

STORIES OF FAITH IN ACTION | 2009

A Celebration of Diversity Woodhaven, New York

Lutherans have a tradition of welcoming new neighbors with a covered dish and a smile.

At St. Luke Lutheran Church in Woodhaven, N.Y., Latino families moving into the neighborhood enjoy a different kind of welcome. **The congregation invites them to be part of an integrated faith community that celebrates the traditions of all its members.**



Many of the new members hail from a variety of Central and South American countries and from a Roman Catholic background. With them they bring rich liturgical traditions and a wealth of ideas for education, worship, and outreach.

New programs at St. Luke include a bilingual Sunday school, a bilingual newsletter, cooking classes, a popular annual Passion play, and Spanish-language worship.

St. Luke members believe the fresh infusion of ideas, traditions, and enthusiasm has revitalized the congregation. They are delighted to share their traditions grounded in Lutheran theology and a strong legacy of lay leadership. Declining membership in recent years had made closing their doors a real possibility. Now St. Luke is experiencing a remarkable renewal.

All agree that a shared commitment to unity through diversity was essential to St. Luke's rebirth. The sense of pride and accomplishment is tangible.

"We want to work together," says Jenny La Paz. "We are one family, not two families."

"I truly believe God didn't want us to shut our doors," says Roberta Detmers. "It's exciting."

Your financial support makes multicultural ministries such as St. Luke possible.

For more Stories of Faith in Action, visit www.elca.org/stories.
Do you have a story to share? E-mail us at stories@elca.org.



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

STORIES OF FAITH IN ACTION | 2009

A Celebration of Diversity Woodhaven, New York

Lutherans have a tradition of welcoming new neighbors with a covered dish and a smile.

At St. Luke Lutheran Church in Woodhaven, N.Y., Latino families moving into the neighborhood enjoy a different kind of welcome. **The congregation invites them to be part of an integrated faith community that celebrates the traditions of all its members.**



Many of the new members hail from a variety of Central and South American countries and from a Roman Catholic background. With them they bring rich liturgical traditions and a wealth of ideas for education, worship, and outreach.

New programs at St. Luke include a bilingual Sunday school, a bilingual newsletter, cooking classes, a popular annual Passion play, and Spanish-language worship.

St. Luke members believe the fresh infusion of ideas, traditions, and enthusiasm has revitalized the congregation. They are delighted to share their traditions grounded in Lutheran theology and a strong legacy of lay leadership. Declining membership in recent years had made closing their doors a real possibility. Now St. Luke is experiencing a remarkable renewal.

All agree that a shared commitment to unity through diversity was essential to St. Luke's rebirth. The sense of pride and accomplishment is tangible.

"We want to work together," says Jenny La Paz. "We are one family, not two families."

"I truly believe God didn't want us to shut our doors," says Roberta Detmers. "It's exciting."

Your financial support makes multicultural ministries such as St. Luke possible.

For more Stories of Faith in Action, visit www.elca.org/stories.
Do you have a story to share? E-mail us at stories@elca.org.



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.