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

August 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

"He said, 'Go out and stand on the mountain before the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by.' Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of sheer silence." - 1 Kings 11-12

Elijah was a mighty prophet of Yahweh, whose relationship with Yahweh gave him the authority and strength to tear down the altars to the false god, Baal (and got him in trouble with Queen Jezebel, too). In this passage from 1 Kings, Yahweh has him go to a mountain, and as God passed by, Elijah noted that God was not in the mighty, howling, wind. Neither was the Lord in the stupefying earthquake, or a raging fire, all events that can terrify and overwhelm a mortal. Where was Yahweh? In the "sound of sheer silence," often translated as "the still, small voice." In none of these huge natural events could God be found. Instead, God chose smallness and stillness in which to reveal God's self.

We progress through the summer, with the global pandemic COVID-19 still ravaging the South and the West, the numbers climbing every day. Here in the Northeast, we continue to wear our masks and practice social distancing, in order to keep each other safe, and our numbers low. Parents everywhere are wondering and debating about schools opening or staying closed or doing both in-school and online instruction. This is also a summer of peaceful protests and civil unrest, and after watching or reading even some of the latest numbers and statistics (it's hard to get away from them) we may wonder where is God? Where can God be found?

I invite you to take pleasure in some of the beaches

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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!

ELCA Youth Gathering Update

After much prayer and consideration, it was decided to postpone next summer's ELCA Youth Gathering to 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The 2022 ELCA Youth Gathering will be held July 24-28, 2022, in Minneapolis, with the two pre-events, the Multicultural Youth Leadership Event (MYLE) and the tAble, scheduled for July 21-24, 2022.

The ELCA Youth Gathering organizers give thanks for your prayers and patience as they worked through the details with partners in Minneapolis and across the country. They hope that by postponing the Gathering for a year, individuals and congregations will feel more comfortable and prepared to attend the Gathering in 2022.

For more information about the 2022 Gathering, please visit elca.org/YouthGathering/COVID19. The website and social media will be updated as more details become available.

They look forward to seeing youth to experience the boundlessness of God in Minneapolis in 2022!

#ELCAYG2022

"Love one another as I have loved you."
~ John 15:12

August Birthdays

Happy birthday to:

7 Sue Bogen
19 Hope Leys
22 Kylie Goodlin
31 Charlotte Mooney

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

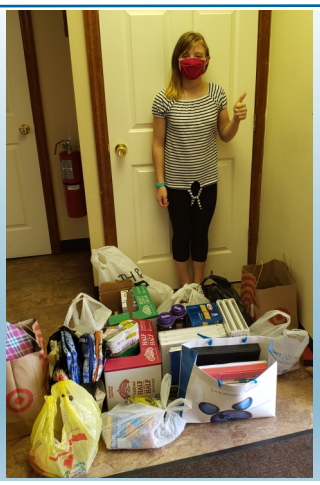
Garden at St. Francis

St. Francis Episcopal Church is looking for volunteers to help in its community garden. Located at 1692 Bellmore Ave., Bellmore NY 11710, people are invited to come down each Monday, Wednesday, & Friday from 7:00 am until 10:00 am for the volunteer hours. They also need volunteers to help run the Farm Stand on Sundays from 11:00 am until 2:00 pm. If you can help with the Farm Stand, please contact Annie McPartlin at anniemcp@verizon.net. You can pick up fresh vegetables for your table even if you can't volunteer. FreshConnect and NY State Farmer's Market checks are accepted, which is handy information to pass on to anyone who might be in need of fresh veggies.

Finally, if you're interested in helping take care of the chickens, please contact the pastor, Rev. Br. Chris McNabb at br.christopher.mcnabb@gmail.com. Confirmands can use these opportunities for service hours, please keep track so you can chart them at church.

Christian Education

Everyone is enjoying summer break from Christian Education. We are still holding 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 and loads of school supplies for the New Life Center drive. Karen Brucia reports that she delivered 67 pounds of school supplies! Big thanks also to Tom and Irina Sargent for collecting the donations from everyone at church.

Council Notes

Hello All!

I hope this issue of "The Eagle" finds you all safe, healthy, and well.

It is tough to imagine how different things are this summer from previous ones. Cancelled vacations, socially distant gatherings (maybe), and "seeing" friends via Zoom and not in person. We love to shake hands, we love to hug—and it really takes a toll when those things are difficult (if not impossible) to do. My family has always tried to make at least one trip each month up to Southbury, Connecticut to visit my parents, who are both in their late 80s. Since March, Irina and I have made one trip (that's it) where we sat in the backyard while my parents spoke to us through their screen door while staying inside. Tough, as a word, does not even come close to describing our lives right now.

On the Saint John front, I want to thank all of you who took time out to bring food and school supplies for our latest drive for New Life Center in Uniondale. It amazes me just how many more people are in need, although it does not surprise me just how well the members of our church stepped up to help. A huge shout out to Karen Brucia for helping to make this happen—and for delivering all the donations when complete.

The officers of the council continue to discuss and consider potential options for worship. As I shared last month, the council was in agreement that we did not want to sit in cars in a parking lot in the blazing heat, nor did we want to sit in idling cars with a/c on and exhaust spewing into the air. We all look forward to gathering together once again—when it is safe to do so.

Finally, thanks to all those who participated in the bishop's advisory panel discussions earlier this month. I anticipate word from the bishop's office soon.

- Tom Sargent, president

A Note of Gratitude

Thank you to…

* Karen and Tom Brucia for counting the offering and depositing it at the bank.
* Margaret and John Neverka for their continued work on applying the state and local safety guidelines to Saint John.
* Karen Brucia for making the arrangements with New Life for the food and school supply drive as well as delivering it.
* John Neverka for keeping an eye on the church grounds while we are absent.

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.

SCARLET SIPPER

A refreshing drink in the heat.
Ingredients: 4 cups of cranberry-apple juice, chilled, 1 cup orange juice, chilled, 1/4 cup lemon juice, chilled, 1 liter of ginger ale, chilled. Optional: fresh cranberries, orange and lemon wedges.

In a pitcher, combine all juices then stir in ginger ale. Serve over ice, garnish with cranberries and orange and lemon wedges, if desired.

This recipe is from *Taste of Home*.

Worship Opportunities

Here is the weekly schedule for online worship:

Sunday mornings—8:30 am Facebook live, 9:30 am Zoom

Tuesdays—Lectio Divina 7:00 pm on Zoom

Wednesdays—Vespers 7:00 pm on Facebook Live

Fridays—Bible study 12 pm on Zoom

Pastor sends the Zoom links out ahead of time. You can watch live on Facebook or catch up at anytime, it's recorded and accessible on our Facebook page.

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of Long Island, where the mighty ocean in its deepest stateliness speaks eloquently of God's power and majesty. Before there was human life on this earth, the oceans and their tides told silently of God's power to create such thundering beauty. The ocean voices an ancient language not just of power, but of God's providence and abundance. In the opening chapters of the Bible, the book of Genesis tells us that God wanted to share this beautiful world he had made, "God saw that it was good. So, God created human beings." Though we continue to struggle with the consequences of this global pandemic, we are nonetheless surrounded by the goodness and beauty of God.

At sunrise and sunset, sky and water merge in shimmering hues of turquoise and aqua, and the sun is a huge, blazing, orange ball. In the rising and setting of the sun, we stand in awe, and God speaks silently to our hearts.

Let's take the time out of our day to pause, thank, and acknowledge that our God reigns over our lives and into eternity. *Pastor Nancy Rakoczy*

Deadline for the next issue of The Eagle is August 21. 2020. Please email articles to jcsargent@optonline.net.

Saint John Lutheran Church
2150 Centre Avenue
Bellmore, NY 11710
Phone: 516-785-4331
Fax: 516-785-4331
E-mail: stjbellmore@gmail.com
https://stjohnbellmore.org/

Find us on:

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