



THE BELL TOWER



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

Vol. 63 No. 3

East Rockaway, N.Y.

March 2023

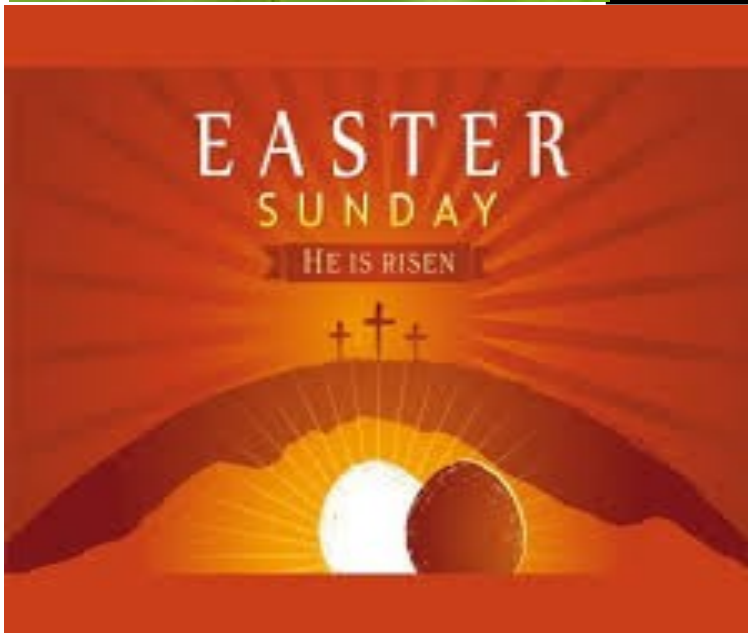


Please join us for our Palm Sunday service on April 2nd at 10:30 am. Not only will we have palms, the church school will be putting on a wonderful Palm Sunday pageant.

Can you help? These wonderful palms are not received ready to share. They must be stripped – peeled apart. Many hands make light work so please join us on Saturday, April 1st at 10:30 am to help prepare the palms for Palm Sunday.

Thank you!

**Holy Week Services: Maundy Thursday - 7pm;
Good Friday – 7pm; Easter Sunday – 10:30am**



6:15 a.m. at the Bay Park Beach House

4 East Cooke Street, Bay Park,

East Rockaway.

Dates to Remember:

April 1...PRC...Learn to Knit/Crochet
April 1...Pasta Dinner (Men's Club)
April 2...Palm Sunday
April 5...Passover begins
April 6...Maundy Thursday
April 7...Good Friday
April 9...Easter Sunday
May 14...Mother's Day
May 20...PRC...Learn to make banners
May 20...Yard Sale (Women's League)

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO VISIT BETHANY'S

THRIFT STORE

LOCATED AT 100 MAIN STREET, EAST ROCKAWAY, NY 11518.
THE "THRIFTIQUE" IS OPEN FRIDAY AND SATURDAY FROM 10:00 AM TO 2:00 PM AND THERE'S SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE!

SPRING HAS SPRUNG!

Please help our Community of Faith
BLOOM
by joining us for
In-Person Worship
at Bethany!

Lent is one of the least popular seasons of the church year.

It's easy to understand why this time of introspection and repentance is solemn and penitent, and just as we are slogging our way through the middle of winter, we are invited to give up some small token of our comfortable lives or spend time looking at our faults and failures, while trying to decide what we will do about them. It's a struggle even under the best of times, but it is even more so now, as so many of us are looking around and seeing the world we knew crumbling around us. Some of us are even feeling like we don't need to look askance at ourselves, the world is already doing it for us, raining on the culture we once thought was exceptional, questioning our values and disrespecting our heroes even as we are expected to absorb new ways and ideas, and to honor things we are still struggling to understand. Everywhere we look, new and often confusing new voices are part of our world, and we find that our experiences, our history and our beliefs are no longer the ones against which all others are measured, that in fact they are challenged in the media and even in the church.

That's precisely why our observance of Lent is so important. Lent reminds us that we are not the Crown of Creation we once thought we were and that we need repentance, faith, hope and grace as much as the rest of God's Creation. God's ways are not our ways, and, that life itself is a reflection of the One who creates it: dynamic, relational and most importantly, interdependent and intertwined. Like a

string of old fashioned Christmas lights, we need all of us to keep the lights shining. Like those lights, the kin-dom of God becomes a reality when it includes all of God's people, especially, as Jesus said over and over again, especially those left out and left behind because of our inability or unwillingness to see them. The kin-dom of God requires all of us, after all, in order to deliver on Christ's promise of abundant life.

Maybe then, our Lenten task is twofold. We struggle as individuals to let go of those things that trap us in patterns of living that are unloving and reactive, that hinder us as we seek to grow into a mature faith. We do a moral and spiritual inventory and resolve to at least try to see the world the way Jesus has taught us, and to refuse the temptation, as he did, to become the image of that which we abhor in our pursuit of the transformation God calls us to. But Lent is also about how we live and move and have our being as communities, as the church, as nations and corporations as fraternal orders and parties; in all of the ways we come together in this world, examining them in terms of who they serve and why. It is a tenet of our faith that God is still speaking, and so we are still listening and still seeking to do better as we learn better, to put our allegiance to the Law of Love above all else. The transformation we are called to must be reflected in our work, our structures and our institutions if it is to be achieved at all, because HOW we do what do is not only as important as

what we do, it is inextricably linked to how effectively we do it. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is a social gospel, one that aims to transform reality itself, for us as individuals and for all the ways we live and move and have our being, all the ways we live in community with one another.

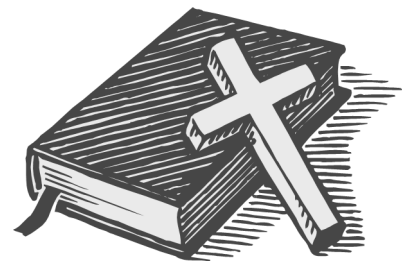
Our faith then, is not simply a sanctuary from the world, but a means by which we can embrace it without fear and bring out the inherent beauty and abundance there. We share this walk toward the kin-dom of God with people of faith and good will from every corner of life itself. Our starting point is illustrated in John 3, that says “God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son,” in order that those who were willing to take up their crosses, eschew the temptations of privilege and self-righteousness and follow him; would not do so in vain. It means that the Son is risen as surely on those mornings when storms or rain seem to block it from our view as he is at noonday; a promise of what can and will be, and a means to show us the way.

Lent can sometimes seem as another one of the church’s exercises in self-flagellation because it requires us to embrace the truth about ourselves with all of its sharp edges and unfinished business, in order to let it go and move forward. But that fearless look in the mirror that we are called to, that acknowledgment of our sins and our fears, is not a trial by ordeal ordered by an angry tyrant to let us know how unworthy we are, but a cleansing of the wounds that have hobbled us by the Great Physician and the hard work of repentance the prescription for making us whole so that we can emerge on Resurrection Sunday ready to meet Jesus in Galilee or East Rockaway or wherever he calls us to be, our lamps filled and our wicks lit, ready for the new thing that God is doing, together.

Have a blessed Lent!

Yours in Christ

Pastor Mark



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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

March 2023 Greetings,

What was the Army General's favorite day? March 4th! (march forth) LOL! I just love jokes, especially the "groaners". I remember as a kid reading the family's monthly copy of Readers' Digest and going directly to the "Laughter is the Best Medicine" section. This page was comprised of readers' submissions of humorous little stories or anecdotes. Very entertaining.

As it turns out, laughter really is the best medicine. Our nurse contributor, Carol Henck, has previously shared many of the benefits of humor. Here's a recap from helpguide.org.

Laughter relaxes the whole body. A good, hearty laugh relieves physical tension and stress, leaving your muscles relaxed for up to 45 minutes after.

Laughter boosts the immune system. Laughter decreases stress hormones and increases immune cells and infection-fighting antibodies, thus improving your resistance to disease.

Laughter triggers the release of endorphins, the body's natural feel-good chemicals. Endorphins promote an overall sense of well-being and can even temporarily relieve pain.

Laughter protects the heart. Laughter improves the function of blood vessels and increases blood flow, which can help protect you against a heart attack and other cardiovascular problems.

Laughter burns calories. Okay, so it's no replacement for going to the gym, but one study found that laughing for 10 to 15 minutes a day can burn approximately 40 calories—which could be enough to lose three or four pounds over the course of a year.

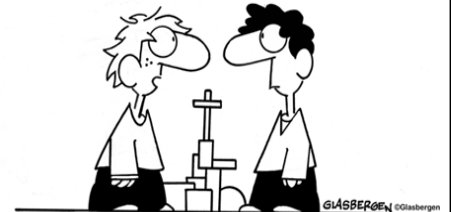
Laughter lightens anger's heavy load. Nothing diffuses anger and conflict faster than a shared laugh. Looking at the funny side can put problems into perspective and enable you to move on from confrontations without holding onto bitterness or resentment.

Laughter may even help you to live longer. A study in Norway found that people with a strong sense of humor outlived those who don't laugh as much. The difference was particularly notable for those battling cancer."

Let's go for it! Laugh it up!

One Easter Sunday morning as the pastor was preaching a children's sermon, he reached into his bag of props and pulled out an egg. He pointed at the egg and asked the children, "What's in here?"

"I know, I know!" a little boy exclaimed, "pantyhose!"



"I'm not sure what religion my family is. It's the one that forbids running with scissors. And eating before dinner is the worst sin."



Parish Resource Center Upcoming Events

Knit, Crochet and Pray: Saturday, April 1st from 11 AM to 12:30 PM. Do you love to knit and/or crochet? Perhaps you would like to learn these crafts? Do you want to gather with others to fellowship and pray? Then this event is for you. Bring your own project or start a new one. There is a limited supply of needles, hooks and yarn if you want to give these crafts a try.

Space is limited so let us know if you plan on joining us by **calling 516-285-0919.**

Mini Pentecost Banner Workshop: Saturday, May 20th from 10:30 AM to 12 noon. Cost \$10 per person. Join in the fun of banner making and leave with a completed mini size banner for your home, church or to give as a gift. This workshop is offered to new and experienced banner makers. No sewing skills required. Pre-registration is required by May 7th so supplies can be purchased and prepared. Please **call 516-285-0919** to register,

FROM THE EDITOR:

Bethany can always use the help of volunteers and donations of any kind. You can always contact the office if you want to know what is needed.

Baptism! Mia Grace Pavlica is now in the family of Jesus and is seen here with her proud parents and Godparents. Congratulations to all!



BETHANY EASTER FLOWERS 2023



Jennifer Firth and John Farrell will be coordinating this year's EASTER FLOWER orders. PLEASE USE THIS ONLY THIS FORM TO SUBMIT ORDERS FOR YOUR Flowers COST OF EACH FLOWER PLUS \$1.00 toward the delivery fee Plants may be dedicated to family members.

A list of memorials will appear in the Church's EASTER bulletin.
ALL ORDERS DUE BY APRIL 2, 2023 AT CLOSE OF COFFEE HOUR

of LILIES Ordered _____ x \$16.00= Total owed \$ _____

of Daffodils Ordered _____ x \$10.00=Total owed \$ _____

of TULIPS Ordered _____ x \$10.00= Total owed \$ _____

of HYACINTHS Ordered _____ x \$ 10.00= Total owed \$ _____

Plus delivery fees\$ _____

TOTAL OF ALL ABOVE \$ _____

MAKE CHECK'S PAYABLE TO BETHANY FOWER FUND

Paid cash _____ Paid by check _____

FROM _____

DEDICATION (PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY):

TROOP 121

On Sunday, March 4th, Boy Scout Troop 121 had their annual pancake breakfast. The troop had a great time serving up pancakes, sausages and happy guests. The event was followed up by a raffle drawing featuring baskets made by the boys and their families, along with some donated by nearby businesses. Many of former scouts, parents and other troop leaders helped to make this a successful event! Many of our local political dignitaries supported the Troop, including Congressman Anthony D'Esposito, County Clerk Kate Murray and Mayor Bruno Romano.



JP D'Agostino achieved Second Rank and is on his way to Eagle Scout! He was awarded the rank at the Pancake Breakfast by Scoutmaster Hugh Boyle and Committee Chair, Vicky Boyle. As the scouts say at an achievement: **BULLY!**



The following week, former scouts Ethan Gish, Robert Pszybylski, and Vincent Max D'Adonna had their Eagle Scout Court of Honor in which they received their Eagle rank, the highest achievable rank on scouting. The troop was honored to congratulate the boys and their families and are excited to see the future of their scouting careers. They each were awarded certificates of recognition from County Executive Bruce Blakeman, Mayor Bruno Romano, Mayor of East Rockaway & Gordon Fox, Village Trustee, Assemblyman Brian Curran, The Elks Lodge and the VFW post of East Rockaway. Almost 100 hundred supporters were in attendance, followed by a luncheon buffet. Eagle Scout is the highest and most prestigious rank in the Boy Scouts. **BULLY!**



Robert, Ethan and Max

Caleb, Sr. Patrol Leader was one of any speakers, as was JP, Asst. PL

BOY SCOUT TROOP 121

TODAY'S YOUTH...TOMORROW'S LEADERS

The Men's Club

Pasta Dinner

Saturday April 1, 2023

6 PM in the Parish Hall

Adults-\$12 Children -\$5



Please join us for delicious dinner which includes salad, bread, pasta, meatballs, sausage and peppers.

Refreshments and dessert are included! Please use signup sheet in the hallway or call

Bill Lewald @973-418-5830(cell) or 516-837-3485(home)

(Editor's Note:) This will be the first Men's Club event in three (3) years. Please show your love and support by attending this historic event!

SUNDAY SCHOOL:

Upcoming Events:

- ◆ March 26...Sunday School will be hosting Coffee Hour
- ◆ April 2... The annual Sunday School Easter presentation
- ◆ May 7...The children will be decorating church planters
- ◆ May 21.... Confirmation Sunday
- ◆ Reach out to Jessie Kilgus or Tina Lewald with any questions.
- ◆ Jessie (516)860-4998 or Tina (917)270-6509



The Women's League

The Women's League yard sale is on Saturday May 20 from 9-3. We will be participating in the Village-wide yard sale.



Also, we will be participating in the Huckleberry Frolic with our bake stand on Saturday June 10th. Please contact Cathy Clarke if you want to help or if you just have questions.

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

Donations may be left anytime in the shed next to the garage!

5 Strange But True Health Tips

Many methods to improve your health are pretty straightforward: to lose weight, eat less and exercise more; to boost your energy, get more sleep; to prevent dehydration, drink more water. Others, however, are totally counterintuitive. The following tips really do work—but they may leave you scratching your head.

Drink coffee to have a better nap...In a Japanese study that examined how to make the most of a nap, people who took a “coffee nap”—consuming about 200 milligrams of caffeine (the amount in one to two cups of coffee) and then immediately taking a 20-minute rest—felt more alert and performed better on computer tests than those who only took a nap. Why does this work? A 20-minute nap ends just as the caffeine kicks in and clears the brain of a molecule called adenosine, maximizing alertness. “Adenosine is a byproduct of wakefulness and activity,” says Allen Towfigh, MD, medical director of New York Neurology & Sleep Medicine. “As adenosine levels increase, we become more fatigued. Napping clears out the adenosine and, when combined with caffeine, an adenosine-blocker, further reduces its effects and amplifies the effects of the nap.”

For healthy teeth, don't brush after eating...Don't brush your teeth immediately after meals and drinks, especially if they were acidic. Acidic foods—citrus fruits, sports drinks, tomatoes, soda (both diet and regular)—can soften tooth enamel says Howard R. Gamble, past president of the Academy of General Dentistry. Brushing your teeth at this stage can speed up acid's effect on your enamel and erode the layer underneath. Gamble suggests waiting 30 to 60 minutes before brushing.

To eat less, eat more...Grabbing a 100-calorie snack pack of cookies or pretzels may seem virtuous, but it's more likely to make you hungrier than if you ate something more substantial, says Amy Goodson, RD, dietitian for Texas Health Ben Hogan Sports Medicine. “Eating small amounts of carbohydrates does nothing but spike your blood sugar and leave you wanting more carbs.” Choose a protein such as peanut butter or string cheese with an apple instead. “They are higher in calories per serving, but the protein and fat help you get full faster and stay full longer—and you end up eating fewer calories overall,” she says.

Skip energy drinks when you're tired...Energy drinks contain up to five times more caffeine than coffee, but the boost they provide is fleeting and may come with unpleasant side effects like nervousness, irritability, and rapid heartbeat, says Goodson. Plus, energy drinks often contain high levels of taurine, a central nervous system stimulant, and upwards of 50 grams of sugar per can (that's 13 teaspoons worth!). The sweet stuff spikes blood sugar temporarily, only to crash soon after, leaving you sluggish and foggy-headed—and reaching for *another* energy drink!

Drink a hot beverage to cool off...Which will cool you off faster on a steamy summer morning: iced coffee or hot? Two recent studies say the latter—When you sip a hot beverage, your body senses the change in temperature and increases your sweat production. Then, as the sweat evaporates from your skin, you cool off naturally. *(This article originally appeared on Health.com)*

Wishing you a Wealth of Health!

Submitted By Carol Henck

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

IN LOVING MEMORY...BY JO SCHNEIDER-LEONSKY

Dear Church Family,

We have really been through a rough patch, and hope by sharing some thoughts and memories of the one who left us all too soon, will help to offer solace and healing... Our beloved Kitten, Teddy, crossed Rainbow Bridge on February 9, 2023 after losing his brave battle with Lymphoma. On his last Vet visit, when the Oncologist declared that all treatment options were exhausted, we had no other choice, but to sadly let him go. Teddy passed peacefully while being petted and spoken to lovingly by us, Jo and Steve, his heart-broken Parents, who will never be the same without him. A short but emotional Service followed - filled with photos, memories, prayers and flowers...a tender way of saying a final good-bye to our beloved Boy.



Teddy was born on August 7, 2009 in Plainview, NY and adopted by us November 21st that same year. Joining our Family as an adorable Kitten with beautiful markings, our Black and White Tuxedo Cat quickly grew into a strong, muscular, handsome "Little Guy" with a personality and darling disposition that more than surpassed his exquisite outward appearance. He was adored by many, but most of all, by our Family. Teddy's favorite activities were going "Cat Fishing with his Dad, having fun with the organic catnip stuffed infant socks sewn up by his Mom, giving and receiving affection, cuddling with and sitting on his Parents, getting "brush outs", watching wildlife outside from the oversized windows of our 1888 Home: "Fireside Cottage", and interacting gently, respectfully, playfully and lovingly, with his adopted Sisters, Cleo and Dolly. His favorite snacks were Bumble Bee Tuna, Whipped Cream, Boars Head Turkey, and Philadelphia Cream Cheese.

As the oldest of our three Cats, he took on more and more responsibility over time. His accomplishments were many as he filled different roles within the household: Doctor of Napology, joining Steve and me at nap time, encouraging peaceful sleep as he'd snuggle with us, purring his special lullaby songs. He had a hypnotic way of inducing relaxation and we always woke up refreshed and well rested. He was also known as a "Snoopologist" as he made regular "rounds" after "lights out" at night, making sure everything was in order before coming upstairs bed. But, his biggest challenge was stepping up to the plate as Head Kitty In Charge ("HKIC") - a tough position in which he truly excelled. Acting as a responsible role model, Ted showed Cleo and Dolly "the ropes" when they arrived, helping ease them into Family life. He continued to monitor their behavior - being supportive and calming while encouraging them to focus on the "Suburban House Kitty Rules" followed by generations of our Kitties: "Behave, Be Sweet, Be Good". He taught with patience and fine judgment, winning over his charges by always setting a good example. Most of all, he was our cherished Son, devoted Boyfriend to Cleo and an invested Cat Daddy who, along with Cleo, helped raise Baby Dolly beautifully. Needless to say, losing Ted, such an important and much loved member of our Family, has taken a tremendous toll on us all.

More than anything, Teddy loved his Family, especially his Mom-Mee (Jo) and Dad-Dee (Steve) as well as his Girlfriend, Cleo and Dolly, their adopted Baby. Teddy was always there to comfort, cheer up, nurture, help heal and cheer on his loved ones - offering unlimited amounts of sweetness and joy. We'll think of Teddy in the warm weather months when flowers bloom in our Pet Memorial Garden. And nostalgic thoughts of our years together will come to mind while viewing his ashes, paw print, photo, flowers and a small Angel Cat figurine that are prominently displayed in his Blessed memory. We're so proud of Cleo and Dolly, who along with us offered support to Ted as he fought his illness valiantly. It's heart-wrenching to see how deeply losing him has affected his Sisters; though a month has passed, they still search for him in familiar places. Though he is no longer physically with us, his presence in spirit will always be felt. The loss is immeasurable, but so is the love left behind. Ted's paw prints are indelibly printed deep within our shattered hearts...he will be thought of daily and never be forgotten. We pray, with God's Grace, that Teddy and the cherished People and Pets who passed before us, will be waiting as we cross the Bridge when our time comes. Because we believe, Heaven is where we'll reunite with those we miss most, including every Cat we've ever loved. Please continue to uplift us in prayer as we navigate through these difficult days.

With our love and thanks,

Jo, Steve and Kittens Cleo and Dolly

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- 1/4 page ...\$300.00/year; \$45.00/month
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Call or text: 516-721-8885 for all of the details.

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Write for *The Bell Tower*: Movie or TV Review? Recipe? Restaurant Review? Play Review? Book Review? Local History or reminiscences? Concert Review? Announcement? (*No political positioning, please*)

You can email submissions to Charles D'Agostino at cjdagostino@gmail.com or drop them off to the Church office. Or 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!

FOOD PANTRY NEEDS:

You can drop food off at the church from 9 a.m. to Noon on Tuesdays and Fridays. 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.



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Bell Tower Boosters

Thank you to **Virginia B. Kirch, Gerard Cantone & Marilyn Baron** for their generous boosters.

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.



Mural in the Fellowship Hall

Courtesy of Diana Harrison and Anthony Claverie (dec.)