



# Endeavorer

VOLUME CIX, ISSUE 7  
SUMMER 2009

## “Telling the Generations . . . Jesus Saves”

### Commissioning Sunday

On Sunday, June 21, our morning worship service included a special Commissioning Service, during which the participants present – the ministers of Word and Sacrament, Rev. Melchior Van Hattem and Rev. Kenneth Tenckinck; the Consistory; the Pastoral Search Committee; and those worshipping at Grove Church - committed themselves to discover and carry out God’s call to ministry, with the help of Christ’s spirit. The congregation, as a whole, committed themselves to encouraging these groups, that the presence of Christ might shine through their living. Representatives of Christ’s Family of Faith, including many members of the Ebenezer Baptist Church, were there to witness this act of commitment and express their affirmation to the Grove congregation through insights from their own Christian experience.

Many of our Christian associates who could not be present on June 21 sent letters to the congregation commending us on our commitment and sharing their congratulations, love and support of Grove Church as we embark upon this new chapter in our long and proud history of ministry in North Bergen. Here are excerpts from the letters we received:

. . . Mary and I join in both congratulations and best wishes for your days ahead. Our prayers will be frequently uttered on your behalf as we remember our happy days with you and as we reflect on what the new day at Grove will bring.

*Rev. Harold J. Goldzung, Sr.*

. . . As we Christians know, Faith is a Confident Adventure. I encourage you to go forward with the faith of our fathers in your mind, the call of Christ in your heart and the vitality of the Holy Spirit filling your soul. As you go forward be assured

### Stories of God’s Presence in Our Lives

At a Sunday lunch on June 26 and August 9 about half the congregation met in small groups and told personal stories. We discovered a wonderful heritage of Christian experiences among us. People described a spiritually enriching event related to prayer, church life, or a mentor who reflected Christ in some way. Here are some theme samples from these stories.

God can work with people even through the imperfections and even in times of mistakes. (I Corinthians 1 came alive through this personal story.)

I saw angels as I prayed in my time of fear, and realized God was there with me. (Genesis 37 came alive for us through this personal story.)

I helped a Sunday School student who was afraid of the dark when a filmstrip was to be shown. (Psalm 139 came alive for us through this personal story.)

Two people described letting a person express their anger at God, adding the phrases: “He already knows we are mad at him. Tell him; he can take it!” (Job’s protests and some Psalms came alive through these personal stories.)

As a person neared death, family members felt gratitude for God’s eternal love and the peace of resting in Jesus’ statements about the future life with him. One person described the smile on her mother’s face. (We felt John 14 come alive in a personal way.)

People described some marvelous mentors within Grove Church. We talked about some of their traits so people who did not know them could picture with us what we admired and wanted to emulate as a reflection of Christ in our lives. (We sensed personal traits noted in Romans 12 as alive around us today.)

The story of Jesus reaching out for the lost sheep came alive as one person described a youth leader who kept reaching out for him. (Luke 15)

We all learned that we can inspire others out of our personal heritage of spiritual experience. And we realized ways in which we could be “Telling the Generations...Jesus Saves.”



**Worship Time Change**

**September 13th**

**We return to our regular Sunday**

**worship time of 10:45 a.m.**

## People of Prayer (POP) Corner

What was the last prayer you memorized? For some it might be the Lord's Prayer or Apostles' Creed learned as a child from parents or Sunday School teachers.

Eknath Easwaren, in a book of multi-faith spiritual readings called *God Makes the Rivers to Flow*, offers the theory that what we repeat and believe, what we fill our minds with, is what we become. Seems reasonable, no?

So, what do we usually "memorize"? TV commercials, jokes, litanies of complaints, bad news, gossip? If we could see a bar graph of our thoughts and words, what categories would soar high and neon-bright to the top? Which would be omitted or barely cover a sliver of space?

Why not search for a prayer to stir your heart and then welcome it into your life? Our two wonderful pastors (can you believe we are blessed with two?) could surely offer suggestions and with 2,000 years of Christian writings behind us there are so many prayers and spiritual writings to choose from, including our Sunday bulletin. Surely you'll discover one that will call to you and say—Come, give me a home in your mind and heart and live my words for Christ. Here's a Celtic one I am trying to memorize. I read it when I turn on the stove to make breakfast.

This morning, as I kindle the fire of my hearth, I pray that the flame of God's love may burn in my heart and in the hearts of all I meet today.

I pray that no envy or malice, no hatred or fear may smother the flame.

I pray that indifference and apathy, contempt and pride, may not pour like cold water on the fire.

Instead, may the spark of God's love light the love in my heart, that it may burn brightly through the day.

And may it warm those who are lonely, whose hearts are cold and lifeless, so that all may know the comfort of God's love.

from the Ortha Nan Gaidheal

## Congratulations Graduate!

Congratulations to Danielle Palmieri, who graduated this past spring, cum laude, from Montclair University with a major in psychology. Danielle received a scholarship to pursue her graduate degree and is currently attending Belmont University in Nashville, Tennessee, where she is working toward a Masters in Leadership.

## Self-Study on Grove Church

### Development for our Future

At the May 30 retreat the Consistory and Search Committee detailed many strengths of the Grove Church congregation. And about half the twelve pages of minutes request information about how other churches have revitalized their future, through cultivating strengths within the congregation, and discovering enriching partnerships in relationship to people of various cultural groups in the communities of their congregational members.

At the June 21 Commissioning Service we celebrated that the whole congregation was open to making this a year of discovery about their own personal development as well as the church's future development.

At discussion luncheons on June 26 and August 9, about half the congregation described in small groups something from their spiritual heritage and treasured church experiences.

The Search Committee Co-Chairs, Dorothy Feitl and Ruth Shaw, were asked by Consistory to transform the retreat minutes into action recommendations. Now at a special summer Consistory meeting, Consistory will prepare for testing some requested developments this fall.

Pastor Van Hattem has started gathering information requested at the retreat, and soon the Search Committee will be asking many people to help examine what we can learn from others for our own personal development and the development of our church.

This is a quieter time of prayer as our leaders take steps so that God can work effectively through our church life identifying our personal giftedness and the potential God sees for a fulfilling life.

## Plugging into Social Networks

Urban churches grow, not by advertising to individuals, but by finding the grapevines and finding the people on the grapevines—at work, at recreational centers, and other relational places. These are places where we can tell our story and interest people in church

## August Hymn Sing

On two Sundays during August members of the Congregation had an opportunity to choose and sing some of their favorite hymns during the first part of morning worship. Everyone enjoyed the opportunity to sing old favorites from our "Worship and Rejoice" hymn book and new favorites from "The Best of Lift Him Up" and sang enthusiastically to Hector's able piano accompaniment .

We were also delighted to have two new volunteers to help lead the Hymn Sing and then share a favorite song as soloist. On Sunday, August 9, Colleen Corliss sang one of her favorite hymns, The Summons, and the congregation joined in on the final verse. And, as we are going to press, Lillian Thompson is preparing to sing one of her favorites on Sunday, August 16. We are so grateful to both Colleen and Lillian for sharing their talents, their love of singing and their joy in the Lord with us. We look forward to more opportunities for all of us to share our talents and interests with our Church family.

### Thank You

Dear Pastor Mel & Friends at Grove:

Thank you for all the beautiful get-well cards and prayers. Jesus saves!!!

Hope to be back at church soon. I miss our Sundays together. God be with you all.

Sincerely, Susan Brandli

## August Music Notes

- August 2 *Look to Your Heart* - Soloist William Bross
- August 9 *An Irish Blessing* - Soloist Janette Goleme
- August 16 *He* - Soloist William Bross
- August 23 *Song of Praise* - Soloist Janette Goleme
- August 30 *Jesus Stretch Thy Hand to Me* - Soloist William Bross

## Church Flowers

- June 14** In Memory of Deacon Douglas Cooley  
From the Kinnear Flower Fund in memory of Walter Kinnear  
From Dolores Pambello in memory of loved ones
- June 21** From Barbara Marcelletti with love and in honor of Joe Marcelletti, Happy Father's Day  
From the Crossley Flower Fund
- July 12** From the Krucher Flower Fund in memory of Emma and Charles Gunset on their wedding anniversary  
From the Crossley Flower Fund

## August Birthdays

Happy Birthday to:

- August 2 Yesenia Bayron
- 7 Thelma Cooley
- 14 Barbara Allen
- 28 Ciel Herscheit

## **Commissioning Sunday** *cont'd from Page 1*

that both Karen and I will hold you (the leadership and congregation) up in our prayers.

*Rev. Dr. Bill Faulkner*

We are pleased to commend and support your service to God in the North Bergen-Union City area. For several generations, Grove Church has been committed to the people of this community, living out Christ-like initiatives and working to reflect the love of Jesus to the world. Ebenezer Church has been the recipient of your love and kindness and for that we are very thankful . . .

*Ebenezer Baptist Church*

*Rev. Carlos Goyanes, Pastor*

*Adela Carrazana, Church Secretary*

It is a joy to send this greeting to you, members, friends, and leaders of the Grove Reformed Church on this momentous occasion today. The Classis of the Greater Palisades offers prayers and best wishes as you gather for a service of commissioning. . .

. . . Actually, anyone who is acquainted with the Grove Church should not be surprised that you have embarked on this bold mission. You have shown this kind of commitment to the ministry of Christ throughout your notable and historic ministry. You are a prime example of a church rising up to meet the challenges of a new era. Thank you for leading the Classis in so doing. . .

*Rev. John E. Hiemstra*

*President of the Classis of the*

*Greater Palisades*

As you join in your Celebration Service and Commissioning . . . you are joined in prayer and in the Spirit by your sister churches of the Classis of the Greater Palisades.

We in the Classis are encouraged by the planning and spirit of mission which is evident in the work of your Consistory as the church prepares for a year of discerning the next phase of Grove Reformed Church's long and positive ministry. We commend to you the leadership of our brother, the Rev. Mel Van Hattem, being commissioned as your Interim Minister, having witnessed his service guiding other churches . . .

*Rev. Jim Reid*

*Classis Executive Minister*

Woodcliff Community Church commends Grove Church for its vision and commitment in the calling of Pastor Melchior Van Hattem, assisted by Rev. Ken Tenckinck, to lead Grove Church so they may be able to discover and discern God's mission for their congregation . . . We offer our support to you, our mother church, from our experience in ministry, in reaching out to the communities that we serve.

*Woodcliff Community Church*

*Pastor Greg Dunlap*

. . . Today I celebrate with you your long and storied history as a church, including being one of our RCA churches that has historically started other new churches. Praise God for the generations of people you have touched with the Gospel through that wise and generous spirit to help other churches begin well. I know of at least four churches still ministering God's grace to people, churches you began: Secaucus, West New York, Hoboken and Woodcliff Community. I pray that your future vision includes such wise investment again in the starting of many new churches. I am at your service to assist in any way I can . . .

*Tim Vink*

*Coordinator of Church Multiplication, RCA*

We at Trinity Reformed Church of West New York want to commend you on this year of exploration that you have committed yourselves to.

We wish you God's blessing as you seek to do His Will.

*Rev. John H. Sharpe*

*Pastor, Trinity Reformed Church*

"God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that ye may abound in every good work." -II Corinthians 9:8

*The Hispanic Reformed Church of Guttenberg  
along with Rev. Jose Lopez and the Consistory*

. . . In these fast changing times in which we live it is more important than ever that we take time apart to listen for the voice of the One who moves the stars across the heavens and stirs the breeze with the wings of the butterfly. May you know more than ever after this year of discernment that this sovereign God loves and cares for you individually and corporately and has a way for you to walk which will bring joy and meaning to your life and lives that can come from nowhere or no one else. . .

*Pastor Will Henkel*

*On behalf of the consistory and congregation*

*The First Reformed Church of Secaucus*

For the years I labored for the kingdom of God in your midst I experienced genuine love and joy in serving God. You are now at a turning point in your long history of seeking to reach the generations for Christ, and I am pleased to write in a pastoral manner to accompany you in your moment of commissioning.

Your history is full of examples of evangelistic and missional outreach and ministry to the diverse populations present in north Hudson County over the decades. Each of you has a link to that history—as well as the spiritual endowment of gifts necessary for reaching and serving others in need in your community.

. . . I love you still, and I will pray for you always. Each of you has a special place in my heart and in the hearts of my family.

*Rev. Douglas Shepler*

