

THE WORD FROM TWO SAINTS

The Church of St. Luke & St. Simon Cyrene
A Parish of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester

December 2007
In Covenant with St. Stephen's Church

A Word From the Rector:

Dear Two Saints' Members and Friends,

Greetings to all as we begin this season of Advent, my favorite of the year. It will be a very different Advent for me this year, as it will be, therefore for us. More on that after the practical note.

Most of you know (this note will go out with the newsletter to our friends far and wide, so some of you may not know) that I have been on medical disability since November 3. Shortly after that date I began a "partial-hospitalization program," which I am finishing this week. I am coming to grips with bi-polar disease—from which I have suffered for a long time, although it has, in the past, been treated largely as depression.

As I finish this particular program, I am not yet ready to return to work, and so the Wardens and I have applied to the Episcopal Church Pension Fund's short-term disability program, which will enable you to continue to pay my salary, while being provided funds to pay someone to take on the majority of my normal duties. This program is not available until 30 days of disability have already passed. Who that person is will be up to the Bishop and the Wardens and I know they will let you know soon. I have also asked to be relieved of my duties as priest-in-charge of St. Stephen's and asked the Bishop to appoint Mary Ann Brody to that role (with the agreement of their Vestry, of course), which she has been effectively playing during the last few weeks. Upon my return, I would continue as Team Leader for our ministry covenant, but Mary Ann would remain as priest-in-charge (as well as continuing as our half-time assistant).

It is my hope that I will begin half-time work the day before Christmas Eve and continue at that level probably through to Lent. This part of the plan could very well change, depending on my progress. As I have said before, I am determined to do the deep and sustained work on my own body, mind and spirit that will bring me to full health so that I can serve God with you as best as we are able together.

It is worth saying again also what I have said before—that I am enormously grateful for our Wardens, Vestry and staff, and many others who have picked up things that have needed to be done and seen that parish life carries on relatively seamlessly. They are in my daily prayers and I ask that they continue to be in yours as well. I am also grateful for Bishop Jack and his staff who have been every bit as supportive as one could hope to both myself and the parish leadership.

As I began this letter, this will be a different Advent for me. Not only will I be away from you, but also living into it in a much more immediate way than I have in the past. Advent is that great paradoxical time of both expectation—of being pregnant with Mary—and restless longing—of crying in the wilderness with John the Baptist. It is the time we learn anew to live in our time, neither giving in totally to the consumer Christmas that wants us to pretend that everything is all right nor sinking into despair because "all right" seems such more a dream than a reality. It is why Advent is my favorite season, because I think it wants to teach us how to live in the now—the time in between the promise and its fulfillment—or, to put it another way, the time in between the poles of fantasy and despair. Recovering from bi-polar disease seems to me very much like this work of Advent.

(continued on next page)

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The Rev. Peter W. Peters, Priest Associate

See, there is still a preacher in me, so there is also hope!

I am also still a lover of hymns, and I'll close with two lines of one of my favorite Advent hymns (though it is not in the "Advent" section of *the Hymnal 1982*). They are words that are very much my prayer for myself and for all of us this season:

*New advent of the love of Christ, shall we
again refuse thee,
'til in the night of hate and war we perish as
we lose thee?*

*From old unfaith our souls release to seek
the kingdom of thy peace,
by which alone we choose thee.*

*O wounded hands of Jesus, build in us thy
new creation;
our pride is dust, our vaunt is stilled, we
wait thy revelation:
O love that triumphs over loss, we bring our
hearts before thy cross,
to finish thy salvation.*

Let us all have such a new advent that we indeed bring our hearts not only before the cross, but also to the manger this Christmas.

Faithfully,



P.S. You that are members will soon be receiving, I believe, both annual pledge and capital campaign materials. I assume all of you who are not members will also receive at least the latter. I ask you to be generous in both ways this year. John and I are preparing to do so. Nothing would be a greater joy to me than to hear that we will enter 2008 with both a healthy budget and a fulfilled capital campaign so that we can do all of the work that we know we are being called to do. Thanks in advance for taking your stewardship so seriously.

(clip art here)

Wardens and Vestry call Peter Peters to serve as priest-in-charge for the month of December.

By Madeline Gamble & Bruce Colburn

Michael's recovery is expected to take longer than at first anticipated. Thanks to the good resources of the Church Pension Fund we are in a position to ensure that the work of the ordained ministerial leadership will be maintained in our community. Most of us know Peter Peters, who has served now for the past two years as one of our adjunct clergy. We are pleased to announce that during this time of Michael's absence he has agreed to serve us as our priest-in-charge and the bishop has so appointed him. Peter will be working half-time to ensure that in this busy liturgical season our services will be maintained; he will also do some administrative work and take care of pastoral needs as they occur. It is his and our expectation that in this brief period he will work in collegial consultation with Michael as far as Michael's health allows. Please continue to pray for Michael's full recovery and his return to us as our Rector.

Christmas Services

Our Christmas services this year will be shared jointly with St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. Together we hope to announce with joy the birth of our savior to the world. Begin by joining us for the **greening of the church** on Sunday, December 23rd following the 10am service. All are welcome to help! Celebrate with us at one of the following services.

December 24th, Christmas Eve

A service for all ages at 6pm at St. Stephen's.

This is a service with music designed to be for all ages. Families with children should count on arriving about fifteen minutes prior to the service so that children can "prepare" for their role in the worship.

A Festive Eucharist with Music at 10pm at St. Luke & St. Simon Cyrene.

Join a combined choir from both churches as they sing in the birth of Christ! The service will include incense and bells!

December 25th, Christmas Day

A Christmas Morning Eucharist with carols at St. Luke & St. Simon's.

A quieter service to welcome Christmas morning.

Call For Nominations For Slate of Nominees at Annual Meeting

Please note the following Positions are open for election at the Annual Meeting in January 2008:

One Position of Warden: Two-Year Term

Four Positions for Vestry: Three-Year Term

One Position for Delegate to Diocesan Convention and District: Three-Year Term

Three Positions for Alternate Delegate to Diocesan Convention and District: One-Year Term

A candidate for Warden must be a member of the parish and Confirmed in the Episcopal Church, and should have Vestry experience. A Warden Term of Office is two years and this individual may serve three terms for a total of six years if re-elected to successive terms.

A candidate for Vestry must be a member of the parish. A Vestry Term of Office is three years and this individual may serve two terms for a total of six years if re-elected to a successive term.

A candidate for Delegate to Diocesan Convention and District must be a member of the parish. A Delegate Term is three years, and may be repeated if re-elected. A Delegate represents the Parish at three district meetings and an Annual Diocesan Convention.

A Candidate for Alternate Delegate to Diocesan Convention and District must be a member of the parish, and the term is one year. An Alternate Delegate may attend all district meetings and convention, and is asked to take the place of a Delegate if the Delegate is unable to attend Convention or District Meetings.

If you would like to serve or would like to nominate an individual for any of the above Positions, please submit your name or the person you wish to nominate to Bruce Colburn, Warden and Nominating Chair by Sunday December 16, 2007, by mail, phone, e-mail or in person.

Bruce Colburn
96 Hickory St.
Rochester, NY 14620
585-454-5304 home
585-529-5029 mobile
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A Year With Matthew

By the Rev. Michael W. Hopkins

On the First Sunday of Advent we begin a new liturgical year and, therefore, a new year in our lectionary, the three year cycle of readings for Sunday services. This coming year is Year A, and we will be spending most Sundays with the Gospel according to Matthew.¹ Like each of the four Gospels, Matthew has its own peculiarities.

The earliest editions in existence of Matthew's Gospel do not contain a title and there is no reference in the Gospel itself to its author. At some point in the early Church's life, the name of Matthew got attached to it. Matthew was one of Jesus' disciples, the one called from being a tax collector (although in Mark's Gospel this person's name is "Levi"). Most scholars believe Matthew to be a "second edition" of Mark's Gospel, re-edited and expanded for a particular early Christian community. The Gospel probably dates from sometime between the years 85 and 90.



The Gospel divides fairly neatly into three sections, so "neatly" that they are themselves often referred to as "books:" the book of Jesus' origin (1:1—4:16), the book of Jesus' Public Ministry (4:17—16:20) and the Book of

¹ Every Sunday except the First Sunday after Christmas, the Second Sunday after the Epiphany, Sundays 2-5 of Lent and 2-7 of Easter, all Sundays when we traditionally read from John's Gospel, the Gospel that does not have its "own" liturgical year.

Jesus' Passion (16:21—28:20).

The community out of which Matthew's Gospel came seems to have been primarily Jewish in composition, although one agenda of Matthew is to prepare his community for the inclusion of Gentiles in "the kingdom of heaven" (a phrase Matthew tends to use instead of "the kingdom of God"). A larger agenda, however, is to show the Jewish community that after the destruction of the Temple (which had occurred in 70 A.D.), it is the followers of Jesus who best carry on the Jewish tradition. In essence, Matthew wants his readers to believe that Jesus is the replacement of the Temple (the place where God dwells).

In putting forth this agenda, Matthew is in heavy competition with the synagogue movement, the development of the Jewish tradition as we more or less know it today, with synagogues led by teachers (rabbis) of the Torah, or Jewish law. It is clear that the relationship between this rabbinic movement and the Jesus movement—at least in Matthew's environment—became increasingly hostile. Matthew's Gospel is more critical of "the scribes and the Pharisees" than any other of the four Gospels.

Matthew takes great pains to establish and emphasize the continuity of Jesus' teaching with Jewish teaching prior to the Temple's destruction. Over and over again Matthew will pause to say, "this occurred so that the Scripture might be fulfilled." Matthew also portrays Jesus as the authoritative interpreter of Torah. It is in Matthew's Gospel that Jesus says, "I did not come to destroy the law but to fulfill it" (5:17).

Matthew is often called "the Gospel of the Church" because it is only in his Gospel that the New Testament word for church, "ecclesia," is used. Matthew's Gospel also spends a great deal of time giving instruction in Church life, most of which is unique to Matthew. An example is in Matthew 18 where Jesus lays out a procedure to follow when one member of the church sins against another. For centuries, Matthew's Gospel was the predominant Gospel read in the Church's worship as well, although this is not longer true in our contemporary three-year lectionaries (Luke is now the most-read Gospel, with Matthew and John close seconds).

Finally, Matthew's Gospel may be in many ways the "hardest" of the Gospels. The theme of judgment is pervasive, and the punishment of those judged is quite visual (there is much "weeping and gnashing of teeth in Matthew). Matthew is also very hard on the Jewish leadership, who, in his Gospel, are clearly responsible for Jesus' death and even proclaim, "His blood be on us and on our children" (27:25). Both these features no doubt arise out of the conflict Matthew's community is experiencing with the rabbinic community of its day, as well as the larger context of a world in a great deal of turmoil, including the recent destruction of any semblance of Jewish independence or freedom and the beginnings of the persecution of the followers of Jesus. These historical contexts are very important to be kept in mind while reading Matthew's Gospel, otherwise the text could be used to promote anti-semitism and otherwise harsh judgmentalism. Yet there is much else in Matthew that witnesses to an inclusive version of the faith of those who follow Jesus. And it is in Matthew's Gospel where the phrase "be not afraid" occurs the most in the New Testament.

Some select Matthew Resources:

- The Gospel of Matthew*, Daniel J. Harrington, S.J. (*Sacra Pagina* series)
- Matthew as Story*, Jack D. Kingsbury
- Matthew for Everyone* (in two parts), N.T. (Tom) Wright
- The Parables of Judgment*, Robert Farrar Capon
- The Gospel according to Matthew*, Barbara Reid (*New Collegeville Bible Commentary* series)

Bowling Party December 16

The annual Men's Association sponsored Bowling Party will be held at 2 pm on Sunday, December 16, at Olympic Lanes, 1350 Scottsville Road. This is an annual gift to the parish by the Men's Association and includes free pizza and wings. All are welcome for a fun time!

Human Rights Day

Please join in the celebration on Monday, December 10 at 5:15 pm with a Potluck supper (please bring a dish to pass) in Celebration Hall on the 2nd floor. At 6:30 pm hear folk singers Bonnie Abrams and Allen

Hopkins in the Sanctuary; 6:45 pm Evening Program and 7:00 pm a panel discussion.

Advent Materials Available

On the resource table in the back of the church you can find materials for advent. Spend some time each day reflecting on the writings of Henri Nouwen, a modern spiritual writer and priest. His writings have been widely read in the Christian community. Advent calendars will be available for our children and youth. The children will be receiving their calendars at children's time during the sermon at our All Church Sunday service on December 2. If your family misses that Sunday, let us know and we'll be sure to get one to you! Spend some time each day with your child talking about the scripture references and activities on the calendar. Help your children to recognize the Christ in Christmas this year.

SWEM Christmas Baskets

Each year Southwest Ecumenical Ministries (SWEM) provides Christmas Baskets for those who need them in their service area. Individuals or groups can sign up to provide a "basket" for a family of 3-4 people. If you or your family would like to donate a "basket", simply take a gold sign-up sheet from the resource table and fill it in. Return it to the address on the form. The sheet will list the items that are expected to be in each basket. You will need to fill out the bottom of the information sheet and mail it to the SWEM office to let them know of your intention to help.

SWEM has had a long-standing relationship with St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, our covenant partner. Our common friend, the Rev. Dick Comegys, was one of the founding members. St. Stephen's provides space and support for a satellite office in their building. Several members of their congregation serve on the board. This is another way to live into our covenant for collaborative ministry on the west side of the city.



Blow the Trumpet! We're Moving Ahead!

By Chris Cleveland
What do Herb Alpert, Chris Botti

and Quincy Jones have in common with Two Saints? They, like us, know how to "Blow the Trumpets". The music is sounding as we embark on the next phase of living out our vision. How do we transform our gathering space to be one that is accessible and open to all that come? The St. Luke and St. Simon Cyrene Capital Campaign is the music and we are the performers.

The trumpets will be blown loud and clear and on December 9 after the 10:00 Service when we have our Kick-Off Event. This is the day where we invite all members, families and friends to hear our campaign committee explain why we're doing what we're doing, and how you can be an integral part of the process. Now, you know how we like to do things at Two Saints, so how could we have a meeting after church without food? Well we can't, so bring your appetite as well as a thirst for how we can better serve the Lord and follow Jesus at our spiritual home of 17 South Fitzhugh Street.

We look forward to seeing you (all of you) on the 9th. Let's have a great time, blowing trumpets, worshiping the Lord and giving thanks (Thanksgiving is every day) for all the abundance that we have been given and all that we have to give in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

P.S. – Don't forget that we are combining the Capital Campaign with our annual pledge drive (or annual gift). Please give prayerful consideration of all of the ministries of this parish when you make your decisions about giving to the annual budget and the Capital Campaign. Now excuse me while I pull out one of my Rick Braun CD's and listen to some excellent trumpet playing.

SS SUNDAY SUPPER NEWS

The dates for Sunday Suppers in December are: December 16th and 23rd. Please consider volunteering for those dates. All help is appreciated. Especially cooks. Menus and food are provided.

We are also collecting fleece blankets for Christmas as well as hats, gloves, and warm socks for the winter months. If you have items to donate, give them to Mary Ann Brody and she will transport them to St. Stephen's. If you are able to help with a

dinner, contact Debbie Burrows at 328-8363 or dburrows@rochester.rr.com.

ST. NICHOLAS PARTY

This year we will be celebrating St. Nicholas Day (December 6) with our annual party at St. Stephen's Church following the Hip Hop Service on **December 8**. Hip Hop begins at 5pm and the party begins immediately following with pizza in the parish hall. Young people and families are welcome to enjoy a project together. We round out the evening with a story and a visit from St. Nicholas himself. Come join the fun!

CHRISTMAS OFFERING FOR FLOWERS/MUSIC

If you would like to contribute to Christmas flowers and/or music in remembrance of someone or give thanksgiving for something, please take an envelope and leave it with your check in the offering plate or mail it to the church.

ADVENT QUIET MORNING

As we all prepare for the holidays it's easy to get caught up in the secular preparations for Christmas. Consider setting aside a morning on December 15 to spend some time preparing your spirit as we reflect on some of Henri Nouwen's writing in his book, *The Prodigal Son*. We will begin at 9:30am and end with a light lunch together. Watch for a sign-up sheet in the church. No experience required!

SCHEDULE CHANGE FOR PEACE VIGILS

By Marilyn Wienk

We have changed the time of the monthly peace vigils to end the war in Iraq to **second Tuesday afternoons, 4:30-6:00 pm**. Because the war in Iraq continues unabated, members of St. Luke and St. Simon Cyrene and Downtown United Presbyterian Church will continue to stand with signs for peace once a month on the corner of Fitzhugh and Broad. Come join us for some or all of the vigil time on December 11th.

Public Policy Forum—December 16

TOM MOORE ON *THE PEOPLE OF IRAN*

By Marilyn Wienk

We might be swayed to believe all the bad things we are hearing lately in the media about Iran and its supposed security threat to our nation. We might be becoming convinced that a pre-emptive war with Iran is the only answer to the current conflict (déjà vu 2002). We might not be mindful enough that any military action taken against Iran will have devastating effects on the people living there, as well as adversely affect us here. We need to be reminded that bombs would fall on countless innocent civilians—no matter how “surgical” the air strikes the U. S. military plans might be.

Who are these people of Iran?

We will have the opportunity to learn more about them from Tom Moore, who recently traveled to Iran with the Fellowship of Reconciliation, an interfaith organization, to meet with everyday people and to bring their stories back to the Greater Rochester Community. Tom will put the human faces on these people of Iran at the Sunday Public Policy Forum, scheduled for December 16, after the late service.

Tom Moore lives in the City of Rochester with his wife and three daughters. He has been a schoolteacher in and around Rochester for 25 years. Tom's peace activism began with protests against the Vietnam War. Since that time he “has found it difficult to ever get comfortable with or completely ignore my government's activities either at home or abroad.” Tom was aware of how the Gulf War and U.S.-imposed sanctions had crippled Iraq. He was “horrified with the prospect of preemptive war with that nation.” On the eve of the attack in the spring of 2003, Tom went to Iraq. More recently, Tom felt compelled to go to Iran to investigate the situation there firsthand. Now he is giving talks to church and civic groups in Rochester. We will have the privilege to hear him speak here at Two Saints on the 16th about the people of Iran.

ECW PROGRAMS AT ST. PAUL'S

By Nancy Andrus

On January 3rd the ECW speakers will be Bishop Jack McKelvey and his wife, Linda McKelvey. The

Bishop will speak on his *Reflections* from the past eight years as Bishop of Rochester. And Linda McKelvey will speak about their "blended family". The luncheon preceding the speakers will be at Noon in the Parish Hall for \$4 with the speaker beginning at 1 pm for an hour. Please call St. Paul's office at 271-2240 to make a reservation for lunch the Monday before the event in order to accommodate all who attend.

CONGRATULATIONS FRANK & CARTER

Frank and Carter Williams were honored with the Woerner Kollmorgen Award for Public Service by the Nazareth College School of Health and Human Services on Tuesday, November 13. The award is given to those who "have demonstrated a dedication to the values espoused by the Nazareth College School of Health and Human Services: a concern for and commitment to underserved individuals; ethical personal and professional behavior; and leadership in the fields of health care and social work" and to those who have "made outstanding contributions in health and human services, improving the quality of life for the greater Rochester community." Congratulations!

CABARAT

February 10, 2008 at 2 pm - GEVA

By Allan Cuseo

The Welcoming and Inclusion Team invites you to an afternoon of exciting theatre. We have reserved 20 tickets for the matinee performance on Sunday Feb. 10th at 2pm -- there is an optional discussion before the musical at 1 pm - which will be lead by one of the cast or crew. These are prime seats down front in the orchestra section and it promises to be a performance which will have you talking and discussing for weeks.

The Story: The year is 1929, as Hitler begins his march to power. Cliff, a young American novelist travels to Berlin in search of artistic inspiration – but what he finds is a world of desire and decadence, jealousy and betrayal in a time when the rules of survival are quickly shifting. He falls in love with Sally Bowles, the sexy chanteuse of the Kit Kat Klub, where Berlin misfits gather for a drink, a laugh, a song - as the storm clouds of war gather outside. Cliff wants to take Sally back to

America where they can raise a family, but the cabaret is the only family Sally knows.

The Experience: "Willkommen. Bienvenue. Welcome." So sings the Emcee as he welcomes you to this sexy and sleek production of one of the classics of American musical theatre, featuring tunes like "Tomorrow Belongs to Me," "Maybe This Time," "Don't Tell Mama" and, of course, "Cabaret." The world might end tomorrow, why not leave your troubles outside and come in for escape tonight?

The Buzz: This fantastic musical first captured audiences when it hit Broadway in 1966 winning 8 Tony Awards and even more nominations. In 1998 the show was revived by the Roundabout Theatre Company, captured four more Tony Awards and became one of the longest running revivals in Broadway history.

The Fine Print: Recommended for high school and up.

The Word from Two Saints is a publication of:

The Church of St. Luke & St. Simon Cyrene (Episcopal)

A Parish of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester

A House of Prayer for All People

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Good News in the Heart of the City since 1817!

DECEMBER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday, December 2—First Sunday of Advent

All Church Sunday (TS)

8 am Eucharist (TS)

10 am Sung Eucharist (TS)

10 am Eucharist with Music (SS)

5 pm Dignity-Integrity Eucharist (TS)

Saturday, December 8

5 pm Hip Hop Worship (SS)

6 pm St. Nicholas' Party (SS)

Sunday, December 9

8 am Eucharist (TS)

10 am Sung Eucharist (TS)

10 am Eucharist with Music (SS)

5 pm Dignity-Integrity Liturgy of the Word (TS)

Sunday, December 16

8 am Eucharist (TS)

10 am Sung Eucharist (TS)

10 am Eucharist with Music (SS)

5 pm Dignity-Integrity Eucharist (TS)

8 am Eucharist (TS)

10 am Sung Eucharist (TS)

And Greening of the Church

10 am Eucharist with Music (SS)

And Greening of the Church

5 pm Dignity-Integrity Eucharist (TS)

Monday, December 24

6 pm Christmas for all Ages (SS)

10 pm Festive Vigil Mass (TS)

Tuesday, December 25

10 am Christmas Eucharist with Carols (TS)

Sunday, December 30

8 am Eucharist (TS)

10 am Eucharist with Music (SS)

10 am Sung Eucharist (TS)

Every Tuesday & Thursday

12:05 pm Eucharist

Sunday, December 23