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

July 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

In this moment in history, what can we do as good, Lutheran Christians to reach out a hand of friendship to our friends, neighbors and colleagues of color? One thing we can do is initiate difficult or uncomfortable conversations with them about race. Sometimes (often?) we don't even know how or where to begin! We are people of good will, yet we can be tongue-tied when it comes to these critical but necessary conversations.

I am thankful there are now three conversations on YouTube, called "Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man" hosted by ex-NFL player, Emmanuel Acho, in which he and his guest tread together into the deep conversational waters of race relations. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rRcyq-79HeY As a service, he models along with his guests how to ask and answer the difficult questions. He says his motive for hosting these interviews is, "To increase your level of understanding and so you can increase your level of compassion and lead ultimately to change." We get a larger compassion, and a bigger heart, when we take these conversational risks. He offers a safe space for these conversations, and answers questions from white friends about black people. The video is a good way for us to study the questions and answers, then use it as a model for when we can have our own perhaps overdue conversations with our friend who is a person of color. Like his first interviewee actor, Matthew McConaughey, we can even come prepared with our questions on index cards.

There is an urgency in this moment in history, where taking risks in conversations can lead to grace-filled change. In Bishop Egensteiner's latest video message of June 19, he asks that we not let this moment of history pass us by: *"Can we walk this humble walk with God together more and more into advocacy for the broken world? Can we use our collective voice and our baptismal calling from Jesus to 'love one another as I have loved you'? To bring about a revolution of hope? Can we set aside in trust and dependence*

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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

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Special points of interest

- Stores and restaurants are beginning to slowly open back up. Let's remember our local neighbors and shop there first to help support our community. Many local businesses are still struggling to stay afloat with the necessary restrictions in place to prevent another wave of COVID-19.
  Shop local!

Memorials & Donations

Given by Karen & Tom Brucia, in memory of:
Mary Brick - lintel repair
Ed Finn - lintel repair
Walter Fricke - lintel repair
Lillian Guise - social ministry fund

Given by Charlene, Pam, Gerard, Adrienne & Cole Drewes, in memory of:
Gerda Drewes - deficit reduction

Given by Bunny Finn, in memory of:
Eddie Finn - current

Pastoral Acts

Funeral
John Richard Green
Wednesday, June 24, 2020
T. F. Walker Funeral Home
Merrick, NY

Given by Margaret & Neil Erath:

A donation was designated to current

Please note that we are catching up on memorials and donations after not being in the church office.

"Let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action."
— I John 3:18

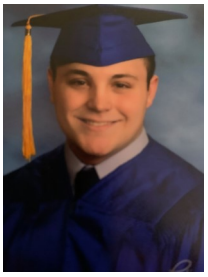
July Birthdays

Happy birthday to:

3 Thomas Ziminski
6 Cole Drewes
9 Margaret Neverka
13 Collin Roulston
22 Kelcie Roulston
25 Christa Tuccillo
25 Elizabeth Kamelhar
26 Nancy Dineen
27 Erin Dwyer
29 Gavin Mooney

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

News, Notes & Greetings



Special congratulations to Nicholas Harper on his graduation from Bethpage High School. He will start studies at Farmingdale College in the fall.

From Soup to Nuts Ministry:

Dear Pastor Rakoczy, WELCA and members of the Social Ministry committee:

Socially distanced line for lunches.

On behalf of the volunteers and guests we serve at Soup to Nuts soup kitchen, thank you for once again coming to our assistance during these unusual days. In lieu of your monthly (every second Wednesday) entrée, we received your very generous gift of $100. Saint John helps us immensely.

On June 1, we returned to providing a bagged lunch on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Your contribution will be invested directly in basic essentials for take-home lunches.

All of us involved with the program thank you very much,

Marion Hart, Monday volunteer and treasurer

Christian Education

Everyone is enjoying summer break from Christian Education after the confirmation class finished up its last two meetings in June. We'll hold off on scheduling the annual Christian Education meeting until we see what guidelines we will need to follow in September. If we can't safely gather, arrangements will be made for materials to be delivered via email or other digital method. Enjoy the great outdoors, since that is safe with a mask!

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE who donated food, bags, baby clothes, diapers, food store gift cards, and a cash contribution. The total amount of food collected for the New Life Center was 300 pounds. Big thanks also to Tom, Eric and Irina Sargent for collecting the food from everyone at church and to Karen Brucia for delivering it!

Council Notes

I hope this issue of "The Eagle" finds you all healthy and enjoying the warmer weather in safe ways! Our last meeting of the church council was held on June 16, during which time we discussed and voted upon several items of significance:

- **Deacon Charlene Drewes** was elected the new co-treasurer. Along with our other co-treasurer, Ira Bergman, she has already put in place some protocols, checks, and balances to ensure our finances and bank accounts are safe and secure. Thank you, Deacon Charlene (and Ira)!
- **Karen Brucia** was elected the new recording secretary, and will be keeping tabs on all giving and donations coming in. Thank you, Karen!
- We also had a good discussion about the potential for outside worship, possibly in the parking lot of a neighboring house of worship. The consensus of the council was that we did NOT want to sit in our cars in the sun during this summer season, nor did we want to idle those cars with the air conditioner on and pollute the environment with our exhaust. Coupled with Pastor Nancy's upcoming vacation (July 3-19), this gives us a few more weeks to look at options.

We are continuing to discuss future in-person worship, but only when it is safe to do so. Thanks to all of you who responded to the recent survey gauging comfort levels in returning to in-person worship (with restrictions). An overwhelming number of you replied (for various reasons), "not just yet." We are going to continue the discussion, and again, a huge thanks for Margaret and John Neverka for continuously updating how guidelines from the Governor's office, the Bishop's office, and the CDC apply to Saint John. We will hopefully have some more ideas as we get through the summer and COVID-19 numbers (hopefully) continue to decline in our area. Stay tuned – and be safe.

- Tom Sargent, president

A Note of Gratitude

Thank you to…

* Karen and Tom Brucia for counting the offering and depositing it at the bank.
* Tom Selvaggio for securing the PPP loan for Saint John. That was a herculean effort!
* Margaret and John Neverka for their continued work on applying the state and local safety guidelines to Saint John.
* Deacon Charlene Drewes for agreeing to work as co-treasurer with Ira Bergman and Karen Brucia for stepping in as recording secretary.

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 or as first responders.

Let's try to be kind and support one another in any way we can. Reach out via phone or email to say hello, send a card or note or have the kids do a drawing to cheer someone up.

WATERMELON PIZZA

Cool, delicious & perfect for the 4th!

Ingredients: 1/2 cup ricotta, 1/4 cup softened cream cheese, 1 Tbsp honey, 1/2 tsp vanilla, 1" thick watermelon slice, fresh berries, mint & toasted coconut for garnish.

In a small bowl, mix ricotta, cream cheese, honey, and vanilla together until combined. Spread mixture onto slice of watermelon and top with berries, mint, and toasted coconut. Serve immediately.

This recipe is from Good Housekeeping, last month's was from Janet Pescatore.

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upon God our own fears, our own priorities, our own privilege, for the sake of the other, for the sake of our brown and black siblings, for the sake of LGBQTIA+ for the sake of all God's children?

This is the moment God has given us. We dare not let it pass us by! We are the church, the people of God for this time! We, the members of the Metropolitan New York Synod of the ELCA, are the city on the hill. On this Juneteenth, may God guide us to make aspiration reality. To make hope realized. To be together despite the rough edges we bring into this relationship, to be together the beloved community, to join in a reimagined and reconstructed mainstream with those who are marginalized and rejected. Because that's where Jesus is."

Jesus always leads us. He always goes before us. Let us embark on these difficult but necessary conversations, knowing he is there guiding us into a greater communion with him and with each other.

Pastor Nancy Rakoczy

Summer Worship Opportunities

Pastor Nancy will be on vacation from July 3 - 19. We do have coverage pastors for this time period; should an emergency arise or if you need pastoral care, please contact Tom Sargent or Margaret Neverka. They can put you in touch with whomever is covering that week.

For worship, the Metro New York synod has many churches with access online, you can look at https://www.mnys.org/about/congregations-digital-services-of-the-word/ to find one.

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Find us on:

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

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