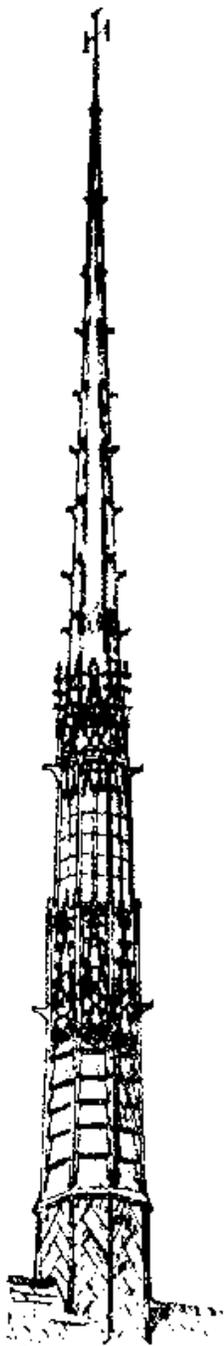


Coming to Terms with History



Loren Mead (an Episcopal clergyman who studies and writes about dynamics of growth, change, and conflict in congregations) has written an interesting and important book:

Critical Moment Of Ministry: a change of pastors (Alban, 1986).

St. John Church is in that critical moment right now. It is in the "time between the times" as some folks have put it. Your former pastor has left; I have agreed to be here, likely for around 12 or so months. My work with you is called an interim ministry, a time between "settled" pastors.

That I have agreed to this appointment (or call) that comes through the Bishop's office and has been approved by the Vestry, indicates that I cannot be considered for a regular call here at St. Johns. For one thing, I am retired and don't want it—as great and dynamic as it is here; I will not work more than three quarter time. You need someone younger and with more energy to lead you into the future God is preparing for you. But even more important is the recent discovery that the times of the interim and settled

ministries are quite different in some important ways. (The difference is found in the developmental tasks noted below.) Recognizing this dynamic, the professional standards of Interim Ministry do not permit a person to move from interim to settled (permanent call) status in the congregation being served.

My work with you in the time I will be here is to assist you in working with and through the five developmental tasks that face you as you prepare to call a new, settled pastor. These tasks are: Coming to terms with your history; Discovering a new identity; Dealing with leadership changes; Renewing synodical relationships; and, Commitment to new directions in ministry. All congregations face these tasks during a pastoral change. The question is whether the congregation will acknowledge and deal creatively with these dynamics or blindly stumble through them. I will devote this column and the next several to briefly describing them to help you begin to recognize and understand them.

In this column we begin with

(Continued on page 2)

Inside this issue:

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Lent and Holy Week worship—“Soup and Catechetics”

Lent is a time of preparation. Early in its use in the church this season of the church year was a time of education. People (converts) preparing to enter the Christian community received instruction about the faith leading up to their baptism during the Easter vigil. In his time, Martin Luther encouraged instruction and preaching on the catechism. St. John’s will follow Luther’s admonition, using this time to revisit some of the basic teaching of the church.

The mid-week gatherings, worship at 7:30 p.m., will be preceded by a soup supper* (beginning at 6:30 p.m.) and discussion from 7 to 7:30 p.m. We meet in the Gathering Place.

Following is our schedule:

Mar. 3	<i>Soup & Apostle’s Creed</i>
Mar. 10	<i>Soup & Lord’s Prayer</i>
Mar. 17	<i>Soup & Holy Baptism</i>
Mar. 24	<i>Soup & Holy Sacrament of the Altar</i>

*If you know you’ll be attending these sessions, please sign the sheet on the bulletin board outside of the Gathering Place (Fifth Street side). Don’t let forgetting to sign up keep you away – all are welcome.

Coming to Terms with History (con’t)

(Continued from page 1)
history.

Pr. Mead makes an interesting statement in his book: “Every congregation, like every human being, is both heir and victim of history” (p.37). One of the tasks you are already about is coming to terms with your history. It happens almost instinctively as members seek to understand what has just happened as the pastor leaves. You are reviewing and talking about the past years, and even the past several decades of life here (at least as much of it as you experienced, recall, or have been told about it). You are sharing stories and memories, and in that process you are coming to a common understanding of what has happened.

There are both positive and negative dimensions of your history. These include successes in the way you have met difficult challenges as well as the shortcomings and failures. You will recall joyful and

sad events. It’s a little like “wrestling” with your history. Someone will remember an event one way; another person will have a different perspective. As you share these perspectives, your understanding will be both broadened and refined. Newer members will be introduced to the things that have helped make you the congregation you are today.

I have begun to learn St. John’s history, especially as I talk with members and hear the stories of ministry and relationships here. I am trying to find my place of interim leadership in your midst.

Another important result of coming to terms with your history is to help keep you from making decisions in an unconscious reaction to former pastors. You cannot find “carbon copies” of beloved leaders, nor can you find the exact opposite of what you had at one time. This “time between the times” is an op-

portunity for discovery, for growth, for renewal so that the congregation will be open to the future into which God is calling it, a new stage of life and ministry. You will discover strengths and assets you didn’t know you had, and you will recognize and acknowledge weaknesses.

This brief column does not do justice to this matter, but it is a beginning. Next time we will look at discovering a new identity.

Let me say as I have said elsewhere that I am glad to be here. I know St. John from the time I served with the Allentown Area Lutheran Parish, having left in 1994. I am renewing old relationships. And I’m making some new friends. Let us all remember to pray for each other and especially for the call committee and Bishop’s staff in their search for a new pastor. May God bless us all.

Pastor Denton Kees

Holy Week Worship Schedule

Palm Sunday – March 28

Holy Communion will be celebrated at 5:30 p.m. on Saturday, March 27, and at 8 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. on Sunday, March 28. All services will include the blessing and distribution of palm branches and the reading of the Passion. Sunday School will be at 9:15 a.m. as usual.



Holy Thursday – April 1

Holy Communion at 12:10 and 7:30 p.m.

The evening service will include the ritual of Foot Washing and the Stripping of the Altar in preparation for Good Friday. If you wish to participate in the foot washing, contact Pastor Kees.



Good Friday – April 2

8 a.m. – Annual Communion Breakfast

1 p.m. – Stations of the Cross

7:30 p.m. – Tenebrae Service



Holy Saturday, April 3

5:30 p.m. - The Great Vigil of Easter

Don't miss this dramatic worship experience that begins in the dimness of lent and culminates with the arrival of the bright sights and sounds of Easter Resurrection.

Easter Day – April 4

Holy Communion at 8 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.

Both services will include special music by our chancel choir and a re-telling of the story of our Lord's Resurrection. Our Sunday School will have a special celebration at 9:15 a.m.



Good Friday Breakfast

Our traditional Good Friday Breakfast will be held on Friday, April 2, at 8:00 a.m. in the downstairs Great Room. This breakfast is sponsored by the Worship and Music Committee. An informal Holy Communion will be celebrated, a light breakfast will be served, and an inspirational message will be offered. The cost of the breakfast is \$4 per person. Watch the bulletin or call the church office for times when tickets can be purchased.

The deadline for securing tickets is Holy Monday, March 29.



Sponsorships Available

Don't forget to turn in your **Easter Lily** order form by March 21. The form can be found in your February SPIRE or at either of the bulletin boards in the Gathering Place. We are also in need of sponsorships for **Palm Trees** for Palm Sunday. The price of the palm trees is \$40.00. If you are interested please contact Josephine in the church office.

The State of the Organ

The saying goes that you aren't necessarily aware of how much something means to you until it's not there, or something like that. Based on the reaction, that was certainly true about the organ's absence the last two Sundays of January. What happened was something that was inevitable, a predictable occurrence in the long life of a well-made pipe organ. The very large 15 horsepower Spencer air blower located downstairs just off the 'Great Room' has supplied air to St. John's organ since its installation in 1938. We've also discovered that it supplied air for another instrument in NY for ten plus years before that. In 1993, when the organ underwent its major refurbishment, the blower was discussed, and the upshot was that it was one of the finest made, and was in A+ shape, thanks to checking the grease regularly by our maintenance crew. However, we knew that the front, back, or both sets of bearings would need replacing in at some point in the future. And that's what happened. At the beginning of January I began hearing a slight grumbling noise coming from the blower, and over the next few weeks with the noise increasing, it became obvious what the problem was. Steve Emery came in and confirmed the problem, assessed what needed to be done, and set a date for removing the motor. The motor was sent to a local machine shop to have the bearings replaced (a job that can take up to six weeks, so I understand), and in two weeks, the workmen returned to put it all back together. It now works perfectly – in fact, it passed the 'balance test'; supposedly back when these machines were first made, the Spencer company guaranteed that a nickel could be balanced on its flat edge on top of their blowers while running, and it wouldn't fall. Well, I wouldn't have believed it, but our blower passed the test – saw it with my own two eyes!! I'm very grateful to have the organ back, as I'm sure you are. I'm also grateful for people like Don Brannan and Gavin MacManaman who didn't hesitate to move quickly when approached about the problem.

And I'm also grateful to have the Emery Brothers Organ Company taking care of St. John's instrument, and admire their expertise and professionalism through the experience. And lastly, I'm grateful for those who actually enjoyed hearing the piano, and appreciated the change, if only for a short time. And now, we have to talk about the organ's ailing Chimes (as some have noticed), but that's a different story, for another time.

HECTOR OLIVERA, Concert Organist

Sunday, March 7, 4 p.m. (\$20 general, \$10 students)

So who is this person? And what's all the fuss about? I have had the opportunity to hear/experience Hector Olivera on a few occasions, and have been transported to other worlds every time. His approach to music as it relates to life is fascinating and totally unique. Here are a few facts:

Hector's organist father encouraged him to play when he was three years old (Tiger Woods of the organ?). He became organist for Holy Church of the Immaculate Conception in Buenos Aires at age five. At age six, he entered the Buenos Aires conservatory, and by nine had composed a symphony performed by the Buenos Aires Symphony Orchestra. Getting the picture? University of Buenos Aires at age twelve, and by eighteen had performed more than 300 concerts in Latin America. In 1965, entered Juilliard, won the AGO Improvisation Competition three years later. Returned to Argentina to play concerts and was treated like a national hero. He has appeared with virtually every notable symphony orchestra in world, every cathedral, church, theatre, or other building housing a great organ, and has even appeared with Garrison Keillor's 'A Prairie Home Companion' at the Atlanta Fox Theatre. In 2007, by invitation, Hector performed for a sold out audience of 5000 at Notre Dame in Paris. He has released a DVD, and more than twenty compact discs.

Musical Happenings (con't)

So why should you come hear him? Hector has never performed in the Lehigh Valley area, so this will be your chance to hear his debut in YOUR church on YOUR incredible organ. Over the years we have had growing list of amazing organists play at St. John's who have transformed this instrument into the artistic medium it is intended to be. This concert will be one of the most amazing EVER, guaranteed. Hector is famous for his prodigious technical proficiency, but his effect on audiences has made the most sophisticated and demanding organ aficionados claim that he is without question one of the greatest organists on the planet.

Why does it cost so much? Playing organ concerts is Hector's full-time job, and his price is steep. But think about it. Wherever you go to experience quality musical or theatrical productions, what do you pay? All things being equal, this is not a huge amount, but granted, this is unusual for St. John's. Will we begin charging this for all 'big-name' artists? No. This is truly a very SPECIAL event, not your typical organ recital, and I hope you choose to join us for the experience.

NOON-TEN CONCERTS IN APRIL

Our 20th season of Noon-Ten Concerts is upon us, and

in honor of the way it all started, we will feature all organists. April 6 will feature Matt Balaban, senior organ student at Muhlenberg College. On April 13, Rich Spotts will perform works of mystical French composer Charles Tournemire. Allen Artz, former of St. John's Emmaus and the Cathedral in Newark will perform a variety of hits on April 20. And Stephen Williams will round out the series on the 27th with music that has grown more and more popular over the years. There is no admission charge, even though we would like to suggest a donation of \$5. As always, we will have legendary baked goods afterward by our talented chefs, Jane Brannan, Beverly Vos, Gail Hanzl, and Theresa Shaton (and maybe a few others). Please join us!!

OTHER MUSICAL OPPORTUNITIES IN APRIL

On Sunday, April 18 at 4 p.m. the Meistersingers from Southern Lehigh High School will be presented in concert at St. John's under the direction of Matthew Wehr. No admission charge. All are invited.

On Saturday, April 24 at 3 p.m. Matt Balaban will present his senior organ recital as partial fulfillment for his Bachelor of Music degree requirements at Muhlenberg College. Matt has been involved at St. John's as a choral scholar and has played

the organ here on numerous occasions. He will play works by Vivaldi-Bach, Max Reger, Maurice Duruflé, Charles-Marie Widor, and Calvin Hampton. There is no admission charge. Matt has cordially invited the congregation of St. John's to attend, and would be thrilled to see you here. A reception will follow.

CHOIR UPDATE

As always, we welcome those who might wish to join a choir at St. John's. The Chancel Choir meets to rehearse on Thursday evenings at 7:30, and is open to all in high school through adult years. The Cantoria Choir could use some extra singers, and this involves a parental commitment since they meet on Thursdays at 6 p.m. The educational and musical experience is really worth the effort and consideration. Handbells meet to rehearse on Sunday evenings at 6 p.m., and even though there are specific and limited positions, we are always looking for an extra ringer or two, even if just as rehearsal sub. So let me know if you're interested.



This year, Daylight Saving Time begins on

March 14

Remember to turn your clocks ahead one hour before going to bed on Saturday night, March 13. You don't want to be late for church and Sunday School!

In Our Thoughts and Prayers

- 1 Pray for Rachel Bauer*.
- 2 Pray for Marianne Bear*.
- 3 Pray for Charles Himmelberger*.
- 4 Pray for Robert Smith, Jr.*, Marion Wolfe*.
- 5 Pray for Justin Beltrame*, Susan Deibert*, Ava Panik.
- 6 Pray for Juliann Boehm*, Jaedyn Munoz*, Candace Rodgers*, Michael Stahl*, Rodney Christman*, Gerald & Evelyn Ritter♥.
- 7 Pray for Mildred Hamersly*, Althea Hannis*.
- 8 Pray for Courtney Green*, Keith Laudenslager*, Susan Martucci*, Amber Saylor*.
- 10 Pray for Ryan Long*, Nicolas Quiñones.
- 11 Pray for Deborah Staples*.
- 12 Pray for Barbara & Roy Ott Jr. ♥.
- 13 Pray for Robert Jaeger*, Ferne Schaffer*.
- 15 Pray for Daniel Keener*, Rita Weimer*.
- 16 Pray for Cindy Kula*, Benjamin Walker*, Bernard & Deborah Staples♥.
- 17 Pray for Baylie Hess*, Todd Treese*, Mary Ann Valente*, Rodney Christman Jr*.
- 18 Pray for Karol Strelecki*, Sicilia Kleppinger*, Sage Haydt*.
- 19 Pray for Barry & Lyne Brobst♥.
- 20 Pray for Matthew Moyer*, Joyce Peifer*.
- 21 Pray for Rachel Bonano*, Patricia Strelecki*.
- 22 Pray for Frank Kovacs*, Fannie Sample*.
- 23 Pray for Kayleigh Scott*, Abigail Enstrom*, Richard & Dolores Herman♥.
- 24 Pray for Mary Maury*, Karen Wendland*.
- 25 Pray for Harold Bortz Jr.* , Jared Kern*, Allen C. Swoyer*, Michele Wertman*.
- 26 Pray for Laura-Ashley Beltrame*, Jesse Young*, Elizabeth Moessner*.
- 27 Pray for Gloria Halpin*.
- 28 Pray for Scott Adams Jr.* , Tyler Freyman*, James & Mary Hausman♥.
- 29 Pray for Amy Remaley*.
- 30 Pray for Eugene Ribecky*, Ann Moran*.
- 31 Pray for Stephanie Mauser*, Mary & Nevin Maury♥.

Deaths

May God grant His promise of the Kingdom to those who have loved and served Him in life especially:

Henry Halpin, February 14

May our prayers and compassion reach out to his family who mourns their loss

Sunday School Lenten Project

During Lent the SCS students will be filling their coin banks to benefit the Allentown Ecumenical Food Bank. We will also be collecting peanut butter and tuna fish to go to the food bank. Our theme for this Lenten Season is "Caring for All God's Creatures". In response to this theme we will also be collecting dog and cat food to benefit the pets of people having hardships in these ever changing times.



COFFEE HOUR HOSTS

You can help continue our tradition of great fellowship following worship at St. John's. Sign up to host a Coffee Hour some Sunday after our 10:45 a.m. service. The sign-up sheet is located on the bulletin board outside of the Gathering Place (Fifth Street side). You choose the date and then simply bring some goodies to share. The coffee and paper products are supplied by the church.

Our Ministry of Special Gifts

To the Memorial Fund in memory of:

Dr. Nevin Shaffer By:

Mrs. Jean Schiffert
 Dr. and Mrs. Donald McLean
 Mr. and Mrs. Walter Toth
 Mr. Philip Newman
 Margaret M. Wormley
 Mrs. Jack L. Prather
 Mr. and Mrs. Edward Winkelspecht Jr.
 Mrs. Richard Marshall
 Mr. Milton C. Fett
 Mr. and Mrs. Howard Schaffer
 George A. Kirchner, D.D.S.
 Mr. and Mrs. Moody Clyde Norelli, Sr.
 Mr. and Mrs. William Lichtenwalner

Mr. and Mrs. Fasold
 Mr. and Mrs. Cameron Shaffer
 Mr. and Mrs. John Leh
 Mr. and Mrs. James Bieret
 Mr. and Mrs. George York
 Carol Miller
 Mr. and Mrs. James Kurtz
 Mr. Ross Stuart

To the Stough Memorial Fund in honor of:

**The wedding of The Rev. Richard Stough
 and Marcia G. Haines** by:

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Ross

<i>Financial Status of St. John's</i>		
Unified Fund	January 2010	Year to Date
Income	\$28,683.34	\$28,683.34
Expenses	\$27,480.22	\$27,480.22
Excess, (Deficit)	\$1,203.12	\$1,203.12

Blood Bank *Sherri Marks*

Thank you to the following people for their donations in January.

Charlene Mann Robert Wolfe Anne McClelland Jane Brannan

As of January 31 we have 4 donations towards our yearly goal of 85. We need 81 more donations to reach our goal for 2010. If you have never given, please consider doing so—if you're a regular giver check to see if you're able to give again. This is your chance to give the gift of life.

Thanks!

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Allentown Area Ecumenical Food Bank, we thank you for your recent donation of \$275.00, one box and 3 bags of food..

Sincerely,
 Esther A. Stahl, Corres. Secretary

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Lutheran Congregational Services, Inc. and those persons whom we serve, I want to thank St. John's for its gift of \$91.67.

During the summer of 2009, the agency re-

cruited, equipped and supported three teams of 15 – 20 individuals that led Camp Noah experiences for children from kindergarten through 6th grade.

Together we are continuing a Legacy of Caring and Service that has stood the test of time. Thank you for your partnership in these endeavors.

Yours in Christ,
 The Rev. Dr. Dennis S. Ritter
 President and CEO

(Continued on page 8)

VESTRY

Gavin MacManaman, President
Elizabeth Moessner, Secretary

Barry Brobst, Vice President
Donald Brannan, Treasurer

Carol Baker-Kratzer
Sabrina Leibenguth
Nelvin Vos

Diane Kellogg
Robert Maza
Donna Waldt

James Hausman
Nancy Miller
Janice Walker

Staff

The Rev. Denton Kees, Interim Pastor (570-424-2485)
Laurie Christman, *Chr. Ed. Dir./Office Administrator*
Josephine Wieder, *Vol. Coordinator*

The Rev. Clark Kuntz, Visitation Pastor
Stephen C. Williams, *Director of Music & Organist*
Tom Swierzewski, *Bookkeeper*

Willard Moll, *Sexton*

Church Office Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Church Office: 610-435-1587 Fax: 610-435-6505

E-mail: stjohnslutheran@enter.net

Music Office: 610-435-1641 e-mail: stepwill@enter.net

We're on the Web – stjohnsallentown.org

Thanks! (con't)

(Continued from page 7)

Dear Friends,

Re: Donation in the amount Of \$20.00

Your generous donation and partnership has made it possible for Habitat to realize the vision of leading the development of safe neighborhoods and provide hardworking, disadvantaged families access to quality, affordable homes and offer their children the stability and safety of a decent, modest home that they can call their own. We thank you sincerely.

More than ever organizations like Habitat depend on the generosity of our supports. And we wish to thank you for your support.

Together, we know, we can make a difference.

Sincerely,

Laurie Schnauer, Capital Dev. Director
Habitat for Humanity

Dear Friends,

We would like to thank you for your generous donation of \$5.00. a great deal of our support comes from the local community. Without help from neighbors such as you, we would not be able to continue the services our shelter has to offer.

Thank you again.

Sincerely,

Marsha Eichelberger, Program Director
Sixth Street Shelter

Synodical News

The faith community that is Christ Lutheran Church, located near ABE Airport, is coming to an end. In discerning how to dispose of their assets, they have offered their building and property to the synod of its offices. Since their offer presents challenges as well as benefits the synod council has formed two task forces to study: 1) The synod's dreams and mission; and 2) "due diligence" of the property. Bishop Zeiser encourages our thanks and prayers for the offer and the study.

Mark your Calendars

This year's annual
Congregational Picnic
will be held on
Sunday, June 13,
beginning at 2 p.m.
in Lindberg Park.

You won't want to
miss the good food, fellowship and
fun!

