



A nondenominational Christian congregation



for persons of all faiths
and of uncertain faith
meeting in historic St. Peter's Church
346 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011
Sundays, September – July, 11:45 a.m.
www.chelseachurch.org
(212) 886-5463

THE CHELSEA COMMUNITY CHURCH NEWSLETTER

CELEBRATING CCC's th ANNIVERSARY

Summer 2010

A man fully alive is the glory of God. - St. Irenaeus

Special Services, Events, Dates (All dates are Sunday, 11:45 a.m., unless otherwise noted.)

August Break No services will be held from August 1 through September 5.

August Outing Stay in touch with us for information regarding our annual August Outing.

And in the fall ...

September 12 Services resume – welcome back! Get ready for a 35th Anniversary “Welcome Back” potluck brunch in the rectory and garden -- you’ve all summer to work on a new recipe!

September 26 Hymn Sing! Come prepared to sing and enjoy lots of perennial favorites from many traditions, accompanied by one or more of our favorite pianists steeped in the music, and also hear a few selections by some of our favorite Sunday soloists.



October 10 Annual Blessing of Animals

Pastoral Reflections

Greetings Chelsea Community Church!

As I write this, spring has fully sprung and we approach the season of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit descended on the Apostles and equipped them with the ability to communicate the Good



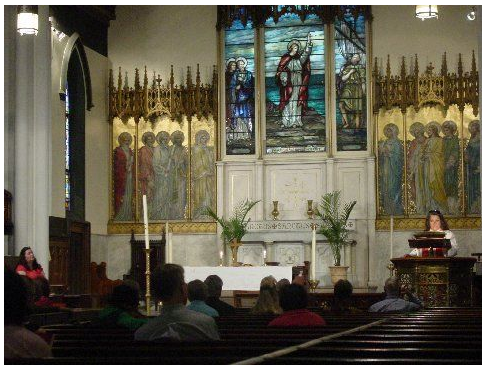
News in languages other than their native tongues. Perhaps coincidentally (or perhaps not), this season comes just several weeks after the state of Arizona passed the most restrictive law on immigration in the country and is now examining the possibility of eliminating various ethnic studies from public schools.

As a grandchild of immigrants, I have a deep appreciation for "tongues" other than my own. My grandparents were from Italy. They married here in the States and had five children, one of whom died in early childhood. Because they wanted their children to grow up with all the advantages of being American, they forbade them to learn or speak Italian in their home. Yet my grandparents usually spoke their native tongue to each other, especially when they wanted to talk privately. One of my earliest, fondest memories is of lying in bed in their house, in the room off the kitchen, in the dark hours before dawn when Grandma and Grandpa were up getting ready for the day. The sweet sound of their native tongue mixed with the perfume of his pipe tobacco. Everything felt safe and warm, even though I had no idea what they were saying.

During this season of Pentecost, let us reflect on our own "tribes" and "tongues" and the places we come from. Let us listen for God's Good News in whatever language we hear it, whether out loud or in our hearts. And finally, let us remember that we are sometimes strangers in strange lands and let us welcome the stranger as we hope to be welcomed.

Blessings!
John
Pastoral Counselor

Pentecost and Membership Sunday, May 23



Mary Sheeran led a joyful and spirit-filled service on Pentecost (image, left) that included welcoming two new members to our church community, Winifred Sanders and William Fowle (right and left, below).

Rev. John Magisano conducted the new member reception (image, right), which included the following pledge spoken by the entire congregation:



*Our church is one of God's miracles.
We walk many different roads of faith,*

but we all stand here, together, in one place, committed to sharing ourselves with each other, reaching out to the needs of our society, and becoming all God means for us to be. We cherish our diversity and work together in friendship and fellowship, nurturing and honoring each other and using our gifts as we grow closer to God. (Excerpt)



Guest speaker Rev. Gabriella Velardi Ward, a Roman Catholic "WomanPriest" who pastors the St. Praxedis Catholic Community of New York and is active in Roman Catholic WomenPriest, spoke on "What We Long For" and on how Jesus showed his disciples--and us--how to love. He gave us his spirit, which would continue to inspire us and instruct us throughout time.

In honor of Pentecost, tenor Jeff Cubeta sang "Send Us Your Spirit," a contemporary song by Dan Schutte.

Instrumental selections by CCC Music Director/pianist Christopher Johnson included the soulful and dramatic second piece from Franz Liszt's *Five Pieces for Piano*.

Among the congregation was Margaret Daffin (second from right), an early CCC member, who was visiting from Houston with her husband, Paul (right). At coffee



hour she was warmly welcomed by many old friends, and she spoke of how much the CCC community had meant to her. (Image, prior page, bottom right: Hilda Regier, Jane Ritter, Margaret and Paul Daffin) (Photos by Kathleen Reid)

Easter



Lay leader for the Easter service was Mary Sheeran, and CCC Pastoral Counselor John Magisano spoke on the topic of “An Idle Tale,” based on the Scriptures of Isaiah 65:17-25, 1 Corinthians 15:19-26 and Luke 24:1-12. Music Director Christopher Johnson featured selections by Richard Strauss, and soprano Deborah Karpel performed two of Strauss’s vocal pieces as offertory and postlude. Our traditional, and traditionally delicious, Easter Brunch (below) was held in the rectory following the service.

Left to right: _____, Wayne Kammerer, Winifred Sanders, Greg Farrell, Thad McGar, (hidden, _____), Madeleine Groff, Leung Ying Leang, _____, Lynne Robinson, _____, Paul Bodden, Gloria Schofner, Kate Johnson, Deborah Karpel, Rick Carrier, John Magisano, Mario Haigler, Merle Levine, Bill Kushner. (Photo by Lynn Ramsey) Help! If you know (or are) one of the unidentified in this picture, please let us know!



Chelsea Community Church Sacred Writing Project

In December the book group chose to do something different: we became a sacred writing group, taking as our guide the Biblical forms of the psalm and the epistle. We read and discussed several examples of each, then wrote our own versions of both forms. Here are two more selections from the group’s work.

A Psalm, for reading without accompaniment

Let my prayers come to you, my Lord God;
my Lady God, may you hear them!
Help me find you, reach you, with my words,
my song, my heart, though I stumble here.

From my childhood I loved to pray, not knowing
but loving the idea of you, source of Love.
When grown I became confused, yet still found hope,
never fully giving up, or in, or ever all away.

Now I return in my late years, weakened in body,
often frail in mind, but strengthened in will,
since I have met you now so often in so many!
Yes, you strengthen me for your purposes.

Hear my praise for your creative power!
You use a vessel, very flawed, yet turned
to your design, and thereby made perfect –
even my flaws (my enemies) put to use.

Hear too my praise for your mercy in forgiving
My lapses into anger, and my unforgiving!
Forgive again my constant seeking of comfort,
And turn my eyes once more to your work.

My Lord God, my Lady God, God of uncertainty,
God of faithfulness, find again the heart you made!
Read there at the depth my wish to serve you,
Though covered over with layers of self-interest.

Find there again that child of prayer, whose spark
of loving warmth you kindled then, and now!
Bring me to wisdom and light and understanding
And there let me find you – loving all your children!

-- Kathleen Reid

St. Peter's Chelsea Food Pantry

St. Peter's food pantry continues to operate from the rectory, Wednesday-Friday, 10 a.m. -12 p.m., Saturday 11:00 -11:30 a.m., serving predominantly low-income families who live in the community, some of whom are homeless. Volunteers are needed for food distribution on Saturday mornings, 10:00 -11:30 a.m. Contact St. Peter's at 212-929-2390 for further information. Major holidays: special hours to be announced. The pantry can also use clean plastic grocery bags.



Thank You

To my extended family and friends of Chelsea Community Church,

I would like to thank all of you for your love, prayers, help and support that you have given me during the time of my loss and grief. It has meant so much to me. All of this has given me strength and courage. This has also strengthened my faith.

This is something I will never forget. May God bless you and continue to do the good work you are doing. May the soul of Paul Gay (The founder of Chelsea Community Church) rest in peace. He, I am sure, is very proud of all of your work.

God Bless

Norma Milligan and Family

CCC also wishes to thank Norma and her family for their contribution in memory of their daughter, Patricia S. Milligan.

Baptisms



On April 11th those attending our regular service witnessed the baptism of Skyla Mireille Lee-Byrnes and Isaac Michael Lee-Byrnes (far left, and fifth from left). Parents are Janette Lee and Luke Byrnes. Standing with them are grandparents Soojie and Cy Lee, and godparents Christina Lee, John Andrilli and Paul Bushkuhl. CCC Pastoral Counselor John Magisano (center) performed the baptisms. Best wishes to Skyla and Isaac and their entire family!

News of Friends



Rick Carrier Stands Up for Veterans, Is Honored in DC, and Celebrates a Major Birthday

A WW II veteran who fought at D-Day, Rick is infuriated at Gov. Paterson's siphoning of \$8.5 million from a special fund to help ailing servicemen and is gearing up to do battle against Albany. Pleased to find his picture in the *New York Post* on April 5th, Rick was shocked to read the accompanying story about the cuts, intended to help fill state budget gaps. "I want to

interview the governor of the state and ask him directly -- and I'll be in my uniform -- 'Sir, why was that money taken away from the veterans?' " he said. (Special thanks to Matthew McDermott of the *New York Post*) Rick is pictured here at the flagpole at St. Peter's which he recently restored; the pole honors the first sailor -- and St. Peter's Chelsea parishioner -- to be killed in WWII, on October 31, 1941.

A few days later, Rick was off to Washington, DC as an invited guest of the Holocaust Museum as the museum honored the April 11, 1945 liberators of Buchenwald. In the midst of all this spring's activity, Rick celebrated his 85th birthday, and we send our congratulations!

Our CCC "Travel Issue"

Joanne Downes in Viet Nam



My daughter Stephanie and I (image, left) recently spent two wonderful weeks in Vietnam. We found the people warm and friendly and very industrious. The food was unbelievably fresh and delicious. The most dramatic initial impression was how fast the country is changing. Stephanie was there 10 years ago and could not believe the changes: motorcycles have replaced bicycles, the remnants of the 50-year-long French presence are disappearing, and tourism is clearly driving the economy. Despite all the progress and new development, images of traditional life abound: farmers working in the rice paddies (image, right);

families cooking, eating, or selling things on the sidewalks in front of their homes/stores; the conical straw hats, which we wore and found so practical; elderly women carrying two baskets of produce suspended from the ends of a pole carried over the shoulder; the bird's nests of utility wires in every street scene; the cyclos, bikes with a passenger seat in front.



In the absence of stop lights, we learned to cross the streets with hundreds of motorcycles coming toward us by walking slowly and at a constant pace. In addition to seeing the bustling cities of Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City/Saigon, we hiked the terraced mountains of the North near Sapa where the ethnic minority hill tribes live. We visited the museums and pagodas of Hue and DaNang, strolled on beautiful China Beach, and kayaked on Halong Bay. The old historic port city of Hoi An was special and served as a base for biking out to the villages (image, above left), rice paddies, and fish farms. A tour of the Mekong Delta and its water markets ended our journey. (Image, left: Flower Hmong family in North near border with China)

Stephanie is too young to remember what the Vietnamese call the American War. But for me, to be in places with names we heard every night on the news for ten years was a deeply emotional experience. Of course, the Vietnamese youth also have no personal memories of the war. One young man told me, "We find history boring; we just want to get a good job and embrace capitalism." Another, "Our parents don't talk to us about the war. They want us to focus on the future." For older people, the "American War" was just the last in a long history of wars and occupations. They have clearly moved on and are working to create a better life for themselves and their children.

Lynn Ramsey in Avebury, England

On a recent trip to England for my goddaughter Katie's wedding, I visited Avebury with her mother, Yolanda Laybourne, and another UK friend Tessa Courage.

Avebury is one of the largest Neolithic monuments in Europe and considered by some to be one of the most sacred places on earth. It is located in the rolling hills of Wiltshire, 90 miles west of London and 20 miles north of Stonehenge. Older and more accessible than Stonehenge, its original construction dates between 2600 and 2400 BC. The complex includes stone "circles," stone rows (image, left), two ceremonial "avenues," barrows (often Neolithic burial chambers), and grassy chalk mounds, including the famous Silbury Hill, the UK's "Great Pyramid" (below, right).



I was completely unprepared for its vastness. The Great Circle encloses an area of about 28 acres, including a large protective, grass-covered bank 1,395 feet in diameter and 20 feet high, a deep inner ditch with four openings at cardinal compass points, and a large stone circle of irregularly shaped sarsen, or sandstone blocks. Within it are two smaller circles, each about 320 feet in diameter. The stones range from nine to over 20 feet high and can weigh as much as 40 tons.

I was also surprised—and disappointed—to see civilization's impact on this ancient place, now a World Heritage site. A busy highway passes through the middle of the Great Circle; the original 98 or 99 stones have been reduced to 27. The smaller inner circles have been equally decimated. A village with homes, tourist facilities, and two museums has taken its toll on the harmony of this sacred space. Nevertheless, thanks to many dedicated antiquarians and archaeologists over the centuries, there remains much to see and ponder, especially away from the village itself.



In 1743, William Stukeley, a doctor, clergyman and antiquarian, published a book, *Abury, a Temple of the British Druids*, in which he likened the site plan to a serpentine temple. While some of his views are not entirely accurate (for example, the Druids arrived about 1,000 years after the original settlement), the etchings he left provide an invaluable picture of Avebury in the 18th century.

No one really knows Avebury's purpose or the real powers of its people. Were they sophisticated astronomers? Were its circles transportation portals to different parts of sacred Europe? Archeologists are just beginning to unearth some of Avebury's mysteries.

Studies show that Avebury was in continuous use throughout the Neolithic and Early Bronze periods —about 2,300 years, an extraordinary span of time. Why or when the site was abandoned is unknown, but by about 600 AD, in the early Saxon period, a settlement was established inside the Great Circle. A small Benedictine priory and church were built in the early 12th Century. The needs of the growing village for land and building materials, combined with the zeal of the church to suppress pagan beliefs, triggered the decimation and removal of many of the sarsen starting at the end of that century.

I left Avebury with questions and a deep sense of awe and gratitude for our early ancestors who went to such extremes to create this sacred space. They seem to have had an intuitive understanding of spirit and the universe and an unrelenting passion and commitment to their beliefs—something that is lacking in our culture today. I look forward to returning to Avebury and learning more about this amazing place. (Image right: Lynn, left, with friends Tessa Courage and Yolanda Laybourne)



SCHEDULE OF SPEAKERS and SPECIAL MUSIC

Worship Service, Sundays 11:45 a.m.

June 6 Rev. John Magisano (Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches) is Chelsea Community Church's pastoral counselor. He also works as a consultant to nonprofit organizations in the New York area. He earned his M.Div. degree at New York Theological Seminary and previously served as assistant pastor for development at the Metropolitan Community Church of Hartford.

June 13 Rabbi Jill Hausman (Jewish) is the spiritual leader of Congregation Ezrath Israel, also known as the Actors Temple. Before coming to the 47th Street shul in 2006, she was with the Boro Park Progressive Synagogue in Brooklyn, first as a cantor and then as assistant rabbi. She was ordained at the Rabbinical Seminary International in Manhattan. ***Special Music: Rabbi Hausman***

June 20 Leslie Rodgers (Nondenominational) is director of case management for Bronx AIDS Services, a nonprofit, community-based organization that works with people who are HIV positive, have AIDS or are at risk of contracting the virus. Previously he was director of Project Samaritan, a Bronx agency offering HIV-AIDS services. He earned a master of professional studies in the New York Theological Seminary program at Sing Sing Prison and an M.A. in sociology from SUNY New Paltz and is now working toward a Ph.D. in social welfare at Hunter College.

June 27 Robert Perretti (Christian) will intersperse a series of his original musical compositions with his sermon. Since retiring as a sales representative for Steinway & Sons, he now devotes his full time to composition. Having learned to play the piano at age 6, he began composing simple songs at 12 and played a solo program when 14. His only formal composition study was as an adult at Westminster Choir College in Princeton, NJ, working with Joel Phillips. Performances of his sacred music in the Princeton area include *Psalm 82: He Speaks Peace to All His Faithful Children* (1991), *Agnes Dei* (1992) and *Sunday School Lessons* (1993). In 2008, three of his *Songs for Bass-Baritone* were performed by the Limroy Duo on its national tour. Performances scheduled for 2010 include a string quartet and a sonata for clarinet and piano to be performed by the Brooklyn Chamber Players this fall. Among his current projects is a series of chamber operas for children. ***Special Music: Robert Perretti***

July 4, Independence Day—Lay-led Service with **Mary Sheeran** in charge. Mary is a singer and writer who has performed in clubs, opera houses and churches in New York City. She holds an M.Div. and her first novel, *Who Has the Power*, about the struggle between Native Americans and white settlers in the West, was published in 2006.

July 11—Ginena Dulley Wills (United Methodist) worked for her denomination's General Board of Global Ministries for 10 years, serving in the United Methodist Committee on Relief and in Mission Education and as director of the Women's Division. In 2004-06 she held the Sara Shingler Public Education Internship with the Women's Division of the General Board of Global Ministries, doing grassroots organizing within United Methodist Women. She was president of United Methodist Women and dean of the School of Christian Mission in the former Northern New Jersey Annual Conference. She was also president of the Core Planning Group of the United Methodist Northeastern Jurisdiction and dean of the Upper Atlantic Regional School of Christian Mission. ***Special Music: Estela Ogiste***

July 18--Rev. Ronald W. Sala (Unitarian Universalist) is the parish minister of the Unitarian Universalist Society in Stamford. Before coming to the Connecticut church in 2001, he served as interim minister of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Northern Westchester County in Mt. Kisco and in consulting ministries for his denomination in New Jersey and Long Island. He earned his M.Div. at New York Theological Seminary.

July 25 Rev. Linda Tarry-Chard (United Church of Christ) is associate minister for membership, care & parish life at The Riverside Church. She was previously an associate minister for social justice at Broadway United Church of Christ. A founder of the People Project Foundation, which works in the townships of South Africa, she

brought 1,000 dolls with African features to the children of that country in its first project in 1996. She holds an M.S. in education from Fordham University and an M.Div. from Union Theological Seminary.

Special Music: Diana Solomon Glover

September 12 Rev. John Magisano (Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches) is Chelsea Community Church's pastoral counselor. He also works as a consultant to nonprofit organizations in the New York area. He earned his M.Div. degree at New York Theological Seminary and previously served as assistant pastor for development at the Metropolitan Community Church of Hartford.

* * * * *

CCC Trustees Plus

Lynn Ramsey, Chair (Benevolence/PR)

Robert Hickey, Vice Chair (Website/Graphics)

Hilda Regier, Treasurer (Worship)

Virginia Pfeiffer, Assistant Treasurer
(Roster Coordinator)

Alana Atterbury (Publicity)

Kathryn Buck (Newsletter)

Wayne Kammerer (Hospitality)

David Robinson

Lynne Robinson (Database & Distribution)

Thad McGar, Clerk John Magisano, Pastoral Counselor Christopher Johnson, Music Director
Joanne Downes, Special Music Scheduling

CCC Mission Statement

An independent, non-denominational, lay-led Christian congregation, Chelsea Community Church is not a building but a people. We offer a supportive environment for people of all faiths and uncertain faith: **TO ENABLE** each individual to define personal religious beliefs, **TO WORSHIP** in prayer, music, reading and interpretation of Scripture with speakers from a variety of backgrounds, **TO NURTURE** each other in spiritual growth, while respecting and accepting a diversity of beliefs, **TO SHARE** with and support each other in the daily and extraordinary events of our lives, **TO HELP** those in need both inside and outside our congregation. We welcome anyone to worship with us and become part of our extended Christian family. www.chelseachurch.org

Another image from Pentecost Sunday: (left to right)
Mary Sheeran, Jane Ritter, Hilda Regier, Kathleen Reid,
Margaret Daffin, Joanne Downes, Thad McGar (Photo
by Lynn Ramsey)



The Newsletter

Published quarterly in December, March, June and September



Special thanks are due, with each issue, to those who help put it together and get it to you – to all of you who submit news and material, to Lynne Robinson for maintaining the mailing lists and procuring stamps, printing postal mailing lists and doing the e-mailing, to Kathy Reid for proofreading, to Robert Hickey for posting it to the website, and to all of you who “stuff, stamp and seal” at coffee hour. **Please submit material for the Fall newsletter** (September - November) to Kathryn Buck by **August 10th**: blsspks@aol.com or call (212) 243-0273.
