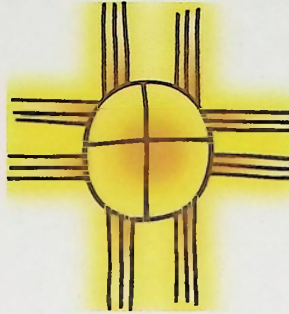


Pastor's Report -- 2008



*Your love, O Lord, forever will I sing;
from age to age my mouth will proclaim your faithfulness.
(Psalm 89:1)*

Dear members and friends:

Our neighborhood is being rapidly transformed (yet again!):

- On the corner of 46th and Eighth we can see the new Platinum building reaching for the sky. Its sales office is open and soon we will witness new tenants moving in.
- Directly across the street the parking lot which has been there for years is now boarded up with a construction wall and its accompanying posters. The old buildings facing Eighth Avenue are being demolished to make way for what we are told will be a new hotel.
- A new “New Orleans” style restaurant called “Bourbon Street” has replaced Danny’s and will be reopening soon with a remodeled building that has added two complete stories to its height.

All this rapid change raises the question of how we will respond to it. The council has set aside money in our budget for the development of new programs in outreach and evangelism, as well as for new plans to increase our public visibility. Some of these changes will begin to happen this year (2008). Among them are plans for a new brochure describing the congregation to non-members; new outdoor banner(s) to make the church more visible from the corners of Eighth and Ninth Avenues. New signboards (electronic) that will enable us to share pictures, activities, and schedules with passersby on busy Restaurant Row.

All of this “design planning” leads to questions of “content planning” as well. Some of our members have already indicated interest in participating in the process by which we will define ourselves to others. In traditional parlance this is known as “writing a mission statement.” In reality it is about being clear in our sense of purpose and direction and articulating that simply but distinctly to others so that they will know and understand what we are about.

Our present brochure was developed in 2001. It describes Saint Luke's as a place of healing and artistic expression, capitalizing on the traditions that Saint Luke himself was a physician and an artist. It reminds the reader that the greatest healing happens through the presence of Christ in the Meal we share weekly. It then describes our ministries: our Soup Kitchen and Clothing Bank as ministries of healing; our liturgical life and our offerings of music and art through the gifts and talents of our members; and our style of welcome as a diverse community which includes people from many cultures and communities, including the gay and lesbian community.

In the months to come we will explore these and other themes in our life together and try to come up with new descriptions that may describe us more effectively. I hope that we will hit upon a concise way of talking that is welcoming but also specific, that describes us as a community whose life is shaped by the risen presence of Christ and which tries to live out that presence both together by its common activities and individually in the various worlds of the city where we work and play.

A brochure, of course, is only part of the equation of reaching out. The real contact between seekers and the church is actually one-on-one. The best "evangelism" happens when you as individuals, invite, listen, and talk about your own faith, not by arguing, but simply by sharing the importance of Christ in your life, the difference his presence makes in good and bad times, the Christian community you are part of and how it helps you to focus your life directions, etc. These conversations matter more than any signs, or brochures. They are what make people consider becoming part of a Christian community, and give them incentive to explore the meaning of faith in Christ

In conclusion, I hope you will be eager to be a part of our planning for outreach. It promises to be challenging but exciting. We are a congregation blessed with wonderful gifts. I pray that we will find new and better ways to share them with the vibrant city we all love.

Pastor Schmiede

P.S. Here are just a few of last year's events remembered. It was a great year!

Koinonia Retreats: Both Winter and Summer Retreats took place in 2007. Watch for additional news about this summer's retreat, currently scheduled for August 1,2,and 3.

Wednesday Bible Studies: Topics ranged from The Lutheran Course II, to an Intro to the Bible, to short stories in Listening for God to a study of the Christmas stories during the Advent season. Watch for more of these supper study discussions during the coming year

A glorious Easter Celebration: with the performance of Handel's Chandos Anthem # 6: "O Sing unto the Lord" with full orchestra and choir.

The dedication of the new columbarium on All Saints Day in November: Additional information about choosing the columbarium as a resting place is part of this meeting's information.

An enjoyable Annual Benefit with attendance at "Altarboyz", the off Broadway hit show and a lovely dinner at Sangria 46 here on Restaurant Row.

A beautiful celebration of Christmas with possibly the largest trees that have ever graced the sanctuary at Saint Luke's.

President's Report

"We do what we can. We give what we can."

That is my mantra for the year. We are in the middle of many projects and it often seems difficult to juggle so much. We always want to do as much as possible as quickly as possible, but we are still few in number. Fortunately we are showing exciting signs of new growth, and our mission work continues to be a strong witness in the community. As Pastor Emeritus Dale Hansen always called us: "A small but mighty congregation in the heart of Times Square."

To highlight a few high points since our last annual meeting, we:

- Started the St. Luke's Weekly Update via email
- Completed the phone tree, a project that has been on the council slate for 3 years
- Planned, installed, and dedicated the columbarium
- Installed stair lifts in the Parish House and the theater space
- Continued our increasingly popular Wednesday night studies. The fall session continued *The Lutheran Handbook II* and introduced with the ever-exciting salt and pepper shakers. The Lenten Bible Study continued with readings from *Listening for God, Volume 4*
- Upgraded our computer system including the purchase of a new server last week.

And last, but certainly not least, we celebrated the 50th anniversary of Pastor Emeritus Dale Hansen's ordination.

Our missions continue to provide a visible, needed community outreach every week. The St. Luke's Soup Kitchen continues to serve more than 150 meals every Tuesday and Thursday. The clothing bank helps nearly 70 patrons every month.

We decided not to fill the Assistant Treasurer/Building Management Committee Chair position from within the council. Instead, we are delighted that Marvin Bettis is returning to help us in the area of Property Management planning. This is an important role, especially with an 86-year-old building, and we are delighted to have Marvin's experience with the building to help us in the future. The Property Management Committee will still function under the Finance Committee. That is where we will evaluate the various building maintenance proposals and put them together with funding, including possible grants through the National Historic Registry.

As you can imagine, our finances are closely tied to the maintenance of our beloved historical structure. We have been using the ALSA Architecture report prepared last year as a guide for our current and future projects. In addition, we have requested a review of the space formerly used by Project Renewal to examine what future possibilities are for this space. We believe it is important to ensure that we balance both the need for income with the mission to serve the wider community in the name of Jesus Christ, and we hope the report will give us ideas as to what is possible.

I thank you for the privilege of serving on council for the last 6 years and as President the past two years. Blessings to you all in 2008.

Cassandra Wilson

*There are varieties of gifts but the same spirit...to each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.
(1 Corinthians 12:4,7)*

**Saint Luke's Lutheran Church, New York City
Cantor's Annual Report 2007-08**

April 27, 2008

Last Fall the Choir of Saint Luke's Church performed Dieterich Buxtehude's cantata, "Wär Gott nicht mit uns diese Zeit" [BuxWV 102] for the annual celebration of our patronal feast of Saint Luke the Evangelist. In November we were privileged to celebrate the golden jubilee of the ordination of the Reverend Dr. Dale D. Hansen, our beloved Pastor emeritus. We were joined by the Reverend Eduardo Fabian Arias and the congregation of Sion Iglesia Luterana. On the following Sunday we dedicated the new columbarium and interred the ashes of two of our long-time members, Hilda Johnson and Esther Montanez.

At Christmas we heralded the birth of Christ with music for choir, organ and brass, assisted by Saint Luke's Trombones in music of Praetorius and a few new arrangements of familiar carols by the cantor. A new Kyrie from my mass setting was sung throughout the Lenten season, and on Palm Sunday, for the first time, we celebrated the Eucharist at Saint Clement's Episcopal Church, having proceeded west on 46th Street from the steps of St. Luke's, where we had gathered together for the blessing of palms. Once again, we were led in song by St. Luke's Trombones, as we sang the ancient hymn of triumph, "All Glory, Laud, and Honor," written by Saint Theodulph of Orleans in the ninth century. A mixed brass ensemble was with us on Easter Day, playing polychoral music antiphonally with the choir in works by Jacobus Gallus (a.k.a. "Handl"), Heinrich Schütz, and in a setting of Sir Edward Bairstow's glorious anthem, "Sing Ye to the Lord," based on the song of Moses at the crossing of the Red Sea (Exodus 15) and the Latin office hymn, "Ad regias Agni dapes," as translated by Robert Campbell, and newly-arranged by yours truly.

In February we bid a final farewell to our long-time choir member and soloist, Irving Hunter. Irving was a gift to our choir and community, and the sweetness of his tenor voice and his beautiful personality will be deeply missed. May his soul and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace.

I thank our choir, section leaders, Pastor Schmiede, Casey Wilson, Nhorie Leonardo, and Scott Layman for their support and friendship. All of you, members of the Lukan family, make my work a pleasure and enable me to do what I love doing as a church musician in a friendly and loving environment, to the glory of God and in the name of Jesus our Lord.

Respectfully submitted,

Pedro d'Aquino, *Cantor*

Pastoral Care Report for 2007

Over the past year, we grew more comfortable with our new Lutheran Worship book. We were able to purchase enough that they are now placed in each pew, which saves us from passing them out and collecting them at each service. Now that we do have a complete set, we have more that we can receive dedications for. Look for the forms in the coming weeks in your bulletins.

We have enjoyed the presence of many new regulars and are so thankful that our family continues to be strong in this busy city. With that said, we are still in need of weekly servers to Assist, Torch bear, Lector, and sometimes Thurifer. It seems that some are reluctant to volunteer but will indeed gladly serve if asked. Just a reminder to all that the server list is always on the board in the narthex so please take a few moments as you pass by and sign your name on the empty lines. We all benefit from your gracious assistance.

We continue to discuss ways to reach out to the growing population of our neighborhood. All you have to do is look across the street and also to the corner of 8th Avenue. to notice the continuing construction. As these new towers fill, we hope that we can fill the need for spiritual guidance to the influx of new neighbors. We always strive to be a beacon of hope and peace in a city that many times presents itself as utterly chaotic.

2007 saw the dedication of our columbarium. Saint Luke's is home for so many of us and we feel that the columbarium offers a welcome place of final rest for our family. Our faith tells us that death is only the beginning of our spiritual lives. It is a comfort that our earthly selves can remain in the house of the Lord.

We look to the future with hope and optimism. With everyone's help, we can continue to grow in faith and spread God's Word.

Jim Deliman
Vice President – Pastoral Care

St Luke's Lutheran Church
Property Management Report
2007

There were four significant issues for 2007.

Architectural Report: At the April meeting, the congregational reviewed a presentation with slides and recommendations from ALSA Architecture. The report detailed many of the current and potential future repairs in both the church proper and the parish house and parsonage. It provided cost estimates and prioritized repairs over a 5 year period. The total cost to implement all recommendations would be close to \$1.2 million. A few of the repairs were done to the parsonage in 2007, but the bulk of the work still needs to be assessed and scheduled. In order to pay for all the recommendations, we would need to undertake a major capital improvement fundraising plan.

National Register: On June 1, 2007 we were approved to be listed in the National Register of Historic Places. This listing is the first step to getting loans and matching grants from a variety of sources to help with some of the work recommended in the architect's report.

New Columbarium: In November the congregation completed the installation of the new columbarium to the right of the Altar in the sanctuary of the church. The columbarium has spaces (niches) for 54 committals. Today's congregational report contains information about participating in the columbarium, and purchasing a space for those who are interested. It promises to be a wonderful place for repose for those who were so much a part of the life of Saint Luke's congregation.

Chairlift: Another major addition to the parish house in 2007 was the chairlift – the funds for which were donated anonymously by a member of the church.

Plans for 2008 include a possible renovation of the Parish House windows in the hope that we will realize increased heating efficiency in a time of increasing fuel expenses.

An unexpected but exciting project has also emerged with the surprise contact from the Synod that a carillon of bells would be available from a congregation closing in Brooklyn, and that they could be installed at Saint Luke's for the cost of the installation. Watch for an upcoming fundraiser in the hopes that this carillon will become part of our neighborhood and welcome us all to worship.

Thank you

Soup Kitchen and Clothing Bank Ministry

“He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the alien, giving him food and clothing.” (Deuteronomy 10:18)

Ordering Food and Supplies, Endless . . . Sorting Clothing every month, Timeless . . . Serving the Homeless and the Needy, Priceless!!!

Time flies so fast. I could hardly believe that this is already my sixth fruitful and blessed year working at Saint Luke's. I still remember my first day at work. I came to work that morning very excited and looking forward to my new job but when I entered the parish administrator's office I was overwhelmed when I saw boxes and files of papers waiting to be sorted. I said to myself, oh Lord have mercy on me! It was a very challenging couple of weeks of organizing and cleaning, but the outcome was great and the rest is history.

What a tremendous year for the Soup Kitchen Ministry. There are so many people in need in our neighborhood and Saint Luke's has provided them a place where they can go and eat a sumptuous hot meal twice a week and the opportunity to mingle with their colleagues and friends. Thanksgiving and Christmas dinner are events that our clients look forward to every year. Most of them expressed their sincere gratitude to Saint Luke's church, their staff, and volunteers for feeding them and what we're doing for the homeless.

Over the last couple of years we have seen a tremendous increase of people coming to the soup kitchen on a regular basis. The majority of them are homeless but the rest of them are low income individuals and seniors, with fixed incomes who eat at the soup kitchen twice a week. This helps them to supplement whatever income they have. When I took over as Soup Kitchen Program Coordinator in 2004, we were just serving 140 to 150 meals a week and to me, that was a lot already. In 2006, we served a total of 9,848 meals and in 2007 that number increased to 11,196. Running a soup kitchen program costs a lot of money. Without your help and support or the partnership we have with United Way and City Harvest, it would be very difficult to continue this ministry that is so vital in this community. It's such a blessing to me to serve the people who are less fortunate than we are.

The Clothing Bank Ministry has grown in numbers as well. We are giving out clothing to 60 to 70 people every 1st Monday of the month. This does not include the people who come here for emergencies. Almost everyday we receive calls from an agency referring clients to us. We really wish we could help them all. Unfortunately, we can't. We try our best to help those individuals who come to our door on different days. Sometimes, we have to make exception to our rules on a case by case basis. When we see people who are really in need of clothing, especially if they are going for job interviews, I often go to the storage room and find them something to wear.

The need for the soup kitchen and clothing bank is great and I encourage each one of you to support this ministry not only financially . . . but also with your time . . . extra hands are always needed.

Finally, I would like to thank all our volunteers for their time and effort. Without your help and support it would be impossible to do what we are doing here. We need you . . . and we are so glad and thankful to God that you are a part of this ministry. May God's blessings be with you all! I would like to leave you with these encouraging words from the apostle Paul:

“Therefore my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourself fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.” (1 Corinthians 15:58)

In Christ,

Nhorie V. Leonardo

Parish Administrator/Soup Kitchen and Clothing Bank Coordinator