

THE BELLRINGER

St. Luke's Church

Forest Hills

May 2008

IMPORTANT LETTER TO ALL PARISHIONERS

Dear Friends,

As you know, the adopted 2008 budget had significant reductions in various areas that would have curtailed some of our vital ministries. Therefore, we launched the *95er Campaign* during the winter in the hope that we might come closer to the needed financial resources to carry out our mission faithfully in 2008.

I am very happy to report to you that your response to the *95er Campaign* was very strong. 47 parish households responded with \$5,205 in giving. At the same time, the publicity about our needs inspired other parishioners to submit pledges for 2008 which added \$5,263. This combined sum (*95er* total and additional 2008 pledges) means that we have, in principle, reached the \$10,000 goal we needed in order to restore budget lines.

Please read on! There's good news – and there are sobering realities which the Vestry knows it must continue to monitor.

The parish pledge promise of \$211,763 is an all-time Saint Luke's record. The average pledge (87 households submitted pledges) of \$2,434 is one of the best averages in the diocese and is higher than the national church average. We should all be greatly thankful to one another for such generous stewardship. That we can manage this joyful giving in tenuous economic times is a wonderful testimony to the people of Saint Luke's in their love of Christ and their commitment to our parish mission. Your generous and responsible giving means that we can do the following:

W Restore funds to the section leader/music line so that our talented choir continues to have vocal leadership that offers beautiful support for our sacred worship;

W As 2008 pledge payments are received, and as we approach year-end, we will be able to make our giving to the diocese and larger church as we originally intended for the year.

W Additionally, upon receipt of pledge-giving, we will be able to offer our local outreach grant which has not only become a year-end tradition but is also a foundation stone of our parish ministry in Christ's name.

W Advertising for festival liturgies and special programs will be possible;

W Administrative responsibilities, such as putting aside funds to pay for audits, will be carried out.

These restorations are totally dependent upon the regular contributions of our members. Saint Luke's Church does *not* have significant savings. Your pledge support, as well as your support in helping to make our special events successful, makes all the difference. This is especially important to remember in the present economy, which could have a negative rebound on our parish budget, just as it might on your own household finances. Dropping interest rates mean significantly less earnings on our modest savings – earned interest is a financial resource for our operating budget. Furthermore, any unexpected expense could change the picture for the year. Again, as you all know, the church boiler cracked earlier this year and soon must be repaired. Going without heat in winter is not an option.

Still, because of your outstanding generosity of spirit, we are in the midst of 2008, creatively being Christ's Body. Mindful of our calling and dedicated to our common life as Saint Luke's, let us remember those less fortunate than ourselves as a way of keeping things in perspective—as a way of seeing the world with the eyes of Christ. We are truly gifted by the grace of God. Let us share these gifts every day.

Yours in Christ,

BISHOP COADJUTOR SEARCH PROCESS

A Bishop Coadjutor is one who assumes the position of Diocesan Bishop upon the current Bishop's retirement. The Search for Bishop Coadjutor of the Diocese of Long Island has been underway for several months, and the time has come for local parishes to offer reflections and responses that will help the Bishop Search Committee in developing a diocesan profile. That profile will give prospective candidates a sense of our diocese and our needs.

To that end, Joyce Egginton and Stephen Banci will present a "*Listening Meeting*" at Saint Luke's on **Sunday, May 4**, beginning during Hospitality Hour and lasting a total of 90 minutes. A light luncheon will be served. Specific questions will be asked of the congregation; we will then break up into groups and share thoughts and ideas. The information gathered will be forwarded to the Search Committee. All interested parishioners are urged to attend, listen, and give their input.

PENTECOST CELEBRATION SUNDAY, MAY 11

RED! If we printed in color, we'd only need to say **RED** once. But since we don't, please remember to wear **RED** on Pentecost Sunday.

As is our custom at Saint Luke's, the Gospel will be read in languages reflective of our multi-cultural surroundings. To enhance our festival celebration, at the 10:30 service the choir will be singing music composed by long-time parishioner Madeleine Hogan. Maddy presently lives in Glen Cove, where she is recovering from physical weaknesses that recently put her in hospital. However, her spirit, as attested to in her musical compositions, is extremely strong.

The choir will lead the congregation in a Gloria, as well as offering a choral setting of the Sanctus/Benedictus and Agnus Dei from Maddy's "Missa Brevis." (Wear **RED**!)

A NOTE OF APPRECIATION TO THE GINGERBREAD PLAYERS AND SAINT LUKE'S CHURCH

The following, written by the parent of two of the young performers in April's sellout production of *The Wizard of Oz*, is a tribute to all parishioners involved in this sometimes undervalued aspect of Saint Luke's ministry and outreach to the community.

"I wanted to take this opportunity to thank all the adults in the cast for affording this opportunity of theatre to our children. I cannot tell you how much I appreciate all that your cast have taught them about rehearsals, practice, taking it seriously and still having a great time, and they have loved every minute. You are very welcoming and wonderful people. Your church must be honored to have you all."

HAVE YOU MADE YOUR RESERVATIONS FOR IMAGINAUCTION 2008?

If not, you may be out of luck. Seating is extremely limited and the RSVP deadline is May 2. Tickets are \$40.00 per person for Saint Luke's fabulous annual event, which will be held on May 17th from 6:30 to 10:00 pm in the parish hall.

And speaking of luck, don't forget to buy raffle tickets. You could win a 42" plasma TV, a Kindle wireless portable reading device, or an iPod dock clock radio. Raffle tickets are only \$1.00 each, and a book of 12 costs a mere \$10.00. If you want to buy – or sell – more books, contact Joe Occhiuto at 718-457-2464 or jocchiuto@nyc.rr.com. He'll be happy to accommodate you.

REMINDER

Holy Eucharist with intention for healing takes place every Wednesday morning at **10:00** in the small chapel off the narthex. For the five or six of us who regularly attend this intimate service, it is a greatly appreciated midweek spiritual refresher. Why not join us?

**MAKE MAY 17 AND 18
A WONDERFUL WEEKEND**

After enjoying the ImaginAuction on Saturday night and joyfully worshipping on Sunday morning, why not experience yet more joy by attending the Oratorio Society of Queens Spring Concert on Sunday afternoon at 4:00pm? Saint Luke's own **Lloyd Elliott** sings baritone with the Society and would love to see his friends there. The concert will take place at the Performing Arts Center at Queensborough Community College, 222-05 56th Avenue, Bayside. For ticket prices and information, call 718-460-0726 or visit www.queensoratorio.org.

**SAINT LUKE'S VESTRY RETREAT
FRIDAY EVENING, MAY 30
THROUGH SUNDAY JUNE 1**

Annually, the Vestry takes a weekend to review parish life and programs and to plan for the upcoming year. The Rector leads this weekend of discussion and prayer, which once again this year will take place at Mount Manresa Retreat Center on Staten Island.

Because 2008 is the 9th year of Saint Luke's 10-year plan for congregational development, this retreat is especially important. 2008-09 is a crucial time of reflection and consideration about the future. What will become the priorities and shape of ministry for the next ten years? Please keep the Rector, Wardens and Vestry in your prayers during this retreat. Let us all pray and work together as Saint Luke's Church, now and in the future.

**SAINT LUKE'S BOOK CLUB
RESUMES JUNE 4 AND 11**

You are invited to participate in Saint Luke's Book Club at 7:30 pm on Wednesday evenings, June 4th and 11th. Our selection is *Leaving Church: A Memoir of Faith*, by Barbara Brown Taylor. The author shares with readers what went into her decision to leave parish ministry and take up a teaching position. This poignant book reflects the spiritual and writing gifts of a celebrated Episcopal priest and preacher and encourages us to consider what matters most about our faith and life as Christians.

This book promises to be enriching for personal reflection and group sharing. Please join us as we discuss finding, losing, and keeping faith. We will begin with dessert and coffee in parishioners' homes, followed by a presentation and discussion. Father Tom is presently seeking two volunteers to host the two evenings. If you are interested in doing so, please contact him at stlukestom@yahoo.com.

Copies of *Leaving Church: A Memoir of Faith*, at \$15 each, will be available in the parish office. Please reserve your copy no later than Sunday, May 18 by contacting the office at 718-268-6021 or stlukesoffice@verizon.net.

BAPTISM

On March 22nd, Emma Simcox, infant daughter of Kyle and Liza Simcox, was sealed in baptism, marked as Christ's own forever, and welcomed into the household of God by Saint Luke's congregation.



MAY BIRTHDAYS

8	Rebecca Santana
10	Madeleine Hogan
10	Rebecca Baxter
10	Isaiah Williams
26	Joanna Guinther
26	Louise Guinther
26	Alberta Hayes Carlson

**UPCOMING ISSUES OF
*THE BELLRINGER***

As summer approaches, the publication of our parish newsletter follows a different schedule. There will be a June newsletter per the usual monthly publication date. However, a single Summer (July/August) issue of *The Bellringer* will reach households in late July, followed by the regular September newsletter, which we trust will be in your mailboxes on or before September 1.

St. Luke's Church Vestry

Rector: The Reverend Thomas F. Reese
Wardens: Anne Harte Su, Jonathan Wallin
Vestry: Sandra Baker, Dennis Khare, Frances Sergi, Allan Smith, Velma Adams, Gary Carldon, Barbara Gratz, Joe Occhiuto, Paul Dinas, David Smith, Jean Tessier, Jane Thornton
Treasurer: Arthur Tasker
Asst. Treasurer: Kim Su
Clerk: Jean Tessier

Parish Staff

The Reverend William A. Doubleday,
Priest Associate
William J. Stokes, Interim Organist
and Choir Director
Sally Friedman, Parish Administrator
Omar Garcia, Sexton

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