

Radical Reflection

By Ryan Chaddick
Church Council Member

Often times, Christians articulate a desire to return to the early church. After all, they claim, the early church remembered Jesus' teachings the best. They held all things in common (according to Acts) and were authentically there for each other. If only, we hear so often, the church could become less divisive and just return to the good ol' days.

Most historical research indicates that, while there have certainly been moments of genuine Christian fellowship throughout the ages, this longing for days long ago is a little misguided.

What if we turned our attention to the central moment of Christianity? What if we decided we want to live our lives in the moment Christianity found existence in the world?

Jesus Christ on a cross, breathing his last breaths, and speaking his last words. In that moment we find an individual who has truly lost everything: his God, his friends, his dignity, and his life.

Lenten Worship Schedule

- March 9 - **Ash Wednesday Worship** with the Imposition of Ashes and Holy Communion, 7:30 pm
- March 16, 23, 30 and April 6, 13 - **Wednesday Evening Lenten Worship**
Simple Lenten Dinner 6:30 to 7:00 pm in the Fireside Room
Devotional Worship 7:00 to 7:30 pm in the Fireside Room
- April 17 - **Palm Sunday Worship**, with brunch following the service, 10:30 am
- April 21 - **Maundy Thursday Worship** with Holy Communion, 7:30 pm
- April 22 - **Good Friday Worship**, 7:30 pm
- April 24 - **Easter Sunday Festival Worship** with Holy Communion, 10:30 am

A sacrifice, a moment in which the powers of the world think they've won...they shut up the revolutionary...they took his life....they condemned him to a death suggesting, according to the Torah, that God had forsaken and cursed him.

And yet, Jesus offers love, forgiveness, hope, and care. Love does not die. All hope is not lost. Love wins.

The word radical means, "returning to the root." This Lenten season we will continue to become more radical as a church. We will return to the "root" moment of Christianity — the existential crisis that spurred a movement of love, forgiveness, and acceptance. Sermons on Sunday services and Lenten meditations during the weeks of Lent will examine the last words of Jesus. Please join us as we sojourn back to Cross.

COUNCIL CHAT

She's Baaaack!

By **Jeff Drushal**

Church Council Vice President

On Wednesday, March 9, our beloved pastor Sue Wolfe Devol will officially return from her sabbatical by preaching and presiding at our Ash Wednesday worship service. We want to welcome her home after her well earned time away and we look forward to hearing all that God continues to do her life.

As we welcome Pastor Sue home, we would also like to take a moment to recognize the much appreciated contribution of time and talent of those individuals who filled the pulpit while Pastor Sue was away. Ryan Chaddick, Jim Loken and Rev. Glenn Anderson each substituted for one week and shared sermons with us that were not only from the heart, but maintained the high standards of preaching we have become accustomed to here at St. Matthew's.

Filling in the rest of Sundays while Pastor Sue was away was Dr. R. Guy Erwin. We especially want to offer our gratitude and kudos to Dr. Erwin for finding time in his busy schedule to share his wisdom, insight and humor with us from the pulpit. We seem to have an embarrassment of riches when it comes to the quality of preaching we receive, so next time you see any of these four members, please take the time to thank them for all that they contribute to this community of believers.

Before she left on sabbatical, the bar of our expectations for sermons had been set pretty high by Pastor Sue. We look forward to having her back with us to share all that she has experienced in her time away as we all explore the Word and grace of God together. Welcome home, Pastor Sue!



Pastor Sue Wolfe Devol and Steve Devol stand in front of the Dome on the Rock during their recent trip to the Holy Land.

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

STAFF

Pastor: Rev. **Susan Wolfe Devol**
 Music and Outreach Coordinator: **Kenneth Callaghan**
 Organist: **Catherine Popovic**
 Deaf Minister: **Don Rosenkjar**
 Newsletter Editor: **Steve Devol**

2010-2011 CHURCH COUNCIL

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



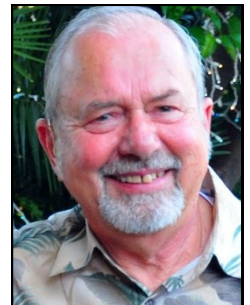
Susan Wolfe Devol,
Pastor



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.

ELCA Presiding Bishop Says Appointment Affirms ELCA Members' Service

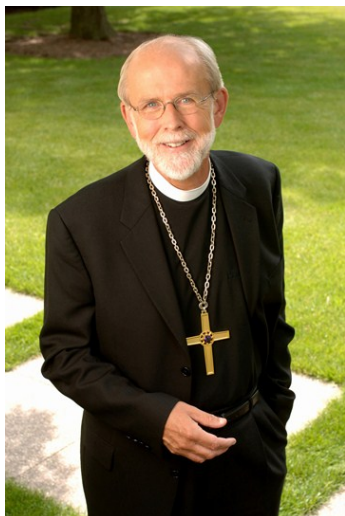
ELCA NEWS SERVICE
February 18, 2011

CHICAGO (ELCA) -- The Rev. Mark S. Hanson, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), said his appointment to a presidential advisory committee strongly affirms the involvement of ELCA members "in serving our neighbors."

On Feb. 4, President Barack Obama announced his intention to appoint Hanson to the President's Advisory Council for Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships, which makes recommendations to government on how to improve partnerships. The council brings together religious and secular leaders, as well as scholars and experts in fields related to the work of faith-based and neighborhood organizations.

"We are known as a church whose members roll up their sleeves, get to work, solve problems and give generously," Hanson said. "The council will provide new opportunities for us to expand partnerships in local and global contexts and to address priorities for our nation."

The council's makeup reflects the Obama administration's commitment to



listen to diverse voices as people respond together to complex issues, Hanson said. He added that by working together, "our power and voice for good, and our commitment

to restore vibrant communities will continue to flourish."

In 2009 Hanson was appointed to a White House task force on interreligious dialogue and cooperation, through the White House Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships.

The advisory council and faith-based offices grew out of bi-partisan recognition by the Clinton, Bush and Obama administrations that people of faith deserve a voice in public affairs, said the Rev. Andrew D. Genszler, ELCA director for advocacy, Washington, D.C.

"Lutherans learn from the Bible and our heritage that government can be a way God is active in our world when officials are reminded to work to preserve creation, work for the common good and to build up peace," he said. "Presiding Bishop Hanson's seat on the council provides a direct opportunity to act on this belief -- both by challenging and affirming public officials, and building relationships on behalf of people otherwise unheard."

Hanson said the advisory council speaks to the administration on behalf of people in local contexts, and it also imagines ways that people in local contexts can work together more effectively. For example, he said the previous advisory council worked to enhance interfaith partnerships in local communities.

"It's not just about policy. We can work together for the good of this nation in public-private partnerships and in interfaith partnerships," Hanson said.

Information about the President's Advisory Council on Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships is at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ofbnp/about/council> on the Web.

A Letter of Thanks from Lutheran Social Services

The following letter was sent by Jan Meseda of LSS in recognition of the efforts of our Feed the Homeless ministry as well as the ongoing, monthly donations of food and clothing generously provided by our members.

Dear Members of St. Matthews,

On behalf of all of our staff, volunteers and participants, we want to thank you so much for your very generous donations of lots and lots of peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, and brown bag lunches, and food items to Lutheran Social Services and our families. Thank you for thinking of us, as always. We are serving over 3,000 individuals each month right now, and this will help us feed and clothe even more people, and we really

depend on your generosity! Please know that we are careful stewards of our funds and donations.

We provide food, clothing and long-term assistance through various programs to any person in the community who wants our help, with no discrimination based on religious belief, race or ethnicity. Our programs are developed to provide families with the resources, education and long term plans to help them find their way out of poverty to become contributing members of our communities. Our programs include a veterans employment assistance program, an anti-poverty program, eviction prevention, a food pantry and clothes closets, urban gardens,

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ST MATTHEW'S CONNECTS

Lent: A Season to Reflect and Reconnect

By Kenny Callaghan

Music and Outreach Coordinator

This month we enter to the reflective season of Lent. Lent is a time to slow down; to reflect and reconnect with God, our neighbor, creation and ourselves; to remember Jesus calls us to follow, to pray, to serve and to discover what it means to us to be and live as children of God. Lent provides an opportunity to experience the foundation of our faith: God's unconditional love for us and our response to that love. It's a time of transformation and spiritual renewal as we prepare to encounter Christ's sacrifice, our need of forgiveness and opening ourselves more fully to the presence of God in our lives, allowing us to be more fully shaped by God's grace every day. At St. Matthew's there are many opportunities to seek God in a fresh, new way this Lenten season. Invite someone to join you and be prepared to meet the living Christ.

March Food collection for Lutheran Social Services is canned soup, preferably flip top cans. Donations may be placed on the table in the front of the church.

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

Koinonia Prison Ministry needs old/used greeting cards and 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.

NEW Growth Group meets Thursday, March 3, 17, & 31 from 7:30 to 9 p.m. at the home of Art Figueroa. This small group will meet for fellowship, study and prayer and is geared to help strengthen your faith. We will discuss "The Way of Forgiveness" by Marjorie J. Thompson & Stephen D. Bryant.

Meditation Group, Monday, March 7 from 7 to 8:00 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. If prayer is asking God for something, then meditation is receiving God's answers/gifts. We will practice together and encourage one another in bringing meditative practices in our daily lives.

Feminie Sacred Circle & Poetry, Sunday, March 13, Noon to 1:30 p.m. in the Church Library. Join us as we focus on Kim Rosen's Saved by a Poem: The Transformative Power of Words. Bring your favorite poem or your own creative offering if you

compose! We will also rehearse with chimes for our April communion musical offering.

Book Club Tuesday March 15, 7:30 p.m. at Pastor Sue's home. For discussion: "Screwtape Letters" by C.S. Lewis.

Great Events Lunch Bunch, Wednesday, March 16, 11:30 a.m. Join us at church to car-pool to The Norton Simon Museum in historic Pasadena and known around the world as one of the most remarkable private art collections ever assembled. We'll have lunch at the Garden Café located in the Museum's celebrated and serene sculpture garden. The café offers daily specials and a variety of fresh salads, sandwiches, baked goods and beverages. Museum entrance is \$10 for adults, \$5 for seniors 62 & above. Sign up on the poster board in the narthex/lobby.

Lenten Soup Supper and Worship Wednesday March 16, 23 and 30 in the Fireside Room. Our theme this year is "The Seven Last Words of Christ: The Message of the Cross for Today." Volunteers are needed to bring soup. Please sign up in the narthex/lobby or see Kenny.

St. Matt's Alive! Sunday, March 20. Join us in the Fireside room following worship for a lite luncheon and fellowship.

Rockin' With the Ages 3 *The Musical with Stars Over 60* starring St. Matthew's Dominick Morra. Sunday, March 20, 2:00 p.m. at The Victory Theatre 3326 West Victory Boulevard, Burbank 91505. Preview Matinee tickets: \$15 each. Sign up on the poster board in the narthex/lobby.

Movie Talk will meet Friday, March 25, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. in the Fireside Room. This is a casual discussion group led by Jeff Drushal. This month's movie is "TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD." It's BYOB, with some light snacks offered.

Feed the Homeless Saturday March 26, 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 Lutheran Care Abounds in Communities program to help us broaden our outreach.

"Ubuntu" led by Ryan Chaddick, meets Sunday evenings at 6:00pm at the Chaddick's home in Pasadena. This group will seek spiritual growth using N.T. Wright's book on Philippians.

For a list of Twelve Step groups meeting at St. Matthew's, please review our [website calendar](http://www.stmatthewsnoho.org) at [stmatthewsnoho.org](http://www.stmatthewsnoho.org).

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ESL, computer and financial literacy classes, and services for very low-income, poverty level and homeless individuals and families.

Thank you all again for all of your help in support of our social ministry. We are seeing more and more “working poor” families coming to us, and it’s wonderful that individuals such as yourselves, our youth groups and Sunday Schools, our schools, churches and community can provide so much of our support.

Take care and blessings to you. Our prayers remain with you as we work together to celebrate the love of Christ for all people through acts of service.

Sincerely and for the community,

Jan Maseda, Director
LSS Community Care Centers

For more information on LSS, click to image below...



PARTING SHOT



Audrey Anderson and Rev. Glenn Anderson share their insights and experiences of PFLAG (Parents Families an Friends of Lesbians and Gays) during St. Matt’s Alive coffee hour on February



Lutherans Concerned Los Angeles Hosts



Building an Inclusive Church

Saturday, March 19 9am – 5pm

St. Matthew’s Church

1920 W. Glenoaks Blvd.
Glendale, CA 91201

Breakfast • Lunch • Snacks

Training Leader: Ross Murray

Deputy Director Lutherans Concerned
North America

RSVP • stmatthskenny@gmail.com

What is it?

Building an Inclusive Church is an intense workshop intended to give participants the tools and knowledge base to build local or synodical teams equipped to work effectively to foster the expansion of the RIC Program within area congregations.

The training is focused in four primary areas:

- **Faith Based Community Organizing:** Learn the skills to gracefully engage and organize money including the one-to-one visit, the proposition, and the process for building an RIC Core Team in your area.
- **Scriptural Engagement:** Trainees will gather in Bible Study, share "texts of promise" in our work for full welcome, and tackle the Bible "bullets," those passages which are used by some to oppose LGBT inclusion and equality in the church and the world.
- **I Love to Tell the Story:** Learn to tell your story strategically, compellingly, and efficiently, honing stories into powerful, two-minute instruments for persuasion. This training will focus on integrating your own stories with talking points and positive frames for engaging the church to achieve the full welcome and inclusion of all.
- **RIC Processes and Resources:** Learn how to use a variety of RIC Resources. Each participant will receive copies of a variety of resources. You will learn how to do a congregational assessment and design a study process based on that assessment. Curriculum ideas and resources available to congregations will be demonstrated. Role plays are used to contrast typical situations of Church Council conflict with other more successful methods of discernment.



St. Matthew's
LUTHERAN CHURCH
NORTH HOLLYWOOD

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North Hollywood, CA 91602