the group take itself too seriously) the Mens' Group has been named the "Martin Luther Beer & Marching Society", with shirts and hats adorned with the logo "MLB&MS" over the Lutheran seal as designed by Martin Luther himself. Prosit!

## Spaghetti Dinner

September 20, 2009  
6 p.m.

This is a special dinner that the Lutheran Youth From Emmanuel (LYFE) is hosting to thank everyone who either donated or helped in some way as they prepared for their trip to the ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans this past July. The youth will have a special presentation and talk a little about what they experienced at the Gathering. Please RSVP by either contacting the church office, or by sign-up on the sheet in the narthex.

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## Adventure Club

4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Graders

October 4, Sunday, 5 - 6:30 p.m.

Emmanuel is starting a new ministry for children in grades 4 through 6 called the *Adventure Club*. Our first gathering will be on Sunday, October 4, 2009 starting at 5:00 p.m. with dinner and ending at 6:30 p.m. This first gathering will have games and activities. Parents are encouraged to stay for dinner and hear about the ministry program and offer suggestions for further events. Please sign up by either contacting the church office, emailing Pastor Lewis, or signing up in the Narthex.

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## Dinner Club

We ended the Dinner Club last year in July with a grand gathering of people bringing in potluck and great fellowship. For 2009-2010 we will begin the Dinner Club in October. There will be a sign-up sheet in the Narthex throughout September. You can also contact Pastor Lewis in the church office during the week.

***MUSICIANS WANTED  
PRACTICES TO BEGIN  
Thursday, September 10***

Emmanuel Ringers: 6:30 p.m.

Senior Choir: 8:00 p.m.

## Congregational Finances: an interim report and cautionary tale

Life in Emmanuel seems to have a pattern. Each year we give, often generously, but still we seem to be short. Wayne Hunley wrote in his note accompanying the second-quarter giving statement:

“Through the first half of the year, our overall offerings are slightly below 2008. As you may recall from the budget meetings, we have budgeted a slight increase in core offerings over last year, and it is important that we achieve this goal to maintain our current level of programs. Your giving will guide us in our planning process for next year.

“We have seen more members signing up for Simply Giving, which allows for electronic funds transfer of offerings on a weekly or monthly basis. This is very helpful to Emmanuel. A sign up form is available (on the Emmanuel website) which you can fill out and drop in my box if you are interested.”

Attendance during the summer has been quite low and, as so often follows, contributions have lagged during the season as well. Expenses, however, have not lagged. Thus, it is understandable that our financial and pastoral gurus want to give a resounding **“WELCOME BACK”** to congregational members and hope that

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## From the Council President:

This is a time of transition for Emmanuel. In a week or so we will have our annual Council retreat. Pastor Phil Hirsch has been added to the ELCA Metro DC synod staff to support evangelism and outreach activities within the synod. He will speak to our Council Members and Committee chairs about how Emmanuel can grow our congregation and grow our faith. While congregation membership has been stable over several years, church attendance has declined. Our congregational life relies on the active participation of its members in all forms of congregational life including worship.

We will also be looking ahead to the future. We will hear from the different committees at Emmanuel to learn their plans for the upcoming year.

We are planning a fiftieth anniversary celebration. It is hard to believe that Emmanuel has been a part of the Lutheran and larger community of Montgomery County and Metro DC for fifty years. Rather than focus on a single event to mark this passing, we want to engage the entire Emmanuel community in a series of events and activities that remind ourselves and also our neighbors of the role that Emmanuel has played in our spiritual lives and in the lives of our community.

I also hope that anyone else interested in planning this Jubilee year will step forward with their ideas and their time.

Looking forward to another exciting year.

Jim McGee

## SAVE THE DATE ANNOUNCEMENT

Oktoberfest is coming

Sunday, October 18 at 6:00 p.m.

As we have had for many years, we will have Old Europe as the caterer and the Heidi und Helmut Echo Band to lend an appropriate atmosphere.

Tickets will go on sale September 27

Watch for details in the bulletin.

## CHURCH PICNIC

September 13, 2009

Beginning at 12:30 p.m

Food      Moon Bounce      & More

Everyone is invited to attend our Annual Rally Day Picnic starting after the second worship service. The entree and drinks will be provided. We ask you to please bring a side dish, salad or dessert to share, a sign-up sheet will be in the Narthex. We will have games and a moon bounce for the children, activities for youth and adults. Come out and have some fun. This is also a great day to bring a friend to church.



Children's Choir

## Joyful Praise Choir to resume

Joyful Praise Choir rehearsals begin on Tuesday, September 8th, 6:30 to 7:30 in the choir room. All children, age 6 and up, are welcome to join. This is a great opportunity to learn about God and the church through music. Please call Susan Drumm with any questions at 301-279-2646.

## Parish Vital Records

### Births

*Leah Dai Offutt*, born 20 June 2009, daughter of Drew and Jennifer Lookingbill Offutt, granddaughter of Pr. Jan and Judy Lookingbill

*Caitlin Christine Groves*, born 26 June 2009 to Kim and Cameron Groves

*Cali Ann Smith*, 16 August 2009, granddaughter of Doug Hackett

### Wedding

*Antoine de Carbonnel* and *Hanna Makarim* in Jakarta on 21 June 2009

*Katie Leeand* and *William Hwang* at Emmanuel on 11 July 2009

*Heather Omran* and *Ricky Colby, III*, 17 July in Tampa, Florida

*Gina Beech* and *David Forney*, 1 August 2009

### Deaths

*Aric Gagnon*, beloved nephew and cousin of the Stables

*Christine Sheetz*, 22 June 2009, aunt of Annette Poston

*William J. Cochrane, M.D.*, 25 June 2009, father of Nina Price, grandfather of Palma, Cecilia, and Evan Price.

*Barbara Jones*, 14 July 2009, mother of Bob Jones

*June Peske*, 15 July 2009, mother of Sherry Peske

*Elaine Heffley*, 22 July 2009, mother-in-law of Katherine Coloney Heffley

*Florence Shish*, 23 July 2009, mother of Jean Abel

*Virginia Wathen*, 26 July 2009, grandmother of Mike Dixon's children

*Annette Ficker*, 31 July 2009, friend of Emmanuel Lutheran Church

## Christian Education News September, 2009

### Rally Day - September 13, 2009 at 10 a.m.

We will start the regular Sunday School schedule on September 13<sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m. in the Atrium with a kick-off party. Please register your child for Sunday School. Besides the kick-off party, the children will meet their teachers and see their classrooms.

### Rally Day for All Youth and their Parents

All youth and parents are requested to be at a short Rally Day Meeting at 10:30 a.m. in the Christian Education Room. We will talk about the different Christian Education programs for the youth as well as discuss the possibilities for parents. (One thing we will be talking about is splitting the high school youth into two groups, grades 9-10 in one and grades 11-12 in the other).

### 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.

9/6 Sunday Funday - One Room Summer Sunday School, Last Day (This has been a very successful program.)

9/13 Rally Day

9/20 Regular Sunday School Lesson

9/27 Regular Sunday School Lesson

10/4 Group Project for Community Based Shelter

### Bible Study - 10 a.m. in the Parlor

The Sunday Morning Adult Bible Study invites you to join them in the Parlor at 10:00 a.m. We will study prayer in the Bible by looking at ten different prayers that are taught in the Bible. We will also use a text as a study guide. Bring your Bibles, or pick one up from the shelves in the Parlor and come join us. Ginger Boone will lead the group. Further information may be obtained by calling the church office at 301-365-5733.

### 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 Luncheon for all those who will be in confirmation classes and their parents will be on Sunday, October 4, 2009 after the second service in the Fellowship Hall. Besides enjoying some fellowship, we will also be sharing some important information about confirmation for the coming year. Afterwards Confirmation Class will meet every Monday that the Montgomery County Schools are in session with the class beginning at 4:30 p.m.

## Pastor Lewis considers...peer pressure

It is September and for many of us that means we are already back to school and dealing with the issues that arise there. One of those issues is peer pressure. It really does not matter how young or old you are because all of us have to deal with peer pressure sometime in our daily lives. Some of us are better than others resisting peer pressure.

When I make my list of those who have successfully resisted peer pressure, Caleb is right up at the top of my list. Caleb served on a special twelve man team sent into the Promised Land by Moses to check it out and bring back a report. When this special unit returned, they all agreed on the report; however, there was serious division among them in their recommendations.

They all agreed that the land was a wonderful place to live, grow crops and animals, and was occupied by what seemed to be a powerful people. Ten of the unit members concluded that the invasion should be called off immediately because they were afraid that they would not be able to defeat the enemy. Caleb did not fall to the pressure of his peers and offered a different option, "Let us go up at once and occupy it, for we are well able to overcome it" (Numbers 13:30)

Short term majorities often get their way. The people of Israel reject Caleb's opinion, which was also backed by Joshua, and did not trust in their confidence. They accepted the opinion of the ten. So they discovered that God's plan included Caleb's perspective. The people's lack of trust in God led them directly to wandering forty years in the wilderness. Because he understood God's will, Caleb spoke the truth under intense peer pressure. Because of this, Caleb was one of two from his generation that later entered the Promised Land.

Although he was right and rewarded for speaking God's truth, Caleb still shared that forty years in the desert with everyone else. Even that disappointment did not wear Caleb down. When he received his portion in the Promised Land at the age of 85, he was still fit and able to enjoy it because he trusted God and did not fall into peer pressure forty years earlier.

One of the important lessons from Caleb's life has to do with the purpose of standing alone. All of us can probably think of a few people in our lives who stand alone when it comes to clothing styles, interest or hobbies, even negative attitudes. But Caleb's purpose was not to stand alone - it was to stand with God. Because Caleb wanted God's way, any other way did not have much appeal for him.

Trusting in God and living for God will create minority situations. Taking God seriously in your life will quickly show you where the majority stands. Like Caleb's, your words may not seem to make a difference to those around you. However, God hears you - and you will find standing with God instead of the crowd makes a huge difference.

More about Caleb in Numbers 13-14 and Joshua 14-15

PAX, Pastor Robert Lewis +

## The Chi Rho Mission Trip

From Sunday, June 28th until Saturday, July 4th, five members of Emmanuel, Greg Hunley, Eleni Stellakis, Cece Sullivan, James Hastings and Pastor Robert Lewis, took part in a special youth-service trip to Neon, Kentucky.

A group of 16 youth and 6 adult chaperones from nearby participating congregations traveled together to a small town in rural Kentucky to donate "sweat equity" to a non-profit organization called HOMES, Housing Oriented Ministries Established for Service, Inc., which provides low-cost housing to families in need. Our special motto for the week was, "God's work, our hands."

This year, our group was blessed with the opportunity to actually build a house instead of doing demolition as in previous years. A woman named Marie Pendleton and her son had lost their previous house in a fire, and HOMES had agreed to build them a new one. When we first arrived at the work site, there was only a rectangle of cinder blocks. Under the instruction of two skilled HOMES employees, we finished the foundation, nailed down the floor, and raised three walls.

Doing God's work is usually not elegant. Pastor Lewis, who served as the chaplain for Chi Rho, wished to stress that point to us, and, following Christ's example, had us wash each other's feet—our dirty feet—the first night. He also stressed that as a people working toward a common goal, we should not have trivial things standing in the way of that work. Therefore, Pastor Lewis told us we were allowed just to call him Robert during Chi Rho. For many of us, it was too hard to not call him Pastor, so we started calling him Pastor Robert and it was later shorten to "P-Rob."

Most of our work time was spent hammering nail after nail after nail, often in the hot sun. We ate reheated, frozen casseroles almost every night. We were lucky if we managed to get even 5 hours of sleep. Oh, and the showers had unpredictable temperatures. One evening we could not get any warm water at all. It is easy to talk about cold showers, but when you actually have to take a cold shower... you realize just how blessed you are to have warm water always available at home!

The spiritual significance of this trip, and the true meaning of "God's work, our hands" did not fully register with many of those there until our last night in Kentucky when it suddenly became clear that close bonds had somehow been forged, and that we had come to love one another like family. Pastor Lewis led a farewell service in which we saw each other as members of a community and acknowledged to the group how much this trip meant to us personally. Afterward, we all hugged each other and cried.

Much happened during that trip and all 22 of us bonded. We truly became the body of Christ. While we were building walls of hope for this family, we were also tearing down all those walls that keep us from doing what God calls us to do - tearing down walls that keep us from getting to know one another on a deeper, spiritual level.

(Many thanks to Stephanie Apruzese, one of the Chi Rho youth from St. Mark, Springfield, for helping us with this letter.)

## Youth and Family Calendar

September 11, Friday, 5 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

### Youth meet at Broadway Pizza

Join Pastor Lewis for some pizza and a quick meeting about the up coming Fall events. All youth (7<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade) are invited. Pastor Lewis will spring for the pizza.

September 13, Sunday, 10:30 a.m.

### Rally Day

All youth and parents are requested to be at a short Rally Day Meeting at 10:30 a.m. in the Christian Education Room. We will talk about the different Christian Education programs for the youth as well as discuss the possibilities for parents. ( One thing we will be talking about is splitting the high school youth into two groups, 9-10 grade in one and 11-12 in the other).

September 13, Sunday, 12:30 p.m.

### Church Picnic

Everyone is invited to the Church Picnic after the second worship service. The entree and drinks will be provided, all we ask is that you bring a salad, side dish or dessert to share. See page 5 in this issue for more information.

September 18, Friday, 5 - 6 p.m.

### Meeting for those who attended the Youth Gathering in New Orleans

We will have a quick meeting to finalize plans for the thank-you dinner and presentation we will be hosting on September 20. Everyone who attended the Youth Gathering should be there.

September 20, Sunday, 6 - 7:30 p.m.

### Spaghetti Dinner

The youth who attended the Youth Gathering is hosting a thank you dinner and presentation about the Youth Gathering. See page 4 in this issue for more information.

September 21, Monday, 12 noon

### Fun Bunch

The Fun Bunch will meet again after a summer hiatus. This is our annual "What I Did This Summer" luncheon, so please bring some show-and-tell items to share with everyone.

September 26 - 27

### Mar-Lu-Ridge 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration

The Lutheran camp, Mar-Lu-Ridge is hosting several events during the weekend of September 26 - 27, 2009 to celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. See page 4 in this issue for more information.

September 27, 10 a.m.

### Youth Parents Meeting

All parents of youth (7<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade) are encouraged to attend this important meeting about a youth sexuality program we plan to begin in the fall. We will meet in the Christian Education room.

October 4, Sunday, 10 a.m.

### Youth Sunday Preparation

All youth, 7<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade, will meet in the Christian Education room as we finalize plans for the Youth Sunday the following week.

October 4, Sunday, 12:30 p.m.

### Confirmation Luncheon

All parents and youth who will be in the Confirmation program in 2009-2010 are invited to this important luncheon and information meeting. Please RSVP to the church office.

October 4, Sunday, 5 - 6:30 p.m.

### Adventure Club

We are going to be starting a new ministry for children in grades 4 through 6 called the *Adventure Club*. This will be our first gathering, including supper and activities. See page 4 in this issue for more information.

October 5, Monday, 4:30 - 7:30 p.m.

### Confirmation Class and serve at CBS

This is the first meeting of the Confirmation Class. Besides beginning classes, we will also be preparing food to bring and serve at the Community Base Shelter in Rockville.

October 11, Sunday, Both Worship Services

### Youth Sunday

Youth will lead and share their message at both services on this Sunday.



## GOD'S WORK, OUR HANDS VIDEO CONTEST

During the Chi Rho mission trip the youth took to Neon, Kentucky back in July, Pastor Robert Lewis filmed several hours of the work on the house they began building. Evelyn Lewis then took those hours of video and created a wonderful 90 second video to submit to the ELCA's "God's work, Our hands" video contest. There were over 200 video's submitted in the same category, with the Chi Rho Video being chosen as one of the ten finalist. While this video did not win the contest, it was shown to all those gathered for the Church Wide Assembly in a plenary session prior to a discuss on youth and young adults.

You can still view the Chi Rho video on the internet at <http://tinyurl.com/elcbethesda> .

## Report on the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering

We want to begin this report with a thank you to everyone who donated money, supported, and prayed for us as we got ready to attend the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans this past July. We had a wonderful trip and experience.

The theme for the event was *Jesus, Justice, Jazz* and each day reflected one of those. Thursday was our Jazz day. We were not sure what to expect, but when we walked into the Convention Center, there was an area larger than three football fields full of activities. We spent the morning learning about putting together water filter systems that would be used in Africa and going through a maze learning about poverty. That afternoon, we met friends from other churches and played games against teams from around the country.

Friday was our Justice day. We had to get up early, walk a mile to the Superdome to catch our bus at 6:30 a.m., and head to Joe Brown Park in East New Orleans to clean it so residents could use it for recreation and fishing. To our great surprise the Presiding Bishop, Mark Hanson joined us in working on cleaning out the lagoon. Also, the Mayor, Ray Nagin, came out to see us and thank us as well.

Saturday was our Jesus day, our learning day. We were up and in the convention center by 9 a.m. and went to workshops to learn about all types of things—poverty, racism, religious freedom and had a chance to talk to a bishop about the church.

We also had a chance to see the Lower Ninth Ward and the parts of East New Orleans that are still messed up from the hurricanes. There are still houses with the big red X on them used by the searchers and a few houses with notices such as “one body found” painted on the front. There were a few homes being rebuilt, but there were more that are still in the same shape as they were days after the flooding. Our bus driver, “Papa Smurf”, told us the main reason that those homes are still there is because they cannot prove who owned them. Many of the homes were passed down from parent to child without re-registering the title. The city can not tear them down without giving due notice, but they don’t know who to give the notice to.

It was not all work and worship, we also had the chance to see parts of the French Quarter, eat the local food, meet new friends from around the world (we worked with a group from the Virgin Islands on Friday), dance and listen to some great music. On Thursday morning we got up early so we could go to the 7:30 a.m. “Hip-Hop” worship service and that was really great.

We don’t want to tell you too much in this report because we would like everyone to come to the “Thank You Dinner” on September 20 at 6:00 p.m. to see and listen to our presentation.

Your Brothers and Sisters in Christ.

Kyle Einwaechter, Jonna Rautsola, Helene Benz, James Hastings, Evelyn Lewis, Peter Murtland, Christina Hastings, Greg Hunley, Leah Freilich, Cece Sullivan, Greg Murtland, Sue Hunley, Jennifer Lewis, and Pastor Robert Lewis



The end of summer comes this month. By then school will have started, the first few games of autumn football will have been played, and the squirrels will be busy stashing away acorns for winter consumption. Each season seems to have its pattern, but for many of us the pattern was disrupted eight years ago when the Trade Center towers were attacked. It rather leaves a bitter taste to an otherwise pleasant season.



Autumnal nights slowly creep into Washington. One morning we awaken to realize that it’s time to bring out a heavier cover for the bed. Days change, too, but with more subtle effects. The sizzling heat of August gradually recedes to pleasant days with comfortable humidity, days to savor, often with azure skies and a sense that all is right. It is possible to forget the news, the wars and the rumors of wars. The tomatoes continue to yield their bounty and the lettuce perks up with cooler weather. There is hope for fresh BLT sandwiches or even wilted lettuce salads. Now is the season when the chrysanthemums reach their glory, frilly spider mums, massive football mums, and the massed banks of yellow, ochre, white, and purple blooms give definition and beauty to the garden.

School has begun and Labor Day starts the month. Each of those events has meaning for us. Those of us with children, those who teach children, or those who can remember being a child recognize that the life of a family is tied to a school year. We grieve with the passing of the summer vacation time, but that sorrow is tinged with the excitement of what will happen during the new year. Likewise, Labor Day marks the last holiday of summer. Now the serious business of living resumes, daily bread is earned, social and business enterprises renew their pull on our lives, and we can put aside the frivolities of summer. Too bad. Summer is nice and routine has its place, but perhaps we shouldn’t relegate the sense of freedom and expectation to the closet just yet. There is to come: the fun of Hallowe’en, the feasting of Thanksgiving, the joy of Christmas. We can anticipate, then savor, and still remember come next summer, while remaining full of the verve of each season.

*Knickerbocker Holiday*, the 1938 musical of Kurt Weill and Maxwell Anderson gave us the standard love song *September Song*. It was full of the wonder of love of an old man and a sweet young thing and the trials thereof. Even if the lyrics didn’t really apply to you, it was a song that appealed to millions. There is a painting, *September Morn* by Paul Chabas, which created a sensation in Chicago in 1913. The picture shows a lissome lass apparently preparing to bathe in a lake amidst morning mists. Although the lass was clearly unclothed, the picture could be seen by your maiden great aunt without any sense of shock. Still, scandal arose from each of these works. Is it September that did it?

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**SEPTEMBER, 2009**

