Saint John Lutheran Church, Bellmore NY
A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

April 2020

Mission statement: *We are a community of faith that is: gathered for worship and fellowship, empowered by Scripture and the Sacraments, strengthened for service and sent forth as witnesses to the Good News of Jesus Christ.*

Join us for worship at 9:30 a.m. on Sunday mornings (currently online).

The Eagle

Pastor's Corner

We never thought since the last issue of *The Eagle*, we'd be in such very different circumstances. Here we are, sheltering in place, and taking the directives from the CDC and the NIH very seriously. Washing hands, keeping a distance of six feet away from each other or more. Disinfecting packages we may get in the mail, or wiping down food packages you've received as takeout. Vigilance is the word of the day. We will outsmart the virus. We have thousands of health care professionals all over the world who are working to mitigate the suffering of so many, and researchers and scientists who are working to find a vaccine.

We are learning to be church in a new way. Though our bodies are in very different places, we remain the Body of Christ; our hearts, minds and spirits remain together in Christ, united with him and with one another. Keep Michael Giordano, who is an ER nurse, and Michael Dwyer who is a hospital administrator, and all those other health care providers in your prayers that they stay healthy, as they are on the front lines in this battle. Lord, give them sweet relief as they exhaust themselves to help other people.

Sunday services are at 8:30 am, and I use FB Live. Then I'll go down to the office and meet those who wish to Zoom together the gospel, sermon and a discussion. Our new schedule for parish activities is:
TUESDAY @ 7 pm Stations of the Cross
WEDNESDAY @ 7pm Evening Vespers
FRIDAY @ 12 noon Bible Study
SUNDAY: Service @ 8:30 am FB LIVE, 9:30 am ZOOM gospel, sermon and discussion
For Zoom for your phone: you can download the ZOOM.us mobile app. Available on the Apple Store and Google Play. I've been in touch with those who don't have the internet, and they have been able to provide me an email address of a son or daughter, so they can stay in touch with us.

I encourage you to read my daily email; it has prayers, a daily song, a poem, and other ways to stay in touch and to keep your spirits up. If you have something you'd

Continued on page four

Staff at Saint John:

Pastor: Rev. Nancy Rakoczy
Office Manager: Ms. Janet Pescatore
Deacon: Ms. Charlene Drewes
Organist & Music Director: Ms. Quinn Anderson
Newsletter Editor: Ms. Jennifer Cline Sargent
Sexton: Ms. Kristina Kamps
Congregational President: Mr. Tom Sargent

Inside this issue

"No Greater Love" recap 2
Birthdays 2
Financial Update 2
Christian Ed 3
Social Ministry 3
Thank You To 3
Stations of the Cross 4

Special points of interest

- While many of our events had to be postponed or canceled, we will be able to gather once again in the near future. In the meantime, please support local businesses like Guy Anthony's and other restaurants by getting take out or buying gift certificates to use in the future. Give back the support we've enjoyed from our local merchants in the past.

“No Greater Love” performed at Saint John

The Xavier Company presented “No Greater Love - The Passion of Christ” in the sanctuary on Friday, March 6.

Under the direction of Carol Ferrone, the company of actors portrayed a moving and compelling version of Christ’s Passion. We had attendance from many of our congregation as well as some friends for a successful event.

“Your sun shall no more go down, or your moon withdraw itself; for the Lord will be your everlasting light, and your days of mourning shall be ended. Your people shall all be righteous; they shall possess the land forever. They are the shoot that I planted, the work of my hands, so that I might be glorified. The least of them shall become a clan, and the smallest one a mighty nation; I am the Lord; in its time I will accomplish it quickly.” — *Isaiah 60: 20-22*

April Birthdays

Happy birthday to:

6 Deanna & Oliver Paxton
9 Aria Kugler
12 Dawn Wickline
13 Stephanie Kugler
13 Nina Thilesen
17 Eric Sargent
17 Joseph Branciforti
24 Tom Smith
29 Lynda O’Keefe DiTuri
30 Kimberly Smith

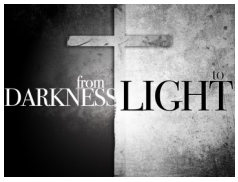
If you are celebrating in April and your name has been inadvertently left off the list, please contact the church office.

Financial Update

As of the last day of February 2020, we are running a deficit of ***-$5,210***. For the same period in 2019 the deficit was ***-$3,381.*** Unfortunately, our bills still need to be paid even though we are unable to meet for worship right now. During this period of social distancing due to the coronavirus, we encourage members to please mail your offering in to the office.

Thank you,

Jeana Dwyer & Ira Bergman, co-treasurers



God is Here

Our community is coming together in incredibly positive ways during this difficult time. Our neighbors who work in healthcare professions continue to go to work each day to care for their patients. Teachers are offering help to parents as they attempt to help their children navigate remote learning. Administrators, teachers and other school employees going to work to continue school lunch programs. Neighbors are reaching out to help and shop for seniors, trading jigsaw puzzles and books to help us fight cabin fever, and staff at local food pantries continuing to go out and serve those in need.

There are also many local merchants who are reaching out to help in new and creative ways during this crisis. Runway Couture is a clothing boutique on Merrick Rd. in Bellmore. The owner and her staff have asked healthcare professionals and medical suppliers to provide the necessary information in order to repurpose their skills and make masks instead of high fashion. Star Smiles on Merrick Rd. in Merrick reached out to a critical care nurse to donate several cases of masks for her to bring to work. R&R dental also donated medical supplies to this same nurse. Vincent and Gina Centauro own a contracting company in Franklin Square NY and started a charity called Rescuing Families, Inc. This charity has many of the highly sought after N95 masks healthcare professionals use. Rescuing Families has reached out to other local contractors with the goal of collecting 1,000 of these masks to donate to local hospitals.

These acts are the proof that even when we cannot worship together, even when things seem at their worst, God is always with us. Let us all continue to pray for everyone affected by this terrible pandemic and do our part to “flatten the curve.”

Submitted by Jeana Dwyer

Christian Education

The Sunday School teachers are working to pull together some lesson materials for the kids to do from home since we can't gather safely right now. Children thrive on routine and find safety in the familiar during difficult times, so we thought providing parents with some resources for Sunday school at home would help. You can also check out the synod's free children's app for Android and Apple by going to https://www.mnys.org/childrens-app/.

There will also be instructions for our Good Friday gathering coming to you via email. We're still working out the details, but stay tuned!

Social Ministry

Thanks for all the donations for Easter baskets that made it in during March before we were all isolated! Karen Brucia and Lilith LePan delivered over 100 lbs. of food to New Life Center, plus several gift cards. If you didn't have the chance to bring in food for the Easter baskets prior to the worship-from-home directive, save it and bring it to church as soon as we can safely gather again.

While you are staying home with your family, think about those around you. Practice social ministry from your couch by calling to check on neighbors who are elderly, have very small children or underlying health issues. See if they need groceries or other supplies. Draw pictures with rainbows (or have your kids do it) and post them on their front windows or doors. Draw a big rainbow with chalk on your sidewalk. If you're on Facebook, you can check out the group "Rainbows over Nassau and Suffolk Counties." It's a collection of photos of rainbows from people all over Long Island designed to remind us that there's a brighter tomorrow around the corner.

Council Notes

I hope this finds you adapting to life with social distancing as the new norm. For those of you who also have "online schooling" going on – I feel your pain. As Jennifer and I have said many times we believe in the "it takes a village" theory of education. The only problem is that right now we are the only villagers here!

Pastor Nancy continues to do her Facebook and Zoom services on Sunday mornings – as well as several other worship and prayer opportunities during the week. Watch for her emails and posts and join in. For the 9:30 a.m. service when our organist, Quinn Anderson, is able to play from home, I have asked her to avoid using the following hymns until further notice: *Breath on me, Breath of God; Precious Lord, Take my Hand; Just a Closer Walk with Thee; and Gather Us In.*

SPEAKING OF SERVICES: EASTER SUNDAY! We are inviting all members of Saint John to join with others in the synod to "worship virtually as one congregation" with Bishop Egensteiner presiding on Sunday, April 12 at 10:00 a.m. You can find the service on the Metro NY Synod Facebook page and YouTube channel. (NOTE: The executive committee of the church council decided in light of all the weekday services that Pastor Nancy is providing that she will have Easter Sunday off and join with us all virtually to worship with the bishop too).

APRIL COUNCIL MEETING: Due to the continued state of emergency and calls for social distancing, the executive committee (Pastor Nancy, Tom Sargent, Margaret Neverka, Jeana Dwyer, and Lori Vanderwaren) will hold a digital check-in meeting of the council officers. There will be no regular meeting of all council members.

Finally, please continue to reach out and stay in contact with each other. I am in regular contact with the bishop's office and the synod vice president. And please, if you are able, send your offering/giving to the church office so we can keep up with the bills that still come in! Be well – stay safe – and go wash your hands! - *Tom Sargent, president*

A Note of Gratitude

Thank you to…

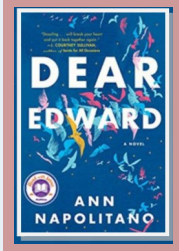
* Pastor Nancy, Carol Glen and Lori and Eric Vanderwaren for distributing food for the St. Patrick's Day dinner. A BIG thank you to AJ Orlich for being gracious and generous as always. Stay tuned for how much we raised for lintel repair.
* Quinn Anderson for agreeing to play music for our 9:30 a.m. Zoom services.
* Pastor Nancy for putting our worship online and providing other resources.

Please hold our members and friends in your prayers who are infected or healing from the coronavirus, those who were already battling health issues and are more vulnerable and those who work in the health care field including Michael Dwyer, Michael Giordano and Pam Drewes.

Businesses who closed to protect public health, putting social responsibility over the bottom line, will suffer. Local stores that are able to stay open are still struggling. Let's try to be kind and support one another in any way we can.

BOOK CLUB

The next selection for Book Club is "Dear Edward" by Ann Napolitano, the story of a 12-year-old boy who is the sole survivor of a plane crash.



You now have more time to read it, most libraries are offering digital downloads.

Stations of the Cross

Pastor Nancy sent out a Power Point and Word document with the fourteen stations of the cross.

Jesus Falls the First Time. Eric Gill, 1917, Wood engraving on paper, Tate Gallery

Some people find using them for meditation and prayer is helpful during Lent, particularly this year when we are additionally challenged but not being able to gather together.

Pastor is also posting them outside church for people who are getting out to exercise or walk dogs to see.

Lenten Services

like to share, by all means send it to me and I'll send it around.

Palm Sunday is just around the corner, with Holy Week and Easter following. I will keep you informed, though I am inclined to do something, even if it's only via Facebook Live. I may light the fire for the Easter Vigil from the balcony at the entrance of the church as the sun is rising.

2 Peter 1: 17-19 "For [Jesus] received honor and glory from God the Father when that voice was conveyed to him by the Majestic Glory, saying, 'This is my Son, my Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.' We ourselves heard this voice come from heaven, while we were with him on the holy mountain.
So we have the prophetic message more fully confirmed. You will do well to be attentive to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts."

We are attentive to the sound of Christ's voice, our Good Shepherd who leads us forward into a place where the day dawns and the morning star rises in all of our hearts. Be at peace, dear people. Be safe. We will stay in touch.

Deadline for the next issue of The Eagle is April 17, 2020. Please email articles to jcsargent@optonline.net.

Find us on:

https://stjohnbellmore.org/
E-mail: stjbellmore@gmail.com
Fax: 516-785-4331
Phone: 516-785-4331

Bellmore, NY 11710
2150 Centre Avenue

Saint John Lutheran Church

PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE