

The Ev. Lutheran Church of Our Savior
204 Wayne Avenue
Corner of Wood Lane and Wayne Avenue
Haddonfield, NJ 08033

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June Messenger
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JUNE, 2008

NEWSLETTER OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF OUR SAVIOR, HADDONFIELD, NJ

ACOLYTE APPRECIATION DINNER

Sunday, June 1 at 6 PM

The Lutheran Church of Our Savior will once again honor the junior and senior high youth who serve as acolytes for worship. Each year the seventh through twelfth grade youth who serve as attendants at the altar are invited to gather in the Parish Hall for a sumptuous dinner and fellowship before appreciation awards are given to the graduating seniors. It has also been the time when the Robinson Award and Gaines Award are presented to graduating senior acolytes for faithful service above and beyond all others. Ironically, even though there is only one graduating acolyte this year, Caitlyn Ebbenga, she has faithfully served as an 8:00 worship acolyte for all four years of high school and two years during confirmation. Greg Gitzes will also be honored as a youth who regularly is down in the audio-video room recording the worship for those unable to attend. All acolytes are encouraged to attend this dinner in their honor.

TAKE “POP” TO THE POP SHOP AND SUPPORT YOUTH MINISTRY

Wednesday, June 11

In celebration of Father’s Day, June 15, the youth participating in this year’s Summer Mission Trip to NC have partnered with The Pop Shop in downtown Collingswood to raise funds for the trip. Simply bring in the “coupon” available at LCOS when you take dear ole Dad to the Pop Shop for a gourmet grilled cheese sandwich (like the one featured in “Bobby Flay’s Throwdown” aired on The Food Network) and The Pop Shop will donate 15% of the bill to the LCOS Summer Mission Trip fund. With nearly 20 youth attending this year’s mission trip (four times more than last year!) the financial need has increased tremendously from the 2007 budget. So pop on over with Pop and Pop-Pop to The Pop Shop on Wednesday, June 11, and have the Pop Shop give a 15% “tip” from your bill toward our youth working with Habitat For Humanity build homes for the homeless this summer.

JUNE 14 WORSHIP TO PRAY FOR THOSE IN ARMED FORCES

Memorial Day is when our country remembers those who have served and those who have died in the various branches of the United States Armed Forces. But in a time when citizens and those in governmental authority differ and disagree on our military presence in Iraq and other nations of contention how might the church offer prayers and God’s word of encouragement and hope to those who are currently serving in those forces? The Worship and Music Committee of Our Savior is currently working to hold a prayer service on behalf of those serving in our military on Saturday, June 14, at 5:00. Even though it is Flag Day it is not meant to be a flag waving occasion of patriotic zeal or glorifying our military. Instead, it will be an opportunity to truly lift up the Christians serving in our armed forces in prayer as they struggle with how to faithfully serve both Christ and country simultaneously. If you have family or loved ones serving in the military this will be an opportunity to have them remembered especially in prayer. Family, friends and neighbors are also invited to attend this worship opportunity, and may contact Pastor Wayne for more details.

DONUTS 4 DAD ON FATHER’S DAY

Moms get a pancake breakfast, but what do Dads get? Well on June 15 there will be donuts for Dad down in the Parish Hall instead of sticky buns for the Faith in Sticky Situations Bible study between the early and late worship services. Pastor Wayne has assured the congregation he will leave some vanilla cream donuts for others to enjoy, but makes no promises on the chocolate glazed. So along with a card and goofy tie be sure to treat dear ole Dad to a donut this Father’s Day on behalf of Our Savior.

*The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Our Savior is a faith community that worships Jesus as our Lord,
proclaims and shares God's Word, welcomes all people, serves human needs,
and nurtures personal and spiritual growth through fellowship all to the glory of God.*

JUNE WORSHIP LEADERS

Altar Guild: June Davis, Julie Frederick, Jackie Hicks
Counters: Betty Woltz, Bob Williams, John & Laura Oakes,
Ben & Carol Beahm

June 1

Readers: 8-John Wenzel 10-Bobbi Newsham
Communion Assistants: 10-Hans Underwood, Eric Woltz
Ushers: 8-Christine & Linda Monsen
10-Bob Mirabello & Russ Barrett
Acolytes: 8-Caite Ebbenga, Rob LaBarge, Kelly Harrington
10-Kyle Carpenter, Michael & Dan Wolf, Stephen Peterson

June 8

Readers: 8-Alan Super 10-Cathe Bare
Ushers: 8-Christine & Linda Monsen
10-Bob Mirabello & Eric Woltz
Acolytes: 8-Caite Ebbenga, Rob LaBarge, Holly Harrington
10-Ethan & Noelle Quanci, Julia Gross, Emily Donovan

June 15

Readers: 8-John Oakes 10:30-Danielle Deery
Ushers: 8-Christine & Linda Monsen
10-Bob Mirabello
Acolytes: 8-Brie Zschech, Rob LaBarge, Morgan Sehdev
10-Alex Fabian, Nicole Fallon, Jesse Gralish, Patrick Brennan

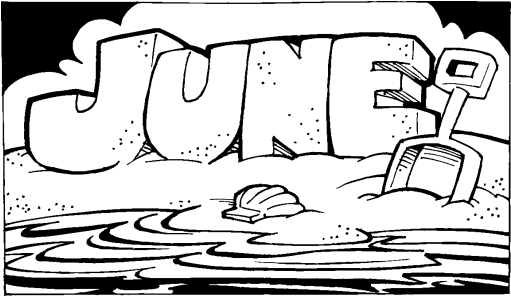
June 22

Readers: 8-Bill Wilson 10-Ken Carpenter
Ushers: 8-Christine & Linda Monsen
10-Bob Mirabello
Acolytes: 8-Caite Ebbenga, Rob LaBarge, Holly Harrington
10-Karen Graeber, Ricky Tredinnick, Joseph Kiernan, Sarah Barrett

June 29

Readers: 8-Christine Monsen 10-Becky Bogina
Ushers: 8-Christine & Linda Monsen
10-Bob Mirabello
Acolytes: 8-Caite Ebbenga, Rob LaBarge, Kelly Harrington
10-Alison & Brian Gensel, Chris Heinze, Rebecca Windle

June 2008						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					



Sun	1	Worship, 8 & 10 AM Sticky Situations, 9:15 AM Martinsen Baptism, 10 AM Acolyte Award Dinner, 6 PM
Mon	2	Prayer Group, 7 PM
Tues	3	Primary Election, 6 AM-8 PM Tai Chi, 6:30 PM Social Ministry Committee, 7 PM Executive Committee, 7:30 PM
Thurs	5	Mother's Group, 10 AM Adult Choir, 8 PM
Thurs-Sat	5-7	Synod Assembly
Sun	8	Worship, 8 & 10 AM Sticky Situations, 9:15 AM McKeever Baptism, 10 AM Confirmation Orientation, 6 PM Youth Group, 7 PM
Mon	9	Prayer Group, 7 PM
Tues	10	Tai Chi, 6:30 PM Church Council, 7:30 PM
Wed	11	Tai Chi, 4 PM Pop Shop Fundraiser (Eat there - tell 'em we sent you!)
Thurs	12	Working Arm, 9:30 AM Mother's Group, 10 AM Adult Choir, 8 PM
Sat	14	Armed Forces Worship, 5 PM
Sun	15	Worship, 8 & 10 AM Donuts 4 Dad, 9 AM Sticky Situations, 9:15 AM Ryan Baptism, 10 AM Blessing of HS Grads, 10 AM
Mon	16	Faith Circle, noon Prayer Group, 7 PM
Tues	17	Tai Chi, 6:30 PM
Wed	18	Tai Chi, 4 PM Children's Church, 7 PM
Thurs	19	Mother's Group, 10 AM
Sun	22	Worship, 8 & 10 AM Sticky Situations, 9:15 AM Bogina Baptism, 10 AM
Mon	23	Prayer Group, 7 PM
Tues	24	Senior Game Day, noon Tai Chi, 6:30 PM
Wed	25	Tai Chi, 4 PM
Thurs	26	Mother's Group, 10 AM
Sun	29	Worship, 8 & 10 AM Sticky Situations, 9:15 AM Smyth Baptism, 10 AM
Mon	30	Prayer Group, 7 PM



SUMMER MISSION TRIP UPDATE

As of this article there are 21 youth and five adults who will be attending this year's Summer Mission Trip to Goldsboro NC to work with the Wayne-Goldsboro chapter of Habitat for Humanity in building high efficiency homes for the poor in that area. Three of the five youth who attended last year will be returning this year. Last year's experience was so life changing that one youth invited a number of her friends from outside the church to begin attending youth group and now there are at least six who will be attending the mission trip this year. And who says Lutherans can't share their faith or participate in evangelism.

Some quick facts. The group will be led by Pastor Wayne, for whom this will be his twelfth mission trip, along with Lisa Quanci, and Linda Harrington of Our Savior. Two other mothers will also be attending from outside the congregation, Adrienne Gioe and Lina Arslanian. They will leave Saturday morning of July 12 and travel to Vienna VA to stay overnight at Emmanuel Lutheran, a former congregation of Pastor Wayne's. After worshipping with the congregation on Sunday morning they'll travel to Goldsboro and get set up in the host church for the week of sleeping and eating. From Monday to Friday they'll work on the jobsite doing anything from framing, drywalling, or siding, to painting, laying sod and landscaping or simply clearing debris from the jobsite. Every job counts. They'll leave and return to Our Savior on Saturday July 19.

Along with money for gas, food, and some recreational activities the group will be raising money for a donation to Habitat for Humanity. While the Wayne-Goldsboro chapter does not ask or require a donation, the group's goal is \$100 per person working, which means they need \$2,600 before paying other expenses. Between the \$900 received at the Community Christian Choir concert held in December of last year, the Spaghetti Dinner held last month and the Pop Shop Night fundraiser the group hopes to raise all of the donation money and most of the operating expenses. Be sure to keep the group in your prayers as they prepare for this life-changing experience and be sure to support them this month at the Pop Shop in Collingswood.

HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR BLESSING JUNE 15 AT 10:00 WORSHIP

Once again The Lutheran Church of Our Savior will be blessing our graduating high school seniors and acknowledging their parents at the 10:00 worship on Father's Day, June 15. During this deeply meaningful and emotional service parents are thanked and acknowledged for keeping the promises they made at their child's baptism being raised in the Christian faith. Graduating seniors affirm the promises they made at their confirmation and together parents and child come forward for the blessing ceremony. The young men and women are presented with an afghan that has the Serenity Prayer on it as a gift from the congregation made possible through gifts to the Memorial Gift and Endowment Funds before receiving a blessing from their parents and then offering one in return. Please keep these graduating seniors and their parents in your prayers as they step out into the world as young adult Christians.



PANTRY NEEDS

Just a reminder to remember the Pantry when shopping and pick up a few extra items. Donations tend to decrease during the summer months. Current Pantry needs include pasta, spaghetti sauce, toothpaste, soap, toilet paper, paper towels, and juices. Donations can be left in the box by the Wayne Avenue entrance.

Thank you.

CONFIRMATION ORIENTATION

Sunday, June 8 at 6 PM

Even though the confirmation service was only a few weeks ago Pastor Wayne is already gearing up for next year. Parents, and only parents, youth who will be participating in the confirmation ministry next year are invited to attend an orientation seminar and registration on Sunday, **June 8, from 6:00-7:30**. Parents of incoming students are especially encouraged to attend and those who have children returning are also encouraged to attend as there will be important information and sign-ups provided.

The Faith Inkubators multi-media materials of the Head to the Heart curriculum have proven to be engaging and highly experiential for both the youth and the parents who volunteer to be small group Guides. Some parents are learning more now than they did when they were in confirmation. Others are establishing and nurturing stronger faith based relationships with both their children and other adults in the congregation. Still others feel such a strong connection to the youth they are staying on as a Guide even after their child is confirmed.

Be sure to attend this highly informational and engaging orientation in preparation for next year's confirmation ministry if your child will be in the seventh or eighth grades next year or if they have not yet begun and are little behind. It is not uncommon to have high school youth in the program as well.



BAPTISM ANNOUNCEMENTS

In Matthew 28 Jesus told his disciples to “Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teaching them all that I have commanded you.” Well, in June the Lutheran Church of Our Savior will be living out that Great Commission every Sunday with the sacrament of Holy Baptism held each Sunday. Please pray for the following infants and their parents as they prepare to be received into the community of Christ through the waters of baptism.

June 1: Julianna Lee Martinsen and her parents Jeff and Jessica.

June 8: John Michael McKeever and his parents Sean and Gabrielle (Miano).

June 15: Erin Elizabeth Ryan and her parents Bill and Alyssa

June 22: Alison Kate Bogina and her parents Curt and Becky

June 29: Avery Ryann Smyth and her parents John and Kristen



RAINFOREST ADVENTURE IS VBS THEME & FLOAT

Rainforest Adventure is the theme for this year's Vacation Bible School held from July 21-25 from 9:00-Noon for children age 4 through grade 4 and will be a float in the Haddonfield Fourth of July Parade as well. Pastor Wayne and Kate will need as much help as they can get to pull off a float in the parade, especially someone who can drive the van and has access to a flatbed trailer for the float. The materials used for the float will then be used for the decorations used in the church during VBS a few weeks later. Contact Pastor Wayne or Kate Zschech to let them know you can help make some trees, vines, donate tropical stuffed animals or simply drive the van for the parade.

SUMMER STAFF VACATION SCHEDULE

During the summer the pastors, office and worship staff will be “re-creating” while on vacation the same as they hope and pray the congregation has time to do as well. In the month of June Pastor Englehardt will be returning from a week of vacation on June 3 just in time for the Synod Assembly. Pastor Zschech will be on vacation from Thursday afternoon June 19 through Saturday June 28. Pastor Englehardt will be away again in August on the 8th and 9th and again from the 21-26 for events related to his daughter's wedding. Pastor Zschech also plans to take another week or two in August but no dates have been determined as of yet.

FROM THRIVENT

Purchasing the right life insurance to fit your personal financial goals is an important decision

Here are some helpful tips to consider when purchasing a new life insurance product, replacing an existing life insurance contract and choosing an insurance provider or agent.

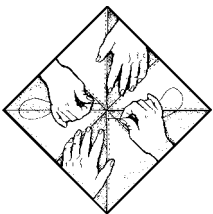
When deciding which product to purchase:

- Don't rush into a decision because you feel pressured.
- Choose a contract or combination of contracts that most closely fit your needs.
- Be sure you can handle the premium payments on an ongoing basis.

When finalizing the contract:

- Never sign an insurance application until you've reviewed it carefully to be sure all information is complete and accurate.
- Make your check payable to the insurance organization and ask for a receipt.
- Read the contract carefully. Ask about anything unclear to you.
- Remember you have a “free-look” period to review and accept the contract, usually 10 days.
- Keep your life insurance contract. It can be very costly to quit during the early years of a contract.
- Exchanging a current contract for another can be costly. Contact your company or agent before you make the decision to change your coverage.
- If you have a complaint, contact the customer service division of the insurance company. You can contact your state's insurance department for help if you aren't satisfied with the outcome.
- Take time to review your contract and update your coverage to meet your changing needs.

This information is presented as a public service by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans George C Welker, FIC. For more information call 856-546-0500.



WORKING ARM NEEDS FABRIC

Colorful fabric is needed to create laprobes and quilts. Please leave donations in the church office. All donations are greatly appreciated!

Thanks to **all those who baked cookies for confirmation**. There has been an amazing out-pouring of love (in the form of cookies) for the confirmands!



Thanks to **all who cook meals** for My Father's House each Tuesday.

Thanks to **Jen McGarry** for organizing and sending out over 40 *Splash!* newsletters to our infants and toddlers each month.

Messenger helpers: **Arlene Berger, Dottie Powell, Jean Schroeder, Jane Evans, Eleanor Gaines, Louise Mowrer, Betty Keene.**

Office Helpers: **Sue Underwood, Jane Evans, Ward Laubach, Jaime Fallon, Arlene Stolarick.**

IN HARM'S WAY

Lt. John L. Gaines, aboard USS Vicksburg
Colonel Richard Howley, serving in Iraq,
PFC Jonathan Keck, serving in Iraq.

Keep all who serve our country and preserve our freedoms in your prayers!



Stop by to check the calendar, read the *Messenger* or just find out a little bit more about us!

www.oursaviorhaddonfield.org

MEMORIAL GIFTS BOARD APPROVES MINISTRY GRANTS

A great deal was accomplished at the May 20th quarterly meeting of the Memorial Gifts Board. The board welcomed Rev. Glenn Miller, Vice President of Development at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, who shared the challenges of administering endowments and memorial funds with both fiduciary responsibility and a zeal for creating and sustaining vibrant ministry opportunities. While serving as senior pastor at Trinity in Reading Rev. Miller oversaw one of the oldest and largest (\$8.5 million) Lutheran endowments in the country that generated an additional \$450K in annual resources for ministry above the 900 baptized member congregation’s regular offering.

It is this additional financial resource for ministry generated by the Memorial Gift and Endowment Funds at Our Savior that allowed the board to approve the grant request from the Christian Education Committee for \$445 to purchase Hands On Bibles for children participating in Sunday School that is a useful accompaniment to the curricula that has been such a great success with students and teachers this past year. The board had previously approved a \$125 grant request for Children’s Church supplies by Heather Vaughn who coordinates the monthly worship ministry for young toddlers and children. They also approved a grant request by Fellowship Development chair, Bobbi Newsham, who implemented Fellowship Together Sundays this year to better facilitate the congregation getting to know one another during the coffee hour as well as the being better aware of the various ministry opportunities at Our Savior. Look for Fellowship Together Sunday to return in the fall thanks to the grant made possible by the gifts and memorials given in memory of loved ones and by those who remembered the mission and ministry of the church after they have entered the Kingdom eternal.



As summer approaches, we once again say a fond farewell to our choirs, both singing and ringing. Knowing that we will see them again in September, we look forward to our summer music beginning.

If you plan an instrument or sing, and have been holding out on us, why don't you give it a try and sign up for a Sunday this summer? There will be a list of available dates in the choir room just waiting for your name to be added.



“FAITH IN STICKY SITUATIONS” RETURNS IN JUNE/JULY AT 9:15

Last year Pastor Wayne tried something new in the summer between the two worship times called “Sticky Situations”. It was originally geared toward school age children and how their faith might be a guide in responding to sticky situations in their day to day lives. While there were a few children who attended regularly there were even more adults who came every week, and not just for the really good sticky buns that were occasionally available!

Therefore, “Faith in Sticky Situations” will return beginning on June 1 from 9:15-9:45. However this year there will be a few twists. First, it will be held down in the Parish Hall to take advantage of the screen already in place for the Power Point slide presentation that is a part of the short program. Second, the situations will be ones that can be applicable to both youth and adults. Finally, Pastor Wayne will try to create a “sticky situation” for which one of the Sunday’s readings might be helpful in discovering a faithful response with others who attend. Most importantly, he’ll do his best to make sure sticky buns are available for the half-hour class each week in the months of June and July. See you downstairs!

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Friday: 9 AM - 12 PM

One calling the church office between these hours can generally expect to reach a church staff person to talk to.

JUNE DAY

This year the annual celebration of June Day at the Lutheran Home in Moorestown will be held on Saturday, June 14, from 10 AM to 3 PM. The Social Ministry Committee has decided that instead of collecting donations of white elephant items to be sold at June Day, a \$500 cash donation will be sent to the home from our congregation. June Day at the Lutheran Home in Moorestown has become an annual tradition for many of the families of our congregation. We hope to continue that tradition again this year and that you and your family will continue to support the Lutheran Home Auxiliary, have lunch, and possibly take a tour of the new building at the home.

GRANT ALLOWS FOR OFFICE ASSISTANT POSITION TO FACILITATE GROWTH

Some time ago the Personnel Committee identified an increase in administrative and office staffing hours would allow for additional and expanded ministry programs. It would also provide a personal presence in the church during normal weekday hours. A generous grant from an anonymous donor has provided the opportunity for such an increase in office staffing to occur this year with the hope in the next few years the additional cost would be absorbed into the congregation’s regular General Fund offering. The ad run in the local papers is as follows.

The Lutheran Church of Our Savior in Haddonfield is accepting applications for a part-time weekday office assistant position of 25 hours/week from 12:00-5:00 to cover certain clerical duties. Knowledge and skill using Word processing and desktop publishing are required and knowledge of the congregation is preferred. Applicants are to submit resumes to Juhan Runne c/o LCOS, 204 Wayne Ave., Haddonfield NJ, 08033 or pastorwayne@oursaviorhaddonfield.org.



TREASURER’S REPORT

Total income for April was \$31,333. For the first four months of 2008, income was \$134, 611 which is 6% or about \$8,800 lower than income for the same four month period last year. While the pessimists will blame recession, higher oil and food prices or even the cold, wet gloomy weather that dominated the first four months of 2008, I choose to be thankful for the Congregation’s generosity. I am confident that contributions will flower in May because the Congregation recognizes the good that is accomplished through the ministries of Our Savior.

Expenses for April were \$49,332. Our expenses for the year so far are \$154,835 which a little basic arithmetic will reveal exceed income by about \$20,224. However, I am not concerned. We have not yet posted \$22,000 received from Memorial Gifts. And our expenses are artificial higher thru the first four months because about \$15,000 of the \$20,224 is due to types of expense we booked in April this year that were booked in May of last year. For instance, because of the Congregation’s generous Easter donations, we were able to make an early benevolence contribution of \$10,000 to the New Jersey Synod for Mission Support.

Did you know that our \$10,000 contribution will be used to support five Mission Teams including Youth Ministry, Discipling, Leadership, Outreach as well as Justice and Peace? My personal favorite is the Justice and Peace Mission. Derived from the baptismal affirmation-“do you intend to strive for justice and peace in all the earth”, the Justice and Peace Mission supports initiatives to stop war, and fight disease, hunger and poverty in various parts of the world i.e., Namibia, Croatia, Tanzania, Somalia and Bosnia. In the United States, funds are used to support the efforts of the Serve Now team to provide relief to victims of hurricanes, tornados and fire.

If you would like more information about the Synod Ministries our benevolence contributions support go to www.njsynod.org.



Response to Recent Disasters

Our world has recently experienced a series of natural disasters: tornadoes in the US; a cyclone (the Pacific equivalent of a hurricane) hitting Myanmar (formerly known as Burma); and the earthquake striking the Chengdu Province of China. We as Lutherans always have an opportunity to respond in aid to help the victims of these kinds of unexpected and sudden life-changing events with very small overhead (about \$.92/dollar goes directly to help those in need). Our national church (the ELCA) is always prepared to respond. Here are two websites available to you if you wish to make a gift:

To contribute to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal, visit www.elca.org/hunger

To contribute to the ELCA International Disaster Response fund, visit www.elca.org/disaster

And to talk to the ELCA International Development and Disaster Response Team you can call 800/638-3522, ext. 5040

We trust these resources will be helpful in your effort to reach out with love. Thank you for your generosity.

In next month’s *Messenger* I will give you a more detailed understanding of the ELCA Global Mission Unit and its active work on God’s behalf in more than 90 countries!

Our Savior Lutheran Church Grief Support Ministry

Cindy Murphy and I will be offering some resources and activities in the Fall of 2008 for any who wish to be a part of this kind of needed support.

Pastor Englehardt

Tai Chi

Tuesdays and Wednesdays

Classes for this valuable ancient art program are now being held here at Our Savior on Wednesdays in the Parish Hall from 4-5 PM and on Tuesdays from 6:30-7:30 PM in the church parlor (across from the nursery); led by Martial Arts instructor Jack Poupard, cost is only \$5/session.

Children’s Church

Wednesday June 18

Don’t miss our last Children’s Church until fall! Mark your calendars for Wednesday, June 18 at 7:00PM. The service will be outside, weather permitting.

Kids, come in your pj’s!

Synod Assembly

Convenes June 5-7

Did you know the word “synod” comes from the combination of the words “synonymous” and “odyssey”, which means “journey”? What that means is the 180+ congregations of the New Jersey Synod are on a “synonymous journey” as we follow Christ for the sake of the world. And since we are on this mission driven journey together it’s good for us to get together once a year to see how our “travels” are going.

This is why those 180+ congregations will gather in East Brunswick from June 5-7 for their annual New Jersey Synod Assembly. Along with Pastors Wayne Zschech and Glenn Englehardt the voting members from The Lutheran Church of Our Savior will include mother and daughter Nancy and Jaime Frazier. Both Nancy and Jaime attended last year and look forward to attending again this year. Along with the variety of reports, forums, and discussion on various resolutions the synod assembly voting members will hear guest speaker Dr. Sara Henrich lead the morning devotions on “Bible Book of Faith”. Please keep the voting members of the assembly in your prayers during the week as they discern the moving of the Holy Spirit among the congregations of our synod.

Faces of LCOS

Mission Trips to Bosnia Become Part of Ed Nace’s Life, Service to God

Ed Nace and his wife, Pat, and their two young boys moved to Haddonfield 21 years ago. A year later, they joined Our Savior. It did not take Ed long to get involved. He joined the handbell choir, then the adult singing choir and, in 1998, he accepted the position of youth group adviser. “There is something fulfilling about doing what you feel is right,” he said.

However, Ed was not fulfilled. Not until 2004. That was the year he experienced a video presentation by NJ Synod Youth Ministry Specialist Jason Reed on an intergenerational mission trip to Bosnia. “When I first heard about it, I knew I was called to do it,” Ed said. “I filled out an application and was accepted to the travel team.” On June 21, Ed Nace will land in Sarajevo with approximately 34 members of the NJ Synod mission team for the fifth time. This year’s theme is *Healing, Hope, Peace*.

Bosnia is a country approximately the size of a combined Vermont and New Hampshire and situated on the Balkan peninsula in southern Europe. It has a history of ethnic division, which continues to divide the country today. Bosnia and Herzegovina were reunited by Marshall Tito as one of six states in communist Yugoslavia after World War II. Tito died in 1980 and Yugoslavia continued to splinter as Muslims, Serbs and Croats engaged in savage and ruthless campaigns of “ethnic cleansing,” that included genocide and the death of an estimated 250,000 Bosnians from 1992-95.

In 1995, the U.S.-sponsored peace talks in Dayton, Ohio, led to an agreement to end the conflict, rebuild the country’s economy and stabilize the government. Serb general Radislav Drstic was convicted of being responsible for the killing of 8,000 Muslims in 2001 and former president Slobodan Milosevic then went on trial for crimes against humanity. He died in 2006 before a verdict was reached. “The Dayton Peace Accord ended the war but divided Bosnia into the Serb Republic and the Federation of Bosnia,” Ed said. “It is a very complicated government with three presidents, and that makes it hard to move forward. Milosevic taught them to hate each other.”

“Our main goal on the mission is our friendship camps for 8- to 12-year-olds. We have various activities based on a central theme, and about 300-400 kids rotate through art, music, storytelling, cooperative games. . . The whole idea is to teach difference and diversity, companionship and modeling Christ’s love.

“I’m 53 years old but the physical challenge is that there are not a lot of amenities. It is a worn-torn country. I have never seen a working elevator. You need stamina and it gets very hot. You have to carry your camp supplies with you.

“The infrastructure is getting better, but you see burned out buildings and bullet holes everywhere. Unemployment is high and the economy is still recovering, but the people are warm and open, and they share whatever they have.

“I have a lot of friends there now. The ministry is aimed toward the kids. You do see a lot of the same kids each year, and on top of that, many of the interpreters are college kids, and you can see them grow up. We stay with host families and you develop relationships with them.

“We are there for two weeks, and during the two weeks we are so busy and on the move and so engaged, it is not until you get to the airport to come home that you realize you want to come back.

“There are no metrics if we are doing any good there,” Ed continued. “The impacts are individual, and there are individual stories. There was a kid who was not responding to us for two weeks, but at the end of the last day before we were to come home, he came up and tugged on my pant leg and counted to three. Everybody was amazed because they said that was the first time he spoke. You just do what you can and hope it has an impact.

“I don’t feel like I’m in danger, but there are some places where you can feel a little uncomfortable. I have never been afraid, but I might be a little naïve. Increasingly, I am more concerned about peace in the world.

“I really have a profound gratitude for the amazing support for this mission through the years. It has become a part of who I am and what I do. I appreciate the support of my family.”

Said Pastor Zschech, “It is clear that Ed is discerning where God’s Holy Spirit is leading him as a missionary in foreign lands as well as in his own backyard.” Ed Nace said a quote by Presbyterian minister and author Frederick Buechner reminds him of his true calling: “The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet.”