



THE BELL TOWER



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

Vol. 60 No. 8

East Rockaway, N.Y.

September 2020



YARD SALE



**Saturday, September 26, 2020
9:00 AM to 4:00 PM**

**BETHANY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
IN THE PARKING LOT
100 Main Street
East Rockaway, NY 11518**

Something For Everyone!



Dates to Remember:

(When things get back to Normal.)
October 4... Corporate Zoom Meeting
October 12...Columbus Day
October 31...Halloween
November 1...End Daylight Savings Time
November 3...Election Day...Please VOTE!!
November 11...Veterans' Day
November 26...Thanksgiving Day

Please drop off any contributions to the Bethany Parking Lot between 8:00 and 9:00 AM. All of the usual types of goods are acceptable. Any questions, please contact Bethany's office (516-599-5768) or Cathy Clarke (516-205-4309). This is sponsored by the Women's League and is part of an East Rockaway Village -wide yard sale. They are running that Saturday and Sunday and maps will be provided. Bethany is participating only on Saturday. As always, thank you for your support.

Wandering in the Wilderness

“I can do all things through him who strengthens me.”

Philippians 4:13

I love the fall. I love the way the world comes to life as we all start to get back to business after the summer. I love the crisper weather and I love that feeling of optimism that comes as another season of doing kicks off and life begins to focus on work, on school. At church, we begin again with Sunday school and with preparation for the holy season to come. I get to see the kids again and suddenly, things are happening, and the world is getting back to normal.

Of course, there is nothing “normal” about this year and let’s face it, much of the usual optimism after a good summer sabbath just isn’t there this year either. The shroud of the “virus” hangs over everything still, as week after week of restriction and lockdowns has become month after month and threatens to become year after year. We have been forced to adjust to a new reality in which things that we took for granted in the past are just not possible anymore. This summer, many of us found ourselves suffering from an extremely stressful combination of boredom and stress as so many of us are forced to stay in our homes or at least close to home, while at the same time trying to cope with this dangerous but mysterious disease and all that goes with it.

Whether you are one of the huge number of folks laid off or furloughed or otherwise made jobless during this pandemic, one of those affected by the disease itself or one of the folks scrambling to do your job in new and uncertain ways for how long we don’t know, you know the stress of fearing that your world is collapsing because you cannot pay your bills. If you are a teacher, a parent, or a caregiver of a parent, a member of the “sandwich generation”, you know the stress

of worrying about the health and safety of the people closest to you, the children who need to get back to school but also need not endanger their health or that of their families in the effort.

All our lives have been turned upside down by this crisis that also happens to come at a time of social change and political turmoil with one of the most bitter elections in our nation’s history. Unlike our past, when we seemed to come together in the face of challenges like this, we simply are unable to do that this time. But it is important to remember always, that what happens to us may not be up to us, but what we do about what happens to us, how we respond, is a choice we CAN make. All across this creation, many of us are choosing with Moses and Joshua and Mary and Peter, to keep hope alive, as best as we can, by the kind of people we determine to be; to hold fast to faith in God’s will and God’s power, the transformative love that is God’s very essence, poured out on all who open themselves up to its living water.

I think it is also important to remember that as the apostle Paul reminds us in Romans, this part of our journey is a goad, a prod to us as disciples to double down on our allegiance to the practical. Day to day expressions of our faith that Paul reminds us are the key to not simply surviving, but making something redemptive, something life giving and good from our experience with the wilderness we find ourselves in as we try to learn to work together to rebuild the foundations of a new and better way of being in community. Fear and rage, after all, go against the fabric of our creation, they offer only bitter succor and temporary satisfaction and they are as

exhausting to carry as they are hurtful to others.

Most of us want the same thing, we want some stability in our world, we want peace, we want community, we want a chance to seek an abundant life. Many of us are also starting to realize that those things are not going to look or feel or even be the same going forward into the future, even after COVID 19 has run its course. But that doesn't mean that they are gone. It means that we have to be intentional about what we do and why we do it going forward. Bethany, like everywhere else, the things we did without thinking require discernment now. We have to once again think carefully about how we do things like worship, and Christian Education, how we conducted our ministries in order to gather, as Jesus told us to do, the "wheat," the vital stuff and leave the "chaff." And, we must do it while also raw with stress about all the other things we have to engage in precisely the same way.

So, we will, and it will be clumsy and maybe even amateurish compared to the good old days. Most of us, at one time or the other in this process may even be muttering under our breath about how it's all gone to hell in a handcart and you'll probably be right, but we will persevere because that is what this community of faith is called to. We will try to see the redemptive purpose in this struggle, as we look

carefully at everything we do and why we do it and as we work together however we can, as we hold fast to our faith, we will begin to find that purpose, that community, and that communion of the saints is coming together as we do. Some cherished aspects of our traditions may certainly have to change. That's okay. It's happened before. But we need to be in prayer, in conversation with the scriptures, with the world we live in, with the traditions and revelations of our faith, and with each other as we move forward into a new and uncertain future. But then again, if you think about it, that's really what we do all the time. We lay our sins and fears, our hopes, and our dreams at the feet of Christ and ask him to lead us. That's what we are doing now. So, let's dig deep for those reserves of hope, of faith, of grace, knowing that God will give us what we need to do what we need to do. Let's reach out to each other, together we can do what we cannot do alone, and let's thank God for the chance to do so, because that's how we grow. The plague will pass, the elections will come and go, some things will change. But the law of love is eternal, and that's the one that matters!

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 express their views in letters to the editor.***

Are you less than perfect? Welcome! We are a community of 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



It's September. By the time you are reading this, it will likely be near the end of September. Who knows what our world will look like by then? Not me! So, I'm not even going to discuss it.

Instead, let's talk about something that happens every year since 1968 but you might not know too much about. It doesn't get the media hype that I think it well deserves. That is National Hispanic Heritage Month. Those thirty days provide us with the opportunity to celebrate and learn more about the histories, cultures, and contributions of American citizens whose families came from South America, Spain, Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean. If you are wondering, like me, about the mid-month start date I just learned it is in celebration of the various countries' independence days found within that time frame. Now it makes sense!

Just like our other monthly awareness foci, the objective is to bring this history to life for us as it probably was not in our schoolbooks. Quiz: How many famous Hispanic Americans or Latinos can you name off hand? Probably more than you realize. Let's see...

Scientist: Ellen Ochoa – astronaut. First Hispanic in Space in 1993. Very cool and out of this world!

Authors: Gabriel Garcia Marquez ...One hundred Years of Solitude..1982 Nobel Prize for Literature. In children's literature we have Meg Medina awarded the Newbery Gold for Merci Watson Changes Gears. A favorite of mine is Carmen Agra Deedy's retelling of a Cuban folktale, Martina, the Beautiful Cockroach which involves advice from a Cuban grandmother. Need I say more?

Television personality – Maria Elenas Salinas has been the longest female new anchor, over 30 years, on U.S. TV.

Music: Let's go back to the 1960's with Joan Baez, folksinger and civil rights activist. How about Selena, the pop superstar of the 1990's tragically cut down in her youth.

Activists: Dolores Huerta, a farm laborer who created the United Farm Workers to improve the horrific work conditions. Let's not forget Cesar Chavez too.

Government: Sonia Sotomayor, first Latina Supreme Court Justice.

The Arts: Lin-Manuel Miranda, groundbreaking in establishing diversity on Broadway and for using his notoriety to create positive change and support.

This list is a mere drop in the bucket but it gets us looking in some good directions. The next time someone mentions a Hispanic celebration don't just go right for the tacos, chorizos, and enchiladas. Remember the people, culture, and accomplishments – then and now. Then go for the food. It's really good!

FROM THE TRUSTEES:

The Trustees have been very active throughout the summer and through the quarantine. We have managed to keep our church strong. The live-streaming has worked out quite nicely. The Dog Club is meeting once again and AA has returned. The Thriftique is soon to open and they are working on the regulations that they feel comfortable with. Of course, our pastor is always diligently working hard to keep his Congregation in the loop and safe. Now, I must remind you that the generosity shown to our church and to our fellowship is wonderful but we can't stop there. We have to remember the food bank. Missions are about to start up again and, of course, tithing to your church is important so that we can keep the church strong and financially secure.

Yours in Christ,

Richard Eaves

www.bethanycong.com



Bethany's Bible Study Group has started up again on Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. We study the bible readings (the lectionary) for the following Sunday.

The only requirements are that you must wear a mask and maintain a six foot distance from each other. We will be meeting in the Sanctuary.

Please enter by the downstairs side door.

And we wish to remind you that we are always collecting nonperishable food items for the Freeport Pantry of the Long Island Council of Churches. A bin is available at the bottom of the side entrance steps or outside the Sanctuary area. All are welcome!

Fall Corporate Meeting

Sunday, October 4th

ZOOM at 12:30 PM



This will include the reports from all of our entities: Sunday School, Women's League, Men's Club, Missions and Outreach, "The Bell Tower", etc.

The link will be emailed in advance of the meeting.

If you do not receive the link by October 2, 2020, contact the office.

bethanyoffice@optimum.net (516) 599-5768

FOOD PANTRY

We are collecting school supplies to be given to the children served by our Lond Island Council of Churches' Food Pantry. Bring all donations to church on Sundays or to the church office during regular office hours.

Also, the following emergency items are always needed:

Dry Cereal (Cold); **Hot Cereal** (Grits; oatmeal); **Vegetables** (Canned corn; carrots; spinach, collard and green beans, etc.); **Jelly** (plastic bottles preferred); **Soup** (any kind); **Pasta** (any kind); **Pasta Sauce**; **Rice** (1- or 2-pound bags); **Shelf stable milk**; **Canned meats** (Chicken; spam; Vienna sausage), **Toiletries** (Toothpaste; Toothbrushes; soap;



FROM THE EDITOR:

We are working from home as are many of you. We sincerely hope that everyone is healthy and safe and that we will all see each other in the not too distant future. We will publish **The Bell Tower** each month as long as the printer is working and the post office is operational. If anyone would like an issue emailed just send your best email to: **cjdagostino@gmail.com**. It is in PDF form and that is how we get to the printer each month. The pictures are in color! Or, if you go to Bethany's website, **www.bethanycong.com** you will find **The Bell Tower** when you click on "Newsletter". Every issue for 2020 is there...in color! Enjoy.

Neighbors in Need helps make a just world for all possible, For this to occur, it needs your support.

Please give generously. And remember, contributions to Neighbors in Need can be made online at a

ucc@org/nin

The Neighbors in Need offering, which we will receive on Sunday, October 4, 2020, supports the UCC's ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. Two-thirds of the offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries to fund a wide array of local and national justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects. Through ucc.org/justice, our national Justice and Witness Ministries office offers resources, news updates, and action alerts on a broad spectrum of justice issues. Working with members of the UCC Justice and Peace Action Network (a network of thousands of UCC justice and peace advocates), Justice and Witness continues its strong policy advocacy work on issues such as the federal budget, voting rights, immigration, health care, hate crimes, civil liberties, and environmental justice. Neighbors in Need also supports our American Indian neighbors in the UCC. One-third of the offering supports the UCC's Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM). Historically, forebears of the UCC established churches and worked with Lakota, Dakota, Nakota, Mandan, Hidatsa, Arickara, and Hocak in North and South Dakota, Wisconsin, and northern Nebraska. Today there are 20 UCC congregations on reservations and one urban, multi-tribal UCC congregation in Minneapolis, Minnesota. These churches and their pastors are supported by CAIM. CAIM is also an invaluable resource for more than 1,000 individuals from dozens of other tribes and nations who are members of other UCC congregations in the U.S. We will receive the NIN offering on Sunday, October 4, 2020.



MORE MEMORIES FROM DON GILLIES

I was born in East Rockaway on Lawson Avenue in February 1931. Babies were usually born home unless there was an expected or known problem. During my early years, I made many trips to the stores on Main Street, shopping with my Mom. There were no super markets until one was built in the 1950s by the junction of Main Street and the Atlantic Avenue that goes to Lynbrook. That junction had a blinking yellow caution light. The only red light in East Rockaway was placed at the northwest corner of Denton Avenue and Phipps Avenue for some strange reason. Four-way stops were not in use then.

Across from the Main Street firehouse was an old house that was built before the American Revolution. Naturally, some people said that George Washington had slept there. It was torn down in the mid-30s. My brother, Dick, had a wooden peg from that house. It didn't have metal nails. I believe it was in too bad a condition to be restored. (Maybe termites or carpenter ants). I know that after the large house on the corner of Main & Baisley had burned down about 1939-40, their carriage house (for horses, carriage, feed & hay) eventually was removed, as it had plenty of large black carpenter ants. (We used to catch some to feel them pinch our skin on our fingers. It was strong enough to feel but not enough to hurt.) This carriage house was near the Manse that Reverend Wilson lived in, on Baisley. Reverend Cousins also lived there in the early '50s.

The grocery stores available were an A&P in the middle of the group across from the bank (East Rockaway Bank & Trust Co.), Bohack, on the corner opposite the bank, and Roulston's across the street on the same side as Bohack's.

After the old house was removed, the lot across from the mostly empty stores next to the firehouse, was big enough that the carnival set up there for a week each Summer. The kids used to help the carnival people set up. I used to help untangle the chains for the swings, a ride that went around and the seats went way out!

Willie Katz had a stationery store next to the lot and did well when the carnival came. Mr. Greenstein had a stationery store next to Roulston's; a bit better location for foot traffic. Bethany had its steps that came straight down to Main St. before the street was widened by moving the North side curbs

back a few feet. Many of the old, big houses on Main Street had carriage steps made of large, long flat stone, that people would step on as they dismounted a horse-drawn carriage. They went when the street was widened.

Almost all traffic on Main Street went past the White Cannon Inn in those days as Atlantic Avenue (from Oceanside) stopped at Denton Avenue. It didn't continue behind the bank in those days. Some traffic, that wanted to continue to Lynbrook, for instance, may have turned right up Denton Avenue and turned left on Wood Avenue to the other Atlantic Avenue and pass the old school that faced Wood Avenue. (Today, most people incorrectly call it "Woods Avenue". It was probably named after the Wood family (as many East Rockaway streets are named after old families.

N.B.: The old WW 1 monument, in the park, has the name of one of the Wood family that served in WW 1.

Almost opposite Bethany, from Rhame Avenue were five (5) stores. The first was a drugstore run by Mr. Babbitt and then by the Troike family. They sold Cardani ice-cream cones 5c and Coca-Cola was mixed in front of you with a squirt of syrup and seltzer water from a tap. Their daughter, Barbara, played the alto horn in the ERHS band with me. Next was Mr. Uris' delicatessen. He made the best potato salad I have ever had! My Mom often had a penny to give me. Mr. Uris sold many kinds of penny candy. Today, people don't believe what 1 c could buy. There were two (2) root beer barrels or a long licorice twist, gum with two cards in the pack (initially they were war cards and in the early 40s were baseball cards). In Spring of 1942, they changed to only one baseball card. We used to go to the stationery stores where business was slow so that we could get the older packs that still had two (2) cards.

Many times, when I went to spend my penny at Mr. Uris', he would wait while I made up my mind as to what to buy. How much of that penny was his profit? One item you could get for a penny was called a "Guess What?" It consisted of two caramels wrapped in waxed paper and a small toy or prize. And these were wrapped with a paper cover with a game etc. printed on it, such as the numbered dots that you draw a line between to make a picture. The candy maker must make a profit; the waxed paper provider must make a profit; the toy/prize maker must profit and the wrapper maker and printer must profit as well as the transporter and sales people.

To be Continued.....

FALL CORPORATE MEETING ON ZOOM OCTOBER 4, 2020 AT 12:30 PM

TROOP 121

By Carson Libbey and Pamela Makaea

Scouting has always been challenging as adult leaders guide and mentor scouts to “be prepared” and learn new things on their journeys to becoming Eagle scouts. With Covid-19 becoming a big part of our lives, “challenging” has taken on a new meaning when it comes to scouting.

Many troops all across the country have faced the challenge in creative ways, and Troop 121 has risen to the occasion. Although it will never replace the joy of pitching a tent, hiking a trail in the woods or sitting by a fire with your fellow scouts, the troop had their first virtual camp out on Father’s Day weekend. Options chosen for their weekend accommodations included the traditional tent and sleeping bag, a hammock and a pillow fort. Scoutmaster Nick Sincinito was happy to have the chance to spend the night outdoors, in his favorite hammock.

Activities for the weekend included games and a hike in each scout’s neighborhood or nearby park making sure that they followed social distancing guidelines and wearing masks when they were close to others. While on their individual hikes, scouts did “a good turn” and picked up garbage to help keep their neighborhoods and parks clean.

During the last week of July, scouts from the troop attended a virtual summer camp through the Theodore Roosevelt Council. If not for Covid-19, these scouts would be spending a week up at Onteora Scout Reservation in Livingston Manor where everyone is greeted with a big “welcome home!”. Scouts and leaders met old friends, worked on merit badges and gathered for a little old fashioned fun via computers and cell phones. While this virtual camp out was not the same, for now, scouts and scout leaders are still in it, living their best scouting lives together.

Interested in scouting? Contact Troop 121 Scoutmaster Nick Sincinito, recipient of a 2020 Silver Beaver Award (the highest Boy Scouts of America council-level service award), at scoutmaster@troop121ny.org.

(Editor’s Note: Bethany Church also would like to congratulate Scoutmaster Nick Sincinito on his award. It speaks of his dedication and interest in sharing his knowledge of scouting with his troop for more than twenty (20) years! As the scouts would say: ***BULLY!***)

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

BOY SCOUT TROOP 121
TODAY’S YOUTH...TOMORROW’S LEADERS

BOOK REVIEW

By Lou Gaspari

The Vanishing Half

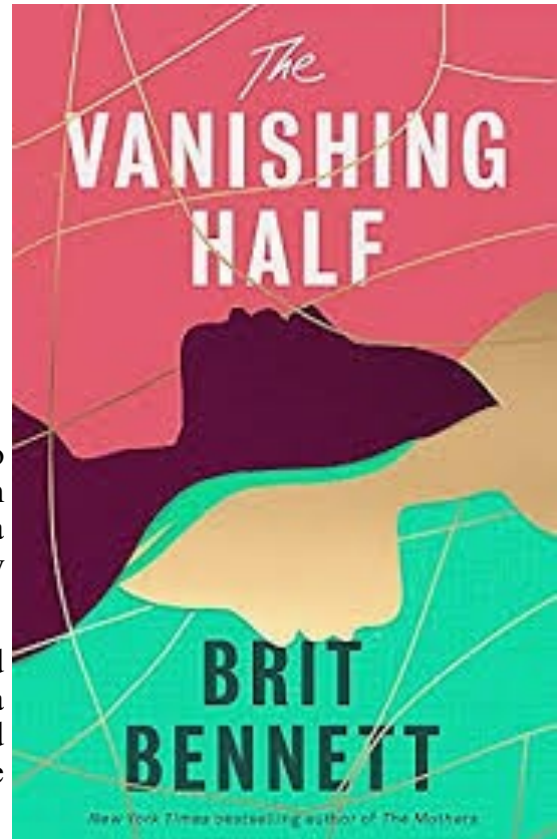
By Brit Bennett

This absolutely wonderful new novel is a tale of two light skinned black sisters who leave a small town at sixteen (16) years of age and go to New Orleans. In a short period of time they separate. The story is a family saga that is set between the 1940's and the 1990's.

It follows the lives of the sisters and their children and explores the complications and price they all pay for a new identity. In essence, it shows the difficulty and problems associated with being black and looking white in a racist society.

There is so much to learn about the racist attitude of our nation from Ms. Bennett's book. Allow me to say that The Vanishing Half is a novel that should be read, especially at this particular time in our history.

ADDENDUM: My thanks to all of you for your prayers and good wishes on my speedy recovery.



To My Church Family,

I realize dealing with the Coronavirus along with other difficulties, life has been fraught with challenges. When I saw this plaque while driving through the neighborhood, I couldn't resist sharing it with you. I pray it brings encouragement and uplifts your spirits. Remember, though it's a hardship being apart, we're all in this together and remain close in thought and heart!

Sending love from the Schneider-Leonsky Family: Jo, Steve & Kittens
Teddy, Cleo and Dolly



SUNDAY SCHOOL

As of September 20, 2020 we will begin instruction remotely. The children will receive a story, an activity and a virtual lesson. For now, the instruction will be twice a month. Pastor Mark will be holding virtual lessons for the confirmation students.

Future Sunday School events, such as the Fall Pot-Luck Dinner, are on hold for now but look for information regarding a Reverse Raffle! If you or anyone you know is interested, you may contact Tina Lewald at 516-837-3485, 917-270-6509 or Tina2000_10465@yahoo.com or Jessie Kilgus at 516-860-4998. Please leave a message and your call be returned.

Change In Thrift Shop Hours:

As a preventive precaution
against the Coronavirus,
Bethany's Thriftique will
be closed as of Friday,
March 13, 2020 until
further notice.

We thank you for your
patronage, apologize for
any inconvenience and
hope to reopen soon.

Bethany is looking for a **Not-For-Profit** Organization to rent the space that we have downstairs.

We are looking to rent the large room, smaller room and 3 small office size rooms plus two (2) large storage areas. If you know of any interested group, please have them contact :

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God Bless America!



THE BELL TOWER

Bethany Congregational Church

100 Main Street

East Rockaway, N.Y. 11518

(Non-profit Organization)

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Mural in the Fellowship Hall

Courtesy of Diana Harrison and Anthony Claverie