



Lenten, Holy Week Schedule



April 6, 13

Wednesday Evening Lenten Worship

Simple Lenten dinner from 6:30 to 7 p.m. in the Fireside Room, followed by devotional worship until 7:30 p.m.

April 17

Palm Sunday worship

10:30 a.m.

Brunch following the service

April 21

Maundy Thursday worship with Holy Communion

7:30 p.m.

April 22

Good Friday worship

7:30 p.m.

April 24

Easter Sunday festival worship with Holy Communion

10:30 a.m.

FROM PASTOR SUE

Returning Renewed

It is really wonderful to be back at church after a 10-week sabbatical. Ten weeks away from the daily duties of being your pastor was a wonderful, surprising, humbling journey for me. In a profession which calls for constant reflection on faith and life, I was truly surprised at how starved and thirsty I was for a personal time of rest and reflection.

More than a few of you have expressed how envious you have been about my sabbatical, and I don't blame you. During this time I travelled, walked, read and prayed. I also spent time visiting other churches and gather new ideas for our ministry together.

I return committed to the task of

growing the congregation and sharing the unconditional love of God in Jesus Christ with those around and among us. During sabbatical I realized that renewal does not come without repentance. Personal inventory can be crushing if you do not understand from the very beginning that you are loved by God, just as you are. Some of the repentance I did, involved all of you. I repented of the fact that I have learned so much from you, and said "thanks" so little. I wonder if there are others who need to find a way to continue to grow in God and to say "thank you" for the support we find in community at St. Matthew's.

While we were traveling in Isra-

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COUNCIL CHAT

The Taboo Topic

When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Leave them for the poor and for the foreigner residing among you. I am the Lord your God. — Leviticus 23:21-23

By Brenda Bos
Council Treasurer

I always thought this commandment was a great idea...when the farmers were rich. Sure, they could afford to leave some of their harvest behind. But only re-

cently I've realized this commandment wasn't just for the rich. It was for everyone. God is telling us we can afford to give away some of our harvest whether or not it's been a good year. We will have enough.

You know, it's funny. At St. Matthew's, we are willing to talk about some outrageous things. We talk about sex, we talk about addiction. We'll explore issues like sexual fluidity, but we won't talk about money because it's too scary. But it's time to talk about money. I have talked frankly about my own jour-

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Dr. Erwin to Be Ordained by ELCA

Dr. R. Guy Erwin, a member of the St. Matthew's congregation and a professor at California Lutheran University, will be ordained to the ministry of word and sacrament in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at a service May 11 at CLU, and fellow members of St. Matthew's are invited to attend.

Dr. Erwin is the Gerhard and

Olga J. Belgum professor of Lutheran confessional theology at CLU.

He will be ordained to the Lutheran ministry by the Rev. Dean W. Nelson, bishop of the Southwest California synod, at the service beginning at 10 a.m.. CLU is at 60 W. Olson Road, Thousand Oaks. A reception will follow.

Dr. Erwin, a former member

of the St. Matthew's staff and recently supply preacher during Pastor Sue's sabbatical, has already had a long ministry among us.

A vote in August 2009 by the national church which allowed clergy in same-sex relationships to be rostered in the ELCA paved the way for this ordination to be possible.

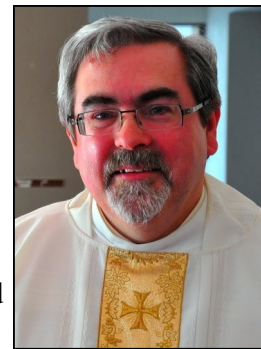


Photo by Steve Devol
Dr. R. Guy Erwin

St. Matthew's remembers Gladys Maasdam

A celebration of the life of Gladys Christina Maasdam was held Thursday, March 31, at St. Matthew's.

A member of St. Matthew's since 1995, Gladys was remembered at her memorial service for her faithful involvement in the life of St. Matthew's and Lutheran Social Services.

As one of seven sisters, she followed in the footsteps of her mother and sisters and became a Rainbow Girl.

Inducted in 1938, Gladys remained a member of East-

ern Star for over 73 years and recently guided her daughter, Christine through initiation.

Gladys was born in Omaha on July 17, 1919, to Andrew and Blanche Cameron. She was the fifth daughter in a family of nine children.

Gladys was married to Eugene Browning and two sons were born of this union, William Eugene Browning, now deceased, and Jack Andrew Browning of Seattle.

In May 1949, Gladys married Felber Maasdam and gave birth to another son, Chris Felber Maasdam and her only daughter, Christine

Catherine Maasdam.

Extremely involved in her community, Gladys was a member of numerous civic organizations, including the Assistance League of Southern California and the Police Activity League.

Gladys' personal mission

was to feed and clothe those in need. She was known and respected for organizing food drives and helping to supply local food banks.

Gladys was named Lutheran Social Services Volunteer of the Year in 2003. Gladys organized programs in which toiletry packets, Easter baskets and grocery bags for Thanksgiving dinners were put together for homeless people.

Gladys is survived by three children, 12 grandchildren, 18 great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild.



Photo by Steve Devol
Gladys Maasdam

The StMatthewsNoHo Newsletter is published monthly by the community of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church at 11031 Camarillo St., North Hollywood, Calif., 91602; Phone: (818) 762-2909; Fax: (818) 762-7439; E-Mail: stmatthewsnoho@gmail.com Website: www.stmatthewsnoho.org

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President, **Morgan Rumpf**; Vice President, **Jeff Drushal**; Secretary, **Dave Allen**; Treasurer, **Brenda Bos**; Councilmembers **Ursula Black, John Cantu, Ryan Chaddick, David James, Amber Keating**



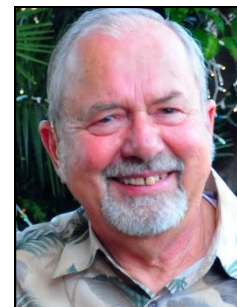
Susan Wolfe Devol,
Pastor



Morgan Rumpf,
Council President



Kenny Callaghan,
Music, Outreach



Don Rosenkjar, Deaf
Minister

St. Matthew's worships on Sunday mornings at 10:30. Worship services are provided in ASL for the deaf and hard-of-hearing. St. Matthew's is a member

of the Southwest California Synod of the ELCA and is a part of the Reconciling-in-Christ program of Lutherans Concerned/North America.

MOMENTS IN LENT

At right, Don Rosenkjar and Judy Hoewisch share their homemade soups during the Wednesday Lenten Meditation and Soup Supper (join us coming up for the last two Wednesdays, April 6 and 13) Below, Ryan Chaddick offers the Lenten meditation using Dr. Seuss' "Sneetches" as an illustration. Below right, the St. Matt's Movie Talk group discusses the movie "To Kill A Mockingbird." Join the Movie Talk group led by Jeff Drushal on Friday April 29 to discuss the movie "The King's Speech."



Trusting Our Money With God in New Ways

(Continued from page 1)

ney with money over the last two years, but what I haven't told you is last year I decided I couldn't afford to tithe anymore, so I decided to give less. And with that decision, I lessened my spiritual experience.

So I've decided to go back to tithing. Last month I made \$250, and I'm giving away \$25. Now, that \$25 will not be the thing that keeps the lights on at church, but I know my spiritual experience will improve, because it's happened before. During this Lenten season, I want to encourage all of us to consider a deeper spiritual experience around our money. Part of the problem is we are a very capable people. As Dr. Guy Erwin

preached a few weeks ago, we're perfectly willing to trust God, as long as we can trust ourselves as much as we always do. But I'm suggesting that trusting God in new ways with our money opens us up for a richer spiritual experience. I am not promising you will become rich if you increase your giving. But face it, many of us have stories of the miracles God does in our lives: We get the job we didn't expect, we find an amazing apartment, our relationships work out, we stay sober, but we rarely have stories about the miracle God does with our money because we do not entrust our money to God.

It is true, I am the chair of the stewardship committee. St. Matthew's does need more money. But just as we decid-

ed we wanted more members two years ago, and put our efforts toward that, we realized it didn't really matter until we deepened our spiritual experience. The same is true about money. More money won't really matter to the church until we deepen our spiritual experience around money. Perhaps you can give more or give more regularly to St. Matthew's. You might increase your giving by \$25 a week. You might increase the percentage you are giving by 1% or more. Perhaps you'll worry less about debt. Perhaps you'll finally get your spending under control. Lent is the perfect time to consider these things. As Philippians 4:13 promises, all things are possible through Christ who strengthens us.

ASK HILDY

The St. Matthew's Take on Palm Sunday

Dear Hildy: I see there is something called a Palm Sunday brunch coming up. I am new to St. Matthew's and haven't heard of this before. What are we celebrating with this brunch?

Signed, Hosanna, Heysanna, Huh?

Dear HHH: You ask a terrific question. The Palm Sunday Brunch is one of several traditions that continue at St. Matthew's.

Years ago, when I was a much younger old battle axe, I moved to SoCal from Minnesota. I lived in the neighborhood and started going to St. Matthew's because, well, because it was close. Back then we were a very small congregation. There were a few older members struggling to keep the doors open and some nice gay, lesbian and bisexual worshipers who made up the majority of our membership.

As some of us older members got to know these new folks, I found it heartbreaking to hear that families could turn their backs on people just because of their sexuality. There were members of our congregation, some of them living with HIV/AIDS, who had no family to celebrate with at Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter because heterosexual family members rejected them.

As a church family we began the traditions of coming together for a Thanksgiving dinner on the Sunday before Thanksgiving, and a brunch held the Sunday before Easter, which is, of course, Palm Sunday.

Palm Sunday is the Sunday we remember that Jesus rode into Jerusalem, hailed by the throngs in the streets as the Messiah. It is the start of the Passion Week that ends with the death of Christ on the cross. We as a community have wrestled against making this Palm Sunday tradition some sort of an Easter "Lite" event.

In the last three months we have lost two wonderful members of our community, our

former pastor and bishop, Dr. Paul Egertson, and our sister in Christ, Gladys Maasdam.

Bishop Paul Egertson loved the Church in general, and loved the people and ministry of St. Matthew's specifically. In the coming weeks we can all think about the wonderful changes God has brought about in the ELCA and at St. Matthew's in the last 25 years. What are each of us willing to give, how are we willing to serve within our congregation so that these traditions, these stories, this congregation will survive?

Gladys Maasdam was a generous person who gave her time, her money and her energy to feeding, clothing and comforting the poor. This year, as we come together on Palm Sunday, let's bring something to the table in addition to our worldly appetites. See how you can participate in the Palm Sunday raffle (below) or bring some food or clothes to be distributed at Lutheran Social Services.

When we serve the poor and hungry, remember our traditions and share our individual commitment to the Gospel on Palm Sunday we honor our departed members and prepare for the celebration of Christ's resurrection.

— *In anticipation of a Glorious Easter, Hildydegard Von Gelischen Kirche*

Pastor Sue

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el, I learned of Bishop Emeritus Paul Egertson's death. It almost physically hurt not to be at Paul's memorial service. I wanted to be with people from St. Matthew's and Paul's family to grieve, share stories and to celebrate the life of this amazing servant of God. He was a magnificent teacher and like many of you I learned so much from him.

One of the last times I saw Paul, we were talking very seriously about issues in the ELCA. As the conversation came to a close I said "church" and almost simultaneously we both said, "Can't live with it, can't live without it" and gave a shrug and a laugh. What I can tell you is that I go "where the love is" God's transforming love. In the weekly sharing of the Lord's Supper, our spirits find community and renewal. I invite you to recommit to St. Matthew's with me. Bring a friend to Palm Sunday brunch. If you have friends who work weekends, invite them to Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services. Show off your congregation. Let this be a wonderful Easter.

White Elephant Raffle

You are invited to participate in the Second St. Matthew's White Elephant Auction during Palm Sunday Brunch. Please bring your slightly used, never-really-loved items to the church library in the Sundays before Palm Sunday. These items will be auctioned off in a repeat of last year's lively Thanksgiving auction.

We encourage you to donate services for auction: yard work, voice lessons, making a meal ... we are a talented group and have a lot to offer! If you are interested in donating a service, please contact Brenda Bos at brendabos198@gmail.com. Proceeds go to beautification projects at St. Matts.

ST MATTHEW'S CONNECTS

The Lenten Journey Continues

By **Kenny Callaghan**

Music and Outreach Coordinator

This month we continue our reflective journey of Lent, approaching the realities of Holy Week and Easter. God uses the story of Holy Week to draw us into God's life-and-death drama of love. But it's not the story we believe in; we believe in a God who promises to "be with us" in Spirit. We see this in Christ's passion and in His Church. As we consider this fantastic tale, we are called to live as God's people. We are led to wonder how the unthinkable and almost obscene actions of Holy Week, which culminate in the joy of Easter, might lead us to love those who are unlovable, serve those we do not know, and feed those who hunger for food, companionship, and hope. We might even wonder how, in light of God's unfolding story of Jesus' obedience, we might engage the world by practicing love and offering peace. Some may be skeptical of the Easter story, but we claim the story's truth as transformative and powerful. Join us at St. Matthew's as we hear the story, share it, and allow God's love and grace to change us. There is much to learn and experience ... it begins with the proclamation, "Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!"

April Food collection for Lutheran Social Services is peanut butter and jelly. Donations may be placed on the

table in the front of the church.

Koinonia Prison Ministry needs postage stamps. Donations may be placed on the table in the narthex. See Kenny if you'd like to be a pen pal.

Adult Forum meets every Sunday at 9:30 a.m. in the Fireside Room. Join us as we begin a new video series, "24 Hours That Changed the World." This is an exciting walk through the events leading up to the Crucifixion with video of the Holy Land. Step into the shoes of Jesus. Includes coffee and discussion.

Lenten Soup Supper and Worship is Wednesday, April 6 and 13, in the Fireside Room from 6:30 to 7:30, with homemade soup and salad followed by worship. The theme: "The Seven Last Words of Christ. The Message of the Cross for Today."

St. Matthew's Choir rehearses Wednesday evenings from 7:45 to 9 p.m. in the church. Join us as we prepare special music for Holy Week and Easter.

Meditation Group is Monday, April 4, from 7 to 8 p.m. in the Fireside Room. Led by Amber Keating, this group will focus on breath-work and meditation to calm the body and mind, as well as reconnect with God. We will practice together and encourage one another in bringing

meditative practices in our daily lives.

"I Don't Know How to Ask This...Keys to Respectful Dialogue." is Sunday, April 10, from noon to 1:30 p.m. in the Fireside Room. Join **Feminine Sacred Circle** for this insightful discussion facilitated by Brenda Bos.

Spark Creative Workshop meets Monday, April 11, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. in the church library. Join us for biblical improv – fun, creative reinterpretations of our favorite Bible stories!

Book Club is Tuesday April 12, at 7:30 p.m. at Pastor Sue's home. "Three Cups of Tea" is the next book to be discussed.

Great Events Lunch Bunch is Wednesday, April 13, at 11 a.m. Meet at church to carpool to NoHo's Eclectic Café, which offers an entertaining, eclectic mix of fine dining and fine art. After lunch we'll journey to the Weisman Foundation estate, dedicated to continuing the legacy and vision of Frederick R. Weisman, an extraordinary entrepreneur, philanthropist, and art collector. More information and signups on the poster board in the narthex/lobby.

Growth Group meets Thursday, April 14 and 28, from 7:30 to 9 p.m. at the home of Art Figueroa. This small group will meet for fellow-

ship, study, prayer and is geared to help strengthen your faith. For discussion: "The Way of Forgiveness" by Marjorie J. Thompson.

Palm Sunday Brunch, Sunday, April 17. Plan now to bring a dish to share at our congregational potluck lunch following worship. Invite a friend to attend worship and brunch.

Movie Talk will meet Friday, April 29, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. in the Fireside Room. This is a discussion group led by Jeff Drushal. This month's movie is "The King's Speech" starring Colin Firth. It's BYOB, with some light snacks offered.

Feed the Homeless Saturday is April 30, 9 to 10:30 a.m. Meet in the church kitchen to make sandwiches and lunches with nonperishable food items. This outreach ministry has been blessed with a grant from the Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Care Abounds in Communities program.

Find Your Strengths, Live Your Purpose coming soon. This small group will identify our strengths using the book "Living Your Strengths" by Winseman, et al., and the Strengths Finder inventory and reflect on what this means about God's purpose for our lives. For more info, contact Elizabeth Loken at (661-510-2426).



St. Matthew's
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NORTH HOLLYWOOD

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