

THE BELLRINGER

St. Luke's Church

Forest Hills

November 2008

THE DOLLAR IS DOWN

Dear Friends,

Recently, on one of the morning TV shows the hype was all about one of the Walendas – of high-wire, no-safety-net fame. This particular young man, bearing the three-century mantle of his acrobatic family, walked and bicycled on a narrow wire twelve stories above the ground. This morning “news” program devoted a solid fifteen minutes to his daredevil feat (which is quite a chunk of time allotted when morning TV usually dispenses with complex national and international news in two-minute bits, sometimes four at best). Right before the segment about Walenda’s act, the continuing news story of a plummeting financial situation had been aired.

In that juxtaposition of falling markets and aerial gamble, I was reminded of an image in my high school American History text book. A black and white photograph of a stuntman sitting on a chair on a wire between two skyscrapers accompanied a paragraph describing the aftermath of the stock market crash in 1929 and the ways in which people in the early 30s tried to distract themselves from what was happening around and to them. Experiencing a replicated 2008 version, this one a newscaster’s script about Wall Street/Main Street troubles along with a televised color image of a stunt, I felt as though I was newly a student in a textbook case of witnessing history repeat itself.

The dollar may be down, but at the end of his fifteen minutes, Mr. Walenda was up, alive and well, having mastered a self-imposed threat to his existence. His message was patently obvious: Come see me at the circus where I perform nightly. But what were the *Today Show* producers thinking? That’s less obvious. My guess is that they wanted to leaven bad economic news with a breathtaking spectacle, perhaps as a way for viewers to transfer their kitchen-table anxieties to Walenda’s high wire and thereby encourage them to believe that *Today* will always find time and ways to distract the viewer in tough times.

Yes, the dollar is down and the circus is back in town. Not to begrudge folks a distraction, however. For lots of people, the walk of daily life is like a high-wire act. Yet theirs is no act and it is not self-imposed. More and more people are having a harder and harder time. It is not a performance, but there is one similarity: *There is less and less of a safety net.*

The Church, in our mission and ministry, will not be distracted. The Church must weave a net, patching it as best we can wherever the holes are. For the Church, the equivalent of a TV spectacle would be for us to gaze at all the gloomy financial data and say we cannot act. Granted, we have to be realistic. But that means we must do more, not less, of whatever we can to reach out to help the needy, the poor, and those who will become the new poor in this economic tumble.

That is going to mean more parish program and outreach—more ERD collections as a way to support the church’s response to the global financial crisis; more than our monthly food gatherings for the Queens Community House; more children needing Saint Luke’s Jesse Tree Project; more attention and response to our local outreach partners from the past and forging new relationships of compassion and care for now and the future. This is not a stunt, though in some ways it does mean that we, as agents of Christ, will be called on to act as if without a net for the benefit of those for whom there is no “as if” about it.

In Christ,

Tom Reese

ALL SAINTS' SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 2ND

To make sure you arrive at church on time, please remember to "FALL BACK" one hour before you go to bed Saturday night!

Our Festival Choral Eucharist on All Saints' Sunday at 10:30am includes the choir's offerings of selections from Gabriel Faure's *Requiem*, Holy Baptism, First Holy Communion, and the honoring of those who will have been confirmed and received into the Episcopal Church at the Cathedral of the Incarnation on November 1st.

This wonderful day that celebrates the equipping of all us saints for the work of the Church is also our Stewardship Sunday when everyone is asked to submit their pledges for the financial support of parish life and ministry in 2009.

THE RUMMAGE REPORT

Congratulation to co-chairs Carol Khare and Velma Adams, and all Saint Luke's parishioners, friends and neighbors who wholeheartedly supported the 2008 Rummage Sale, making it the most successful in Saint Luke's history. Whether this was due to the current economic downturn producing more than the usual number of avid bargain-seekers, an ad placed in one of the local giveaway papers, our posting on Craigslist, or a combination of all three, the result was extremely gratifying. As of the end of October, the grand total was \$11,188.78, a percentage of which will be dedicated to Saint Luke's Community Outreach Grant.

Stalls and Their Receipts

Appliances	\$ 383.50
Books	647.00
Boutique Fashions	2,149.35
Children's Clothes	234.25
Christmas and Holiday	91.75
Furniture	206.00
Jewelry	1,791.00
Linens	643.05
Menswear	480.00

Snack Bar	1,469.52
White Elephant	2,062.05
Women's Coats, etc.	331.00
Women's Separates	700.31
Grand Total	\$11,188.78

Special thanks to Carol and Velma, to all who donated merchandise for the sale, and to all those stalwart volunteers who worked so hard for so long to put it all together: Stephen Banci, Maria Barbanotti, Giselle and Jim Bates, Gary Carldon, the Chodkowski family, Paul Dinas, Ann Espenschied, John Fallon, Louise Foisy, Barbara Glick, Barbara Gratz, Dolly, Joanna and Louise Guinther, Hedi Hoffman, May Hung, Adriana Jacdocyn, Dennis Khare, Daisy Ludwig, Jeanine McPartlin, Sheila Miller, Oscar Moron, Joe Occhiuto, Terri and Shannon O'Rourke, Denise Presnick, Robin Resin, Diane Santana, Lori Sbordone, Allan Smith, David Smith, Georgina Smith, Lawry Smith, Barbara Stokes, Anne Su, Lauren Su, Jean Tessier, Jane Thornton, Barbara Trippel, Shirley Vickers, and Jonathan Wallin. (If we've left anyone out, please excuse the omission and know that your contribution was greatly appreciated!)

LOOKING BACKWARD AT SAINT LUKE'S 95TH ANNIVERSARY, LOOKING FORWARD TO OUR 100TH

On Sunday, October 19th parishioners gathered to celebrate 95 years as Saint Luke's congregation at the 10:30 choral Eucharist, followed by a delicious potluck luncheon. Allan Smith and Denise Presnick had arranged an exhibit in the parish hall of photographs, portraits and documents culled from the church's archives and donated by parishioners, giving us all an overview of Saint Luke's eventful past. These items will form the basis of an even more extensive exhibit that is being prepared for the celebration of our Centennial in only five years. Many thanks to Allan and Denise for their dedication to this task, and to Jean Tessier and Louise Foisy for so ably coordinating the luncheon.

FRANCES SERGI RELOCATES

Our dear Frances has decided to move to Connecticut where she can be closer to her son Ted and daughter-in-law Barbara. We are glad that Frances is happily with her family. However, she wants everybody to know that she sorely misses her *parish* family. Well, Frances, we are tenderly missing you, too.

Saint Luke's family, take note. We need to find a lot of replacements because Frances has been an amazing dynamo – Vestry, Gingerbread Players, ImaginAuction, Rummage Sale, Stewardship, Inreach, and Evangelism Committees, Greeter *par excellence*, often warmly reconnecting with a new mom or dad in the parish whom Frances remembers as one of her elementary school students.

Whether regaling the adult education group with vignettes from the past or being one of the Vestry's strong visionaries for the future, she has inspired us all. Frances, you've assured us that you will visit whenever you can, and we shall hold you to it!

—Tom Reese

OUTREACH REACHES OUT TO THE PARISH

The Outreach Committee is eagerly seeking new members. We will be hosting two open meetings on November 5 and December 9 at 6:30pm in the parish hall to give parishioners a chance to learn what we're all about.

Our baptismal vows bind us to “seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving our neighbors as ourselves,” and to “respect the dignity of every human being.” These callings are at the very heart of our faith, and they are echoed in the mission of Outreach: To provide opportunities for parishioners to be the living Presence of Christ in our community by offering support and comfort to those outside Saint Luke's walls. Current projects include feeding the hungry through the Queens Community House food pantry, ministering to the sick through God's Love We Deliver, providing holiday gifts for families in need through our Jesse Tree, and furthering numerous worthy causes

through our Lenten self-denial offerings and our annual Outreach Grant.

We are always looking for new ways to help and new hands to implement them. The company is great, the meetings are brief, the work is rewarding. Why not join us at either meeting (or both!) to see if this ministry is right for you?

—Joanna Guinther
Outreach Co-chair

CALLING ALL BAKERS!

It's that time again. We're looking for bakers for the upcoming Gingerbread Players' production of the crazy, crackpot comedy classic “Arsenic and Old Lace” on November 8, 9, 15 and 16. You needn't limit yourself to gingerbread – we'll need a variety of treats such as cupcakes, brownies, and other easy-to-handle baked goods. Please contact Louise Foisy at 718-575-1767 or lmf325@aol.com if you can contribute some goodies, and also if you would like to help sell them at intermission on any of the above dates.

A YEAR OF FORMATION IN FAITH

Real Presence

and

The Wilderness Experience:

God and Absence

At two gatherings, Sunday, November 9th at 12:00 noon and Wednesday, November 12th at 7:30pm, we will continue our shared spiritual reflection and journey. Both discussions will take place in the lower parish hall.

Real Presence: When did you last experience the love of God? Where is the center of meaning in your life these days? Has anything been threatening that “center”? At the center or heart of our faith is Christ's Incarnation – God fully, really present in the human. How do you live out your faith? What does your commitment – body and mind and soul – to become fully human look like? What about the Holy Spirit in you, and God's creation all around you?

The Wilderness Experience: For the ancient Israelites, it was 40 years in the desert. What about for you – are there ways in which you are feeling not at home, or out of place, in the world? Do you ever experience feeling not at home or out of joint in the Church? Have you had expectations of Church that have not come through for you?

DIOCESAN CONVENTION

The Annual Convention of The Diocese of Long Island will take place on Friday and Saturday, November 14th and 15th. Please keep in your prayers our Diocese, Bishop Walker, and all the clergy and lay parish delegates, including our Rector Tom Reese, our delegate Brain Percival, and alternate delegate Anne Harte Su.

FOREST HILLS INTERFAITH THANKSGIVING SERVICE

AT SAINT LUKE'S

Saint Luke's Church is honored to host this year's community Thanksgiving Service on Sunday, November 23rd at 4:00pm. All parishioners are encouraged to attend in the spirit of grateful thanksgiving for all God's gifts, and also as welcoming ambassadors to the folk who will visit from Forest Hills' diverse faith communities.

THANKSGIVING DAY

On Thursday morning, November 27th at **10:00 am**, the Holy Eucharist will be celebrated. In lieu of a sermon, the Rector will invite all members of the congregation to offer anecdotes or examples of experiencing God's abundant goodness over the past year. This "dialogue sermon" will conclude with a consideration of what things we would like to be thankful for in the year to come.

LOOKING AHEAD TO ADVENT

On each Sunday of Advent at 12:00 noon, Bible Study will consider the Advent Scripture readings around the theme "**We Are In For A Change.**"

On the First Sunday of Advent, Father Tom will preach on the theme of Change. After the 10:30 service on that Sunday and the remaining Sundays in Advent, parishioners Lori Sbordone, Bill Paine, Joe Occhiuto and Joyce Egginton will lead the study discussions.

Why the title "We Are In For A Change"? Take a little time to think about it. You have heard it said that when a baby is born, especially if it is the firstborn, the parents are in for a real change. Since we are preparing for the birth of Jesus, are we ready for the changes such a birth brings?



NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

3	Matthew Santana
3	Maria Barbanotti
5	Shibu Varghese
8	Irene Matthews
11	Jeremy Boiko
14	Amber Elizabeth Lenti
18	Emily Brillson
23	Susan Sydenham
23	Anna Alfano Gurney
25	Marianne Percival
26	Jean Tessier
28	Nancy Cheng Yue



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

1/4The Church in the Gardens, 50 Ascan Avenue, Forest Hills, will hold its annual Golden Harvest Bazaar on Saturday, November 8 from 10:00am to 4:00pm. For further details, call 718-268-6704 or visit their web site at www.thechurchinthegardens.org.

St. Luke's Church Vestry

Rector: The Reverend Thomas F. Reese

Wardens: Anne Harte Su, Jonathan Wallin

Vestry: Sandra Baker, Dennis Khare, Allan Smith,
Velma Adams, Gary Carldon, Barbara Gratz, Joe
Occhiuto, Paul Dinas, David Smith, Jean Tessier,
Jane Thornton

Treasurer: Arthur Tasker

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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