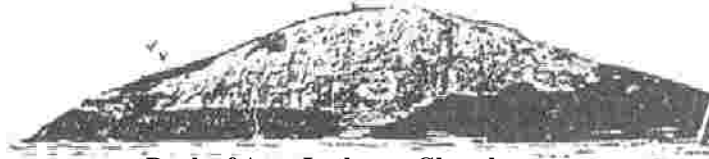


The Fortress

*Reverend Randal Palm, Pastor
Minister Trina Petersen, Intern*



Rock of Ages Lutheran Church
5135 Memorial Drive | Stone Mountain, GA 30083
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THE ROCK OF THE COMMUNITY

WHAT DO WE CALL HER?

When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets." "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. (Matthew 16:13-17)

By this time the Disciples had walked and talked with Jesus for years. They had listened to His teachings and had witnessed many miracles of healing and deliverance. Yet Jesus asked them the question, "Who do you say I am?" Jesus was checking the understanding of the people and of the disciples. See, some thought Jesus was a great prophet. Those who had experienced the healing power of God through Him, would no doubt say Jesus was the Great Physician. And those who had through Jesus experienced deliverance would likely say Jesus was the Great Deliverer. And though they would have been correct in stating their understanding, their statements would confirm their lack of knowing and understanding Jesus in His fullness.

Over the past few weeks I have been wrestling with the task of how I would like the congregation to address me while I am here doing my internship. Intern, Vicar, or pastoral intern were the choices given to me. I researched each of these titles and these are concise statements of what I found.

Intern - (noun) (Fr interne, resident within, L internus, inward) a person, esp. a student, participating in a program of temporary, supervised work in a particular field in order to gain practical experience

Vicar (noun) (O.Fr. *vicair*, from L. *vicarius* "substitute, deputy) the original notion is that of "earthly representative of God or Christ".

Pastoral intern (adj/noun) a person, esp. a student, participating in a program of temporary, supervised work in a particular field in order to gain practical experience of or relating to a pastor.

My spirit was not fulfilled after reading and pondering the titles and the definitions. I was seeking a title that described both whose I am and who I am. Something was missing. The title Intern was missing the spiritual aspect, the title vicar was missing the intimacy aspect, and the Pastoral Intern was too formal and too long. I asked God, "What have You called me to be and to do for the people in this ministry?" The answer from God came to me so clearly, "I have called you to minister to My people." To minister... hmmm

Minister- (both a noun and a verb). (O.Fr. *ministre*, from L. *minister* (gen. *ministry*).

(noun) a person acting for another as agent and carrying out given orders or designs; specif.,

(verb) supply; provide; to give help (to)

That's who I am, a child of God on a mission for the God-appointed hour - to preach good news to the poor, proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, and to set at liberty those who are oppressed. I am a minister called by God to minister. Minister Trina Petersen. My spirit is at peace. And so... as we journey together I strive not only to be a minister, but to minister to you and the people of this community. And somewhere along the way I will ask you, "Who do you say that I am?" and hopefully you will be able to answer a minister who is ministering. But even more importantly, somewhere along our journey together I will ask you, "who do others say that you are?" and hopefully your spirit will be at peace with your answer.

—Minister Petersen

LUTHERAN SERVICES OF GEORGIA

LSG needs your help. We are experiencing a large influx of refugees and their needs are great. We are thankful that we can have our Refugee Clothes Closet at your church. You have welcomed us most graciously. We could use another volunteer or two to help sort clothes, restock shelves and assist refugee families. This would not be an every week commitment but an on call as needed basis. Working with the refugees is a truly rewarding opportunity. We are also in need of children's clothes in all sizes and men's and women's clothes in small and medium sizes. Recently we have settled families from Bhutan, Afghanistan, Iran and Burma and our stock of clothes in these sizes has been depleted.

It is important that the donated clothes be clean and in good repair as they are needed to send these people to work and the children to school. If you would like to volunteer, please call Elsie Guenther at 770/998-2159 or talk to Vaira Lyons or Susanne Hollister. Thank you for your continued support.

"SOMETHING"

Sometimes, when you have done something repeatedly over time, it is easy to lose sight of how important that "something" is, even when that something is for the sake of another.

Over the last 18 months, members have generously and lovingly participated in the "Manna From Heaven" sandwich ministry, which delivers sandwiches to the "Open Door" community homeless shelter on Ponce de Leon in Atlanta. To date we have provided close to 5,400 sandwiches! Wow!

And yet.....in the event anyone may be "growing weary in doing good" with regard to this sandwich ministry, or pondering whether or not "my dozen sandwiches are really needed THIS month", please know that the Open Door program needs 2,000 SANDWICHES A WEEK to feed the homeless folks who come to it for assistance. THERE IS NO GIFT OF SANDWICHES TOO SMALL TO BE "INSIGNIFICANT" WITH A NEED SO GREAT! Thank you so very much for your loving and faithful support of this ministry.

On a related note, some folks have asked why we don't contribute food to a homeless shelter in Stone Mountain. The answer is that there IS no homeless shelter in Stone Mountain. You can ask your local representatives why that is the case. There is a Stone Mountain Cooperative, located in the village of Stone Mountain, for residents of the area who need assistance, but no facility serving the homeless of Memorial Drive. We provide "homeless packs" for those who ask us for food (it is a collection of items requiring no water or heating/cooking, and provides about 2,500 calories), but our ability to provide these meals is very limited, so we only hand out meals on Sundays. To provide more days or to serve a larger audience would require us to staff 2-3 volunteers at least one day a week, and a much larger budget -- something I have pondered but can't commit to at this time given issues other churches have had trying to meet this need themselves. This is a topic I may revisit with you over the next year.

Finally, a few folks have also asked why I seem to ask you to prayerfully consider so many "food" related programs and ministries. A good question, and I am glad you asked. There are countless needs around us, and we could choose any number of ways to assist folks in our community, nation, and world. But in a small family of faith such as ours, sometimes it is helpful to focus on a single broad area of assistance. This is what I have tried to ask of you with regard to food related ministry opportunities, and you have responded with all your heart and spirit! There are so many problems and issues in this world that are difficult, complex, and have no easy solution. But one problem we CAN address is providing basic nourishment to our brothers and sisters. I am reminded constantly of the

words of Jesus, recorded in Matthew 25:34-45:

"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.

"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'

"The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers or sisters of mine, you did for me.'

"Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.'

"They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?'

"He will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.'

Thanks for your constant and passionate desire to tenderly care for those in need around us! Take care and God Bless!

—Pastor Randy

PS-

Our next "Manna From Heaven " Sunday is September 21st :) :) :)

ROCK OF AGES JAZZ VESPERS



CDs Available!

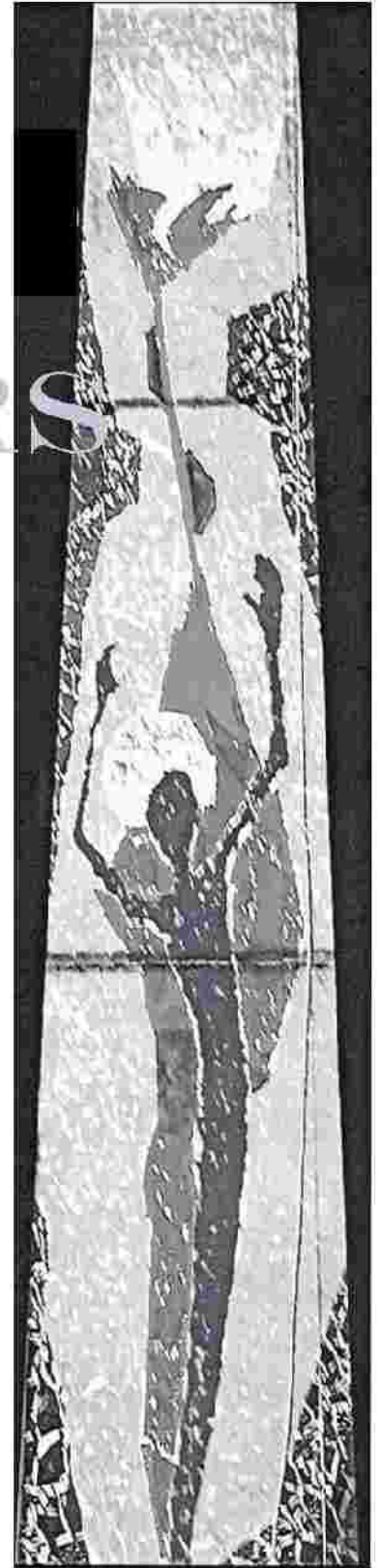
**Join us for
our Fall Jazz
Vespers
celebration**

**Performed by
Gary and Veronica
Motley and
other world-class
jazz artists**

**Sept 14, 2008
5:30 p.m.**

For more information contact Pastor Randy Palm

**Rock of Ages Lutheran Church | 5135 Memorial Drive Stone Mountain, GA 30083
404-292-7888 | www.rock-of-ages-lutheran-church.org**



DID YOU KNOW . . .

...ROCK OF AGES doesn't run by itself? It takes the efforts of dedicated members to keep things running smoothly. Our Congregational Council is made up of an Executive Committee consisting of the President (Lara Adams), Vice President (Cheryl Bopp), Secretary (Carole Cooper), Treasurer (Kelly Kraus), Minister of Finance (Steve Hansen) and Pastor Randy Palm, and the remaining Council includes the Ministers of Congregational Life (Avenelle Thomas), Mission and Service (Melanie Taylor Williams), Women of the ELCA (Patricia Snow), Worship (Joyce Anderson) and Property (Annette Conner).

But these dedicated officers and ministers cannot and do not function by themselves. It takes participation of other church members to accomplish their tasks and goals. We're asking you to get involved in some of these activities, even if you only have a few hours to spare. When we work together, we strengthen the bonds of our Christian community. And the great thing is that YOU will benefit from the increased fellowship and personal commitment!

This month we are highlighting Congregational Life. Avenelle Thomas is the Minister of Congregational Life and also serves as the chair of the Multicultural Task Force. Don Stewart has been helping her in both of these areas. They could use some help! Here's what the Congregational Life committee does: Congregational Picnic(s), Sunday School (youth & adult), Vacation Bible School, Oktoberfest, Maintain Pictorial Directory, Provide Food for Receptions & Meals, Setup & Cleanup for Receptions & Meals, Sunday Morning Coffee Hour, Toy Makers, and much more. The Multicultural Task Force coordinates Community Health Fair, Movie Nights, Black History Month Celebration, and other programs.

As you can see, there is a lot to be done! Please consider working on the Congregational Life committee. If you can offer any time to help with any of these activities, especially the planning of events, please contact Avenelle Thomas at abary1965@yahoo.com or 678-418-6297.



PLEASE TAKE NOTE!

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL STARTS ON SEPTEMBER 27 AT 8:45 AM IN THE LOUNGE.

BERNICE BRUTUS WILL ONCE AGAIN BE SHARING HER GIFTS IN LEADING THIS WEEKLY CLASS. ALL ADULTS ARE WELCOME!

MINUTES OF THE ROCK OF AGES LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL
AUGUST 18, 2008

Present: Lara Adams, Joyce Anderson, Carole Cooper, Steve Hansen, Patricia Snow, Melanie Taylor Williams, and Avenelle Thomas.

Absent: Cheryl Bopp, Annette Conner, Kelly Kraus, Pastor Randy Palm.

The meeting was opened with a devotion by Steve Hansen.

The minutes of the 6/16/08 meeting were approved as written.

Treasurer's Report / Financial Report—Steve Hansen

- The Treasurer's Report provided by Kelly Kraus was reviewed and accepted, with the understanding that she is reworking numbers regarding percentage of pledges received and the shortfall amounts.
- We are on track for the \$4,000 per week needed in regular giving to meet operating expenses (offerings have totaled \$12,022.00 so far this month).

July 2008 Operating Funds Overview

Beginning bank balance as of 6/30/08	Plus: Total Weekly Offerings	Plus: Miscellaneous Deposits	Minus: Accounts Payable in July	Total Operating Funds as of 07/31/08
\$9,733.77	\$15,220.50	\$4,382.00	\$23,937.30	\$5,848.97

Vice-President's Report – no report

Pastor's Report

Pastor Randy Palm was unable to attend the meeting but submitted the following summary of his activities 7/15/08 through 8/18/08:

- Taught 3 Monday Midday Bible study classes
- Participated/moderated 3 evening Joint VBS with St. Timothy and MDPC, provided the meal for 40 participants first night of VBS
- Purchased food for Homeless packs
- Met with roofing rep to do detailed inspection of sanctuary ceiling looking for possible leaks- none found
- Work with Air Conditioner rep to do repair work on both sanctuary AC, and Corkish hall AC (twice)
- Cut church property grass

- Met with locksmith to address problems with 3 doors
- Met with Peniel Ethiopian mission leadership
- Attended Worship committee meeting, Quarterly Committee Planning meeting, and Internship committee meeting
- Work on preparing for arrival of new Intern, including completion of application forms, and tasks related to formation of the Internship committee
- Meeting with Dr. Carroll (Director of Internship) and Minister Petersen
- 2 weekly supervisory sessions with Minister Petersen
- Led Congregational presentation of Short term proposal for ROA (2009 Vision)
- Work with Dick Kraus on planning details of Oktoberfest event October 4th
- Work on Confirmation program and schedule
- Work on FOG compliance issue
- Delivered homeless sandwiches
- Planning session with regard to Welcoming lay ministry
- Officiated at one wedding and one renewal of vows ceremony
- Met with Internship Committee chairperson
- Hospital and shut in and pastoral care/member visits
- Made prospective members contacts
- Dialog with LSG to have article/picture about ROA and rice donation in upcoming LSG newsletter
- Work with Kelly Kraus on advertising for upcoming Jazz Vespers service
- Work on plans for indoor/outdoor railing and plans to make "western" parking lot more handicap accessible
- Work with Kelly Kraus on rental/church usage issues/problems
- Work on 2009 Stewardship campaign
- Staffing discussions
- Work on sanctuary sound system issues
- He and Kelly Kraus are still in negotiations with DeKalb County regarding FOG (grease trap) compliance

- A/C coils for the sanctuary unit could be repaired rather than replaced; Corkish Hall unit was also repaired

Old Business

The sanctuary sound system should be completed soon with the installation of the pulpit and altar microphones.

New Business

- Council members were asked to let Lara know by the next Council meeting if they are willing/able to serve in their positions next year.
- We will consider having a Council retreat in early January, 2009, for planning purposes and to assist new Council members.
- Avenelle would like for us to consider the Multi-Cultural Task Force as part of the Congregational Life ministry rather having it as a separate committee, since the same people work on both. Discussion of this concern was tabled until the next Council meeting.
- Pastor Randy has asked Council to consider using hunger funds to support a program that provides lunches for school children in Honduras. This was tabled for discussion at the next Council meeting.

Ministers' Reports

Congregational Life – Avenelle Thomas

- The Family Movie Night will be scheduled starting in October. Popcorn and drinks will be served rather than a meal.
- We were unable to put together the Community Health Fair this year.
- A congregational picnic will be planned, possibly for late September.
- Avenelle desperately needs additional committee members, as it is currently just Don Stewart and her. We will make an appeal to the congregation to assist in this ministry.

Mission and Service – Melanie Taylor Williams

- Nicholas House: ROA has the week of Labor Day, 9/2 through 9/5. A sign up sheet will be available soon. We especially need volunteers who can cook and serve the meals. We hope to get better estimates of the number of residents who will be eating. Volunteers need to be there by 6:00 p.m. and serve at 6:30 p.m.
- Angel Food now accepts food stamps. We have about 6 or 7 orders from ROA each month; some people just write a check so the money can be used to donate food to those in need.
- Angel Tree sign up will be coming soon.

WELCA – Patricia Snow

- Claude Merritt, Dora Jackson and Patricia Snow will attend the Synod Convention Sept. 12 - 14.
- Circle meetings and Bible studies will resume in September.
- The Women's Retreat this year is scheduled for Sat., Sept. 27 as a free day-long retreat with no overnight stay. It will be held at a new retreat center in Stone Mountain, with a variety of activities. Attendees will be asked to bring a "box" lunch and then the shoe boxes will be wrapped for Operation Christmas Child.
- The Cluster Meeting was changed to Oct. 18 due to calendar conflicts.
- The Advent Breakfast will be planned for Dec. 6; Patricia will check the calendar and confirm.

Worship – Joyce Anderson

- We are still working with Owen toward completing the sound system and the recording system.
- Joyce is seeking comments regarding use of the Psalms in our worship.

Property – no report

Council Actions Taken By Email Vote (since last Council meeting)

The following actions were taken by Council via email due to time constraints involved with calling a special meeting:

- Approval of expenditure from reserves to donate to the LSG Rice Fund (July 3, 2008):

A member challenged Council to match a \$100 contribution by the member with a \$100 donation from reserves to the LSG Rice Fund. Council approved the expenditure unanimously.

- Approval of expenditure to repair right-side air conditioner unit in Sanctuary (July 10, 2008):

Pastor Randy explained our options for addressing the frequent failing of the right-side sanctuary air conditioner: 1) continue to spend \$500 every 1-2 months to recharge the freon in the unit, or 2) replace the cooling coils at an estimated cost of \$3,500. Kelly Kraus recommended Option 2 (funds to come from remaining Capital Campaign balance). Council approved the motion unanimously.

NOTE: it was subsequently discovered by the service technician that the coils could be repaired, thus the full repair cost was \$1,600 lower than estimated.

- Approval to provide a subsidy to Pastor Randy to supplement his health insurance (July 25, 2008):

Executive Committee recommended to Council that we provide a \$450 health insurance subsidy monthly to Pastor Randy through the remainder of 2008 to assist with additional health insurance, to begin immediately upon his enrollment in the plan of his choice. Council approved the recommendation unanimously.

NOTE: This subsidy amount was reached based on review of the cost of providing health insurance through the ELCA's plan. We will plan to incorporate this subsidy into Pastor Randy's 2009 compensation package.

The next Council meeting will be Monday, 9/15/08.

The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,
Carole Cooper, Council Secretary

MEMO

To: The Women of ROA

From: Dora Jackson

Our combined Circles of WELCA will be hosting a One-Day Retreat on Sept 27th at one of our Historic houses right here in the Village of Stone Mtn. Let us all plan to be together. EVERYONE BRING ONE is our motto. We urge you to look for the sign-up sheet in the narthex. Don't worry, you will be given the specifics but PLEASE reserve the date NOW.....There's an old Japanese saying- ----- 'Treasure every encounter because it won't happen again'

Thanks



NICHOLAS HOUSE MEAL SERVICE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We are in need of folks to prepare and serve dinners to residents of Nicholas House for September 2-5 (Tuesday through Friday). Contact Melanie Taylor Williams if you can help (404-378-4269).



14th Annual LSG Golf Classic

October 13, 2008

The Golf Club at Bradshaw Farm
Woodstock, GA

Shotgun Start 9:00a.m.

Per golfer \$125

For More Information Contact
Robert Jackson @ 678-686-9602
Email: rjackson@lsga.org

Registration Form: www.lsga.org

Sponsorship Opportunities: www.lsga.org/Golf.htm

SEPTEMBER CELEBRANTS

Birthdays

Jean Tshamala	September 3
David Snell	September 6
Amirah Adem	September 8
Bernardo Tshamala	September 9
Shenise Howard	September 11
Kevin Kraus	September 11
Danielle Olson	September 11
Ronald Dokie	September 12
Glen Miller	September 15
Annette Conner	September 16
Alta Washington	September 17
Kelly Kraus	September 18
Aletha Funderburk	September 21
Charlie Parr	September 21
Evelyn Ojukwu	September 22
Ellawease Trimble	September 23
David Cooper	September 26
Charles Bopp, Jr.	September 28
Cheryl Bopp	September 28
Peter Essicks	September 28
Claude Merritt	September 29

Wedding Anniversaries

Gary & Veronica Motley	September 15
Gladstone & Claudette Delapara	September 22

UPCOMING EVENTS

EVENT	DATE	TIME
Confirmation Class Kickoff	September 7	Following worship in the Lounge
Oktoberfest Helpers Meeting	September 7	Following worship in the Sanctuary
Sunday School Kickoff (Youth)	September 7 (TENTATIVE)	
Monday Bible Study resumes weekly	September 8	12:00 pm in the Lounge
Internship Committee Meeting	September 10	7:30 pm in the Lounge
Community Jazz Vespers	September 14	5:30 pm
Manna from Heaven Sunday (sandwich ministry)	September 21	
WELCA Retreat	September 27	Stone Mountain Village
Adult Sunday School Kickoff	September 28	8:45 am in the Lounge
Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Kickoff	September 28	
Oktoberfest	October 4	7:00 pm FOP Lodge, Stone Mountain
Stewardship Sunday	October 19	
Reformation Sunday/Friends and Family Day	October 26	10:00 am Worship (Reception following)
Angel Tree Kickoff	October 26	

Weekly Activities

Day/Time

Coffee Hour

Sunday @ 8:30 a.m.

Adult Sunday School

Sunday @ 8:45 a.m.

ROA Sunday School

Sunday @ 9:00 a.m.

Worship

Sunday @ 10:00 a.m.

Bible Study

Monday @ 12:00 noon

Other Activities

Lydia's Circle

3rd Tuesday of every month

Martha's Circle

3rd Wednesday of every month

Church Office Hours: Mon-Wed-Thurs, 9:00 am-1:00 pm

Email: rockofageselca@bellsouth.net

Minister Petersen's Hours and Contact Information:

Mon-Tues-Wed-Fri, 9:00 am-1:00 pm (Thursdays off)

Phone: 404-292-7888

Email: TrinaMarieP@yahoo.com

Pastor Randy's Hours and Contact Information:

Office hours vary (Fridays off)

Phone: 404-384-9762

Email: R111158@aol.com