



THE BELL TOWER



“PROCLAIM GOOD NEWS TO THE WORLD
JESUS LIVES OUR GOD REIGNS”

Vol. 62 No. 1

East Rockaway, N.Y.

January 2022



Welcome Back

*Come on back! Sunday services
have room for many more.*

*Please join us. Reservations are
NOT required. So just come on over.*

Let's worship



Dates to Remember:

- February 2...Groundhog Day
- February 12...Lincoln's Birthday
- February 14...Valentine's Day
- February 21...Presidents Day
- February 22...Washington's B-day
- March 2...Ash Wednesday
- March 13...Begin Daylight Savings
- March 17...St. Patrick's Day
- March 20...First Day of Spring
- April 17...Easter Sunday

Lay Readers and Ushers are needed for Sunday Worship. Please sign up on the sheet in the Hallway or speak with Maryanne (516-599-5768) in the office or Stephanie Maddolone (516-355-1970). Lay Readers will be required to assist with the service and read two (2) Bible passages for that Sunday. Please speak to Pastor Mark for further directions.

OFFICE HOURS: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 9:00 A.M. to 12:00 Noon (Closed Thursdays)

The Thrift Shop is OPEN!! Fridays and Saturdays 10:00 AM-2:00 PM

Enough Already!

Last year, we spent New Year's Eve at home, most of us masked and wondering when the new vaccine would be available so we could come out of quarantine and begin our lives again. This year, we're in the same place; because variants of the virus; or because we are trying to find tests or get booster shots. Many of our children are a year or more behind at school, and the hospitals are full to overflowing once again. My son James took a part time job at a hospital and has worked six days a week since he started because of the number of staff knocked out by the virus, not to mention the soaring number of colleagues that, burned up and burned out, have left the field, never to return. It's all COVID all the time and we're all sick of it. It's hard to find a news report, an article or a church sermon that doesn't come down to COVID. Even those of us who at first carried on as usual have had to bow to the disease, if for no other reason than to ensure the safety of children or immune-compromised family or to go back to work. We're burnt out and we're maybe a little scared. But here we are.

The people we trust to lead often seem as confused as we are and that is as infuriating as it is terrifying, but that's the hard reality of the disease we are all facing these days. So, the question we might ask ourselves is this: how long will we allow this to go on? Because we can stop this if we are all willing to get over ourselves, remember who and whose we are, and bend ourselves toward the greater good. It's past time to stop throwing stones and to start proclaiming our allegiance to the Gospel with our voices and our deeds, by living the Word we pray and preach on Sunday mornings. This is not a red or blue, conservative, or liberal issue. It is a spiritual issue and one that calls us to remember what Jesus asks of us, as per Matthew 25, when he welcomes into that kingdom

those to whom he says, "I was hungry, and you gave me food, I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me. I was naked and you gave me clothing, **I was sick, and you took care of me**, I was in prison, and you visited me.... Truly I tell you, just as you did to the least of these who are member of my family, you did it to me."

We cannot, as the apostle James wrote, pretend to love God whom we have not seen while not loving our neighbor whom we have seen, and it is time for us to recognize our responsibility to one another as human beings as well as children of God because as Jesus teaches us, they are one and the same. Love is an assumption of obligation and responsibility, and like it or not, that means we are our brother and our sister's keeper. We are responsible for the healing of our broken world, and that means stopping this misguided refusal to cooperate with simple health guidelines that is overburdening our health systems, stalling any progress we might have made on this global pandemic and costing lives, not just for those afflicted with Corona Virus, but for those thousands dying because medical resources are all being diverted to treat unvaccinated patients who end up in with life-threatening levels of COVID. Remember polio, measles, mumps, smallpox? They are gone because we worked together to: get vaccinated, to devise and follow health rules, and just as importantly, because the nations of the world decided they needed to put down the swords for a moment and solve this universal problem.

Jesus calls us to one prime allegiance: the law of love. That love is fulfilled in compassion and the communion of God's children, a community that in Acts is said to have shared all things in common, a family where each receives

according to their need, not simply of material goods, but of the spiritual, emotional and other kinds of support to know the healing, and well-being they need to thrive as per the will of the Christ. There is no “every man for himself,” no human being is an island- that is an illusion that the enemy has been pushing since Adam and Eve. We need each other, we are bound together, like it or not, and as we struggle and resist those bonds, we are not only tearing ourselves apart, but we are also cutting ourselves off from God’s love, the nourishment we need to fulfill our destiny as the kingdom of God.

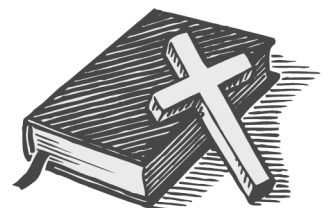
It’s all part of the great democratic process to disagree, just as it is part of the human process. But love calls us to do so in the spirit of mutuality, and of grace, and when we learn to do that, perhaps we will finally beat this pandemic once and for all. God also calls us to uphold the sanctity of life, and to do what we can to ensure an abundant and healthy life for all people, not just ourselves. That’s why we get vaccinated, get boosted, wear our masks and also, advocate, donate, whatever it takes, to get vaccines to those countries which don’t have adequate supplies so they can get their folks vaccinated too. Our lives are not our property, they are sacred trusts that God has given us to

share and to steward for the benefit of God’s entire creation. In the book of Jeremiah, the oppressed people of Israel asked God what they should do about their exile. How they should live amongst these people that they could not see as kin because of their differences and their history. God answered them: “build houses and live in them, plant gardens and eat what they produce... and work for the welfare of the place where I the Lord have placed you, because in its welfare, you will find your welfare.” We’ve already lost 800,000 of our moms and dads, our siblings, our grands, our kids. This nonsense needs to stop.

The only way to defeat evil permanently is with love, as Dr Martin Luther king Jr said: “evil cannot drive out evil, only love can do that.” We need more of that love, for ourselves, for each other, for the One whose love created us and loves us still, anyway. It’s a new year, a new chance to do things better. We have a chance to rise above our petty differences for the good of all and to lead others to do the same. Let’s do it!

Yours in Christ

Pastor Mark



Bethany Bell Tower ...is a monthly publication of

BETHANY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

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***Statements made in editorials, signed articles or letters, do not represent an official position in this church.
Persons with differing opinions are invited to expres their views in letters to the editor.***

Are you less than perfect? Welcome! We are a community or imperfect people (including but not restricted to): squirming children and their harried parents, happy and sad people, people with challenges, seniors, young people, middle aged folks, people of every race, poor people, rich people, in between people, LGBT and straight people, true believers, seekers, agnostics, odd and ordinary people, extraordinary people, un-churched and unsure people, people with disabilities, hypocrites, saints, sinners and everybody else. Because no matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here just as you are!



Greetings from your Bethany Moderator

In peace, Janet Moser, Bethany Moderator

January Greetings

Sometimes it's really hard to love January. After all, Christmas has passed, New Year's is history, and it's cold and dark. But wait! It doesn't have to be all gloom and doom. Perhaps we just need to adjust our attitude. Change our perspective.

Perspective – one definition being “A particular attitude toward or way of regarding something; a point of view.” *Let's give it a go...*

- ♦ Did you know that from Christmas day to the day I'm writing this, January 8th, we have gained ten minutes of daylight? Aha!
- ♦ Did you know that winter can be the warmest season – what with all those heavy sweaters, woolen scarves, toasty mittens, and hot cocoa? Aha again!

If that doesn't quite do it for you, remember this – it is summer right now in half the world!

Perspective....

My first introduction to the wonderful story below was in a children's book called **Zen Shorts** by Jon Muth. I don't know if the kids really got it but it had quite an impact on me.

See what you think...

Once upon a time there was an old farmer who had worked his crops for many years. One day his horse ran away. Upon hearing the news, his neighbors came to visit. “Such bad luck,” they said sympathetically.

“Maybe,” the farmer replied.

The next morning the horse returned, bringing with it three other wild horses. “How wonderful,” the neighbors exclaimed.

“Maybe,” replied the old man.

The following day, his son tried to ride one of the untamed horses, was thrown, and broke his leg. The neighbors again came to offer their sympathy on his misfortune.

“Maybe,” answered the farmer.

The day after, military officials came to the village to draft young men into the army. Seeing that the son's leg was broken, they passed him by. The neighbors congratulated the farmer on how well things had turned out.

“Maybe,” said the farmer.

--Zen Parable

So now do you find January to be a most wonderful month?

“Maybe”



FROM THE EDITOR:

This is just another example of Bethany's generosity and selflessness. Here is Maryanne Walling, our church secretary, with a myriad of toys collected for needy children.



Also, Dave Donovan getting ready to drop off a generous supply of food to the food pantry of LI Council of Churches in Freeport. There are many others who help with this endeavor as well. They include Joann Wright and Barbara Valis.

There are also a number of volunteers who help with the Thriftique every week also. We will try to get a list of name by next month's issue.



The Thrift Shop is OPEN!!

Fridays and Saturdays 10:00 AM-2:00 PM

FROM THE TRUSTEES:

We are still looking for a tenant for the space downstairs. We did have one inquiry from a soup kitchen/food pantry organization but it did not work out.

The Trustees are in constant touch and we are keeping Bethany operational. The Omicron variant of COVID-19 has been adding some difficulties but we will persevere and prevail.

TAKE THE "TACKLE HUNGER CHALLENGE".



Bethany will be collecting \$1 bills and cans of Soup on Souper Bowl Sunday, February 13, 2022.

In 1990, Souper Bowl of Caring began with a simple prayer from a single youth group:

"Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us be mindful of those without a bowl of soup to eat."

Since then, more than \$170 million has been generated for local charities across the country through Souper Bowl of Caring. It has become a powerful movement that transforms the time around the Big Game into the nation's largest celebration of giving and caring for those in need. Through this mission, people learn they can make a positive difference in the world as they collect food, raise money and serve at hunger-relief charities and show caring and compassion in local communities across the country. Share in God's love for our neighbors in need and give generously on Souper Bowl Sunday. All of the donations collected will go directly to our Souper Bowl of Caring Charity of Choice:

LONG ISLAND COUNCIL OF CHURCHES
230 Hanse Avenue, Freeport, NY 11520

The Thrift Shop is OPEN!! Fridays and Saturdays 10:00 AM-2:00 PM

TROOP 121

Troop 121 closed out the year with a Christmas Party in the church's gymnasium on December 13th. We had a pot luck dinner that included the Scout's families and the food was delicious! The Scouts also had a Secret Santa gift exchange and everyone had a great time.

The evening closed out with a Scoutmaster minute which answered an age old question kids and adults have asked for ages. Is Santa... a Boy Scout? He certainly holds all the traits of our Scout Law. He is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent. The evidence leaves little doubt that Santa is indeed a Boy Scout.

This month's topic is Cooking in our troop. We are learning how to be clean with our food and what a good meal consists of. For example, for dinner you should have a protein, vegetables, and dairy. We are learning to make more creative meals and different ways of cooking them.

The older boys attended Cold Weather Camping Training where they learned about surviving in the cold weather. Some things they learned about are recognizing and treating hypothermia, dressing and staying comfortable for colder temperatures, food to avoid and food to plan for in cold weather, how to make quinzees, (snow caves), and wilderness survival.

Our previous Scoutmaster, Nick S., has been honored with the E.R. Herald's "2021 Person of the Year" award and was presented with a certificate from the Mayor during the January 10th Board of Trustees Meeting. There was an article in the Herald highlighting many of his contributions to Scouting and the community. We are very proud and happy for him. Congratulations Nick! (See complete article below.)

BULLY!

(For more information, please visit the troop's website: <http://troop121ny.org>)

BOY SCOUT TROOP 121

TODAY'S YOUTH...TOMORROW'S LEADERS



By [Mike Smollins](#)

Whether it's doing nearly everything to help shape Boy Scouts members as a youth leader, aiding his elderly neighbor or helping others around the village, Lynbrook resident Nicholas Sincinito has been there for his community time and time again.

For his efforts, Sincinito is the Lynbrook/East Rockaway Herald's 2021 Person of the Year.

Sincinito, who turned 56 on Monday, has been involved with Boy Scout Troop 121 in East Rockaway for more than two decades, mainly serving as scoutmaster, and despite being diagnosed with esophageal cancer more than two years ago, he still remains active in scouting as an assistant scoutmaster and puts on clinics to teach scouts from other troops various skills.

"If you call, he comes," Troop 121 Secretary Pam Makaea said. "If you can't call, he'll get to you. Everywhere he goes, it's like, what doesn't he do? That's the type of person he is, whatever he can do to help. When you're around Nick, and everyone is around Nick, he's the type of person everyone is happy to be around. He's comfortable to be with. When you leave Nick, you feel good. You have a smile when you leave him. He says, once you're here, you're family."

Sincinito lives in his childhood home in the village. He was the youngest of three sons of Frank and Annie Sincinito, and attended Lynbrook District schools with his older brothers, Andrew, who died in 1999, and Frank. His father was a Pearl Harbor survivor, which gave Sincinito a sense of patriotism. After high school, he began a career in publishing, and despite

his illness, he still works at Minuteman Press in Rockville Centre.

In the late 1980s, Sincinito met his future wife, Sheila, and they wed more than 30 years ago on May 11, 1991. They have two sons, Sean and Colin, who each graduated from Lynbrook High School and are the fourth generation to live in the Sincinito home in the village.

When his sons were young, Sincinito became a Cub Scout master at his wife's urging, and quickly found that he enjoyed it, Sheila said. He moved up to Boy Scouts with his sons, and stayed long after they finished scouting because he enjoyed it so much.

"He blames me," Sheila said with a laugh. "It goes back with my brothers being involved in scouting and my father, and when I had boys, I knew the program was good from seeing my brothers go through it . . . He was always very diligent, and he's always loved it. He loves taking the boys camping and teaching skills to them."

Sincinito worked with other packs and taught them skills like tying knots, working with tools and cooking, and he organized the Pinewood Derby for Nassau County's Iroquois District. He eventually was inducted into the Order of the Arrow, which is a national camping honor society that recognizes scouts and scouters (adults) who best exemplify the scout oath and law in their daily lives. He also was inducted into the Sagamore Service Council, which is a group of devoted scouters who pass on a lifetime of leadership skills and training to new generations of scouts and scout leaders, among his many accolades.

Steve Alberts said he was the Iroquois District commissioner when he first met Sincinito more than 20 years ago when the latter was a Cub Scout master, and they quickly became friends.

"He's the type of guy that if you need something, he doesn't know how to say no," said Alberts, who is now a district committee member. "He was always there for the boys in his unit, his co-leaders. Any time we needed something on the district or the council level, you ask Nick, he'd say sure. I can't say enough about Nick. He's earned basically every award that could be achieved by a leader through service to his troop, the district and the council. I'm pleased to call him a friend and a fellow scouter."

Sincinito served as scoutmaster for nine years until stepping down in September and inducting Paul Gish as the new leader while he stayed on as an assistant. In addition to scouting, Sincinito has remained active in his community. He is quick with his snow blower to help his neighbors after winter storms, he helps them with flat tires and dead car batteries, and he aided his neighbor, Ruth Green, who lived in the neighborhood for more than 70 years, by changing batteries in the thermostat, installing and uninstalling her air conditioner each year, helping her move items and more, until she died earlier this year at 102.

Despite his diagnosis, Sincinito continues to help his fellow community members.

"I think part of what's good is him being involved," Sheila said. "Even though I noticed a change in his energy levels and everything, it's important to keep living, to keep your face to the sun, to keep moving in a positive direction. I've been very supportive of him doing the scouts because when you see him just talk with the youth, young men and young ladies, too, he doesn't talk down to them, it's very inclusive. It's a gift he has, it really, truly is."

Sincinito also enjoys playing bass guitar, working with wood, fishing and being in nature. His peers said that in scouting, he keeps things light for the troop, frequently cracking "dad" jokes and bringing levity while teaching important life skills to the scouts.

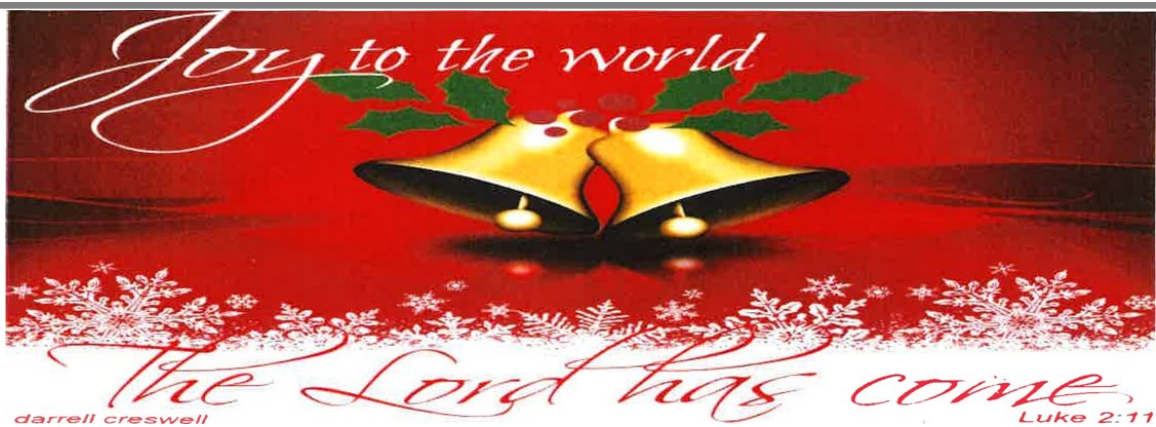
Lori Treglia said she met Sincinito 20 years ago because she was also a scout leader, and her family and his family have grown close over the years. She added that he is a tremendous leader of young people and helps them learn important skills.

"You come across these people, and Nick is one of them, who do it just purely for the joy of wanting to shape the youth and watch them grow up and do amazing things," Treglia said. "He's one of those people that, when he had gotten sick, he's not like, 'Why me?' or 'Why did this happen to me?' He kept on doing the scouting, and I kept telling him it's OK to step back a little. He didn't want to let go. He's lived his life by following the 12 points of the Boy Scout law, and he's just . . . he's a good guy."

Reprinted from the December 30, 2021 issue of the Herald

Community Newspaper, Lynbrook, ER edition





Wishing Christmas Blessings to All!

Rev. Mark & Kate Lukens

James Lukens & Ben Lukens

Janet Moser

Maryanne Walling

Rich & Andrea Eaves

Ethel Gilloon & Dan Gilloon

Barbara Valis & Lou Gaspari

Jen Valis, Charlie and John-Paul D'Agostino

JoAnn Wright

The Donouan Family

Carol & Peter Henck

Jessica, Tracy, Taryn & Dylan McConnach Henck

Rebecca, Harold, Christina & Jacqueline Webb

The Schneider-Leonsky Family: Jo, Steve & Kittens

Teddy, Cleo & Dolly

CHOOSE A HEALTHY NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION!

As the New Year begins, you may wish to consider choosing one of these healthy habits as one of your 2022 Resolutions!

Each of these is a proven strategy to help prevent chronic disease.

- Make time to unwind and connect with others~
- For stress relief, take deep breaths, stretch, meditate, or do an activity you enjoy. Talk with people you trust about how you're feeling and express gratitude.
- Get an adequate amount of sleep~
- Adults need at least 7 hours of sleep per night. For a healthier sleep, be consistent. Go to bed at the same time each night and get up at the same time each morning, including on the weekends.
- Eat healthfully~
- Reach for healthy options like fruits and vegetables instead of salty or sugary snacks.
- Move more—Sit Less~
- Get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity every week (or about 30 minutes on 5 days), plus muscle-strengthening activities at least 2 days a week.
- Rethink your drink~
- Substitute water for sugary or alcoholic drinks to reduce calories.
- Don't use tobacco in any form~
- You can quit today! Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW for free support.
- Be Sun-safe~
- Wear layered clothes and apply broad-spectrum sunscreen with at least SPF 15. Even in cold weather, the sun can damage your skin. UV rays, not the temperature, do the damage.
- Brush your teeth~
- Brush twice a day with fluoride toothpaste.



And we all should do all we can to prevent the spread of COVID-19:

Get vaccinated and 'boosted' and get your flu vaccine;

Wash your hands; Wear a mask in public indoor spaces!

Source: www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease

Submitted by Carol Henck

Wishing you and all of your loved ones a Wealth of Health in the New Year!!

ATTENTION BUSINESS OWNERS:

- Space is now available for advertising. (No full or half pages)
- Reasonably priced.
- 1/8 page....\$200.00/year; \$25.00/month
- 1/4 page ...\$300.00/year; \$45.00/month
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- Not just local...we mail all over.
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- Business expense deduction (Perhaps a charitable deduction?)

Contact our editor: Charles D'Agostino

FOOD PANTRY NEEDS:

You can drop food off at the church from 9 a.m. to Noon on Tuesdays and Fridays during July and August. If you would like to make a monetary donation, make checks payable to "The Long Island Council of Churches" with "food pantry" in the memo.

Any questions, please call the office and leave a message at 516-599-5768.

Now that school has started in person, we will also be collecting school supplies.

A big "Thank you" to all who have been faithfully donating food each week.

HELP ME HELP BETHANY!



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Write for The Bell Tower



You can email submissions to Charles D'Agostino at cjdagostino@gmail.com or drop them off to the Church office. You can even mail to him directly: 70 Sunrise Drive, Lynbrook, NY 11563. *Thank you!*

THRIFTique

We are pleased to announce that the Thrift Shop at Bethany Congregational Church located at 100 Main Street, East Rockaway, NY, is open for business once again. Our hours are Friday and Saturday from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Entry of people will be limited to few at a time, temperatures will be taken, hand sanitizer and masks must be used and social distancing will be put into practice to help keep both customers and staff healthy and safe.

We carry many items in our shop and there's something for everyone!

Looking forward to seeing friends
- old and new - real soon!



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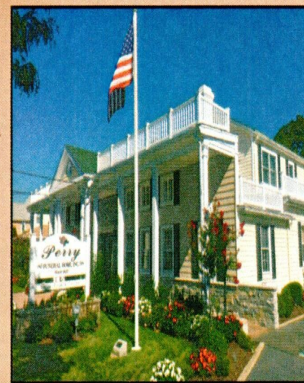
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Bell Tower Boosters

**Thanks to:
Ed and Cathie Clarke**

If you enjoy *The Bell Tower* and you would like to see your name here, please send a small donation to Bethany Church. It helps to offset costs.

Thank you.



Mural in the Fellowship Hall

Courtesy of Diana Harrison and Anthony Claverie