

Lenten Parament Dedication March 6, 2011

“For all who are led by the Spirit are children of God.” - Romans 8:14

The paraments woven for the Lenten season for St. Matthew's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin during the Fall of 2010 were a collaborative effort of many. This project was sparked by movement of the Spirit in the summer of 2008 as some of our members spent time in retreat at Holden Village in the state of Washington. There in the large craft center some of the travelers wove and the Spirit moved. People asked, “Could we have a loom at St Matthew's?”



A conversation was had with John Paradowski, St. Matthew's music and worship minister, about the possibility of creating paraments. A need was determined for new paraments for Lent.

This project could not have started without the donation of a large floor loom by David Watry, brother-in-law of member Sandy Cristan. Paperwork found with the loom indicated it had been purchased for David's mother in 1951.

Weavers in the church were encouraged by Pastor Margaret Schoewe. Sandy Cristan and Marge Crawford formed the leadership team for this project. Bill and Georganne Gielow were identified by the ABK Weaving Center at Gaenslen School in Milwaukee as people who could assemble and “tune” the loom. Church tradition limits the colors appropriate to Lent. Barb Chappell, owner of Fiberwood Studio in Milwaukee, assisted with fiber selection and calculations to generate fabric for the paraments using one warp with three separate wefts. The Weaving Center and members of the Wisconsin Handweavers Guild identified resources for patterns and examples of weaving for worship spaces.

Carl Widder waxed the main beams when it was determined that they were too rough to handle the fiber. Bob Cristan was ever available to tune and adjust and provide a sounding board as “opportunities” presented themselves. Roylee Pflughoeft helped Sandy and Marge load the loom (a multiple-day project), Susan Buss, a weaving instructor at Gaenslen School, helped with tension of the threads. And many members, adults and children, helped with the weaving! Lots of interest was generated by locating the loom in the lobby of the Education Building at St. Matthew’s – a truly delightful space in which to spend time.

After two months of cleaning, assembling, shopping, measuring and loading the warp on the loom, the weaving began. Special thanks to:

Sandy Cristan	Nancy Herrell	Norma Winters
Marge Crawford	Kaye Hutter	Joyce Heinrich
Jill Due	Nancy Bowen	Sue Baker-Gill
Rosie Haas	Anneke Clement	Jim Clement
Joe Richter		

and Sunday School Classes of preschoolers, 4K, 5K, 5th, 6th, and 7th graders and their teachers, as well as others not specifically named.

Between August 20th and December 1st, more than 150 hours were spent planning, loading the loom, and weaving about six yards of material about 37” wide. It was a labor of love that grew more exciting each time a new weaving session began! Then the woven fabric was taken off the loom, an edge was machine sewn between the three different wefts, and the yardage cut apart. Sandy Cristan washed and blocked the yardage.

Weaving:

Practiced in Palestine from the earliest times. The loom in use was an upright frame, provided with a horizontal beam (1 Sam. 17:7) from which a row of threads, called the warp (Lev. 13:48) or web (Judg. 16:13) was hung. Each thread ran through a loop, by means of which it was moved backwards and forwards, while the shuttle, a wooden implement shaped like a boat, passed to and fro among the threads of the warp, winding off from itself, as it went, the thread called the woof (Lev. 13:48), which was at right angles with the warp. In Job 7:6 the shuttle is the emblem of the swift flight of man’s life.

A Description from a Bible Dictionary

*“Return to the Lord, your God,
for he is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love...” Joel 2:13*

Planners next needed to settle on a design. Lent can be a time of reflection and penance. Often a Lenten discipline is undertaken. Something is given up as a means of penance. But Lent is also a time of repentance, a time of turning away from something that is no longer life giving to open more fully to God’s way.

After some discussion, the group settled on a path returning to a cross. Pastor Margaret sketched her concept. Lois Bross and Marge Crawford shopped for appropriate appliqué fabric. Chuck Kraus made crosses for each piece in black metal. Christine Widder executed the concept, piecing the yardage for an altar cloth, and pulpit banner, a lectern banner, and three stoles for our pastors. She hand appliquéd the path and the cross, lined and finished the pieces. Her time is in addition to the hours identified above.

The money for this project was donated as a memorial to Keith Haberman by his wife Sue Haberman and their family. Keith died in 2010. Keith was a long-time member of St. Matthew’s who loved the process of sharing the peace and would have deeply appreciated the idea of many hands working together to create these beautiful paraments and stoles. Special thanks and appreciation go to Sue and her family for their support and interest in this project.

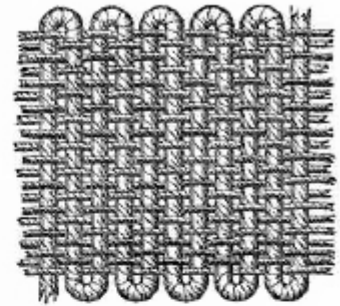
The symbol on the front of this brochure was created by Lisa Bergman combining the parament design and the theme of our Lenten worship – “Walking by Faith.”

*“For it was you who formed my inward parts;
you knit me together in my mother’s womb.
14 I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
Wonderful are your works;
that I know very well.” Psalm 139:13-14*

It was natural when working on these paraments to think of those beautiful words of Psalm 139. Knitting and weaving those paraments was an intimate work of love among the weavers, sewers, designers and metal worker. St. Matthew’s is blessed by these “wonderfully made” paraments.

A Weaving

*On a loom are we created
And have our breadth of days
Our web fashioned by unseen weaver's hands
Deftly spun we become the woof
Now the warp
Slowly turned into tapestry*



*The filaments of our lives entwine
Each strand touching others
Soft wool, hard jute, supple linen
A spectrum of color and feel
Amid the rough fiber find gold thread
Blended with those of common mettle*

*Each sees their texture but dimly
For we busy ourselves in being the yarn
Yet, in heaven's time is revealed an artful plan
A fabric woven from laughing hearts
From joyful love's embrace
And, too, of sorrow's tears
On the humble trail we trod*

*Shall we now lift our hearts
In sweet appreciation
For a life well lived,
For a life well spent;
Fashioned from recovered cloth
Into a weaving made divine.*

Ron Eklof 2008