

The LINK



UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF PATCHOGUE

Since 1791

April 2015

Easter

"I have come that they may have life, and have it to full." (John 10:10 b)

May God work within you abundantly during this Lent season, so that you shall be empowered by the Holy Spirit to serve God, and others!



Jesus said that He came to give us life to the full extent. What does it mean to be "full?" It means, wholeness that encompasses the communal aspect of it as well as the individual

aspect. This is the perfect time for you to grow spiritually, and personally in terms of maturity as an authentic Christian, while we are preparing for celebrating Easter.

There are many ways to form a new habit for the sake of your own spiritual growth.

I would like to take this opportunity to explain The

Great Three Days from Holy Thursday through Easter Day, which are the climax of Lent (and of the

whole Christian year) and a bridge into the Easter Season.

At the service of Holy Communion on Holy Thursday, which is also called Maundy Thursday, the Worship Committee decided to have a couple

of volunteers for foot washing as a symbol of that day. A Seder display will also be available for us at that service.

On Good Friday, our Education Committee chair is to prepare and display the Stations of the Cross within the Sanctuary, which you can visit after the service.

On Easter morning, there will be an ecumenical Easter sunrise worship at Jones Beach at 6:30 am. It will be a great opportunity to participate in an early morning outdoor service surrounded by the awesome creation of our God. I am planning to drive, and anyone who is willing to accompany me, please let me know.

I hope and pray that all of you may encounter God's work in your life in such a unique way that we, as a church family, will be able to share our

WORSHIP IN APRIL

Apr. 2—Maundy Thursday, 7:30 PM, Rev. Dawn Yoon, Psalm 116: 1-2, 12-19, John 13:1-17, 31b-35

Apr. 3—Good Friday, 7:30 PM, Rev. Dawn Yoon, Psalm 22, John 18:1-19:42

Apr. 5—Easter, Rev. Dawn Yoon, Psalm 118:1-2, John 20:1-18

Apr. 12—Guest Speaker Geri Sheridan, Psalm 133, John 20:19-31

Apr. 19—Guest Speaker Barbara Becker, Psalm 4, Luke 24:36b-48

Apr. 26—Rev. Dawn Yoon, Acts 4:5-12, Psalm 23, John 10:11-18

testimonies as we journey together.

May God encourage you, and walk with you in every step of this season, to experience Resurrection! In Christ,

—Rev. Hyo Jung Dawn Yoon

Circle of Concern

For Joys:

Lenny Pearson's helping hands with anything & everything, Louis & Laura Diamond gained employment, Jim Miller for managing the S. Ocean Ave. sign for the last seven years, Douggs Douglas for updating the sign, Kevin Rice's successful operation, Keisha (Pearson) Meyer's marriage on Jan. 18 and promotion to 1st Lieutenant while being named "Officer of the Year" by her company.

For Bereavement:

The family and friends of the Murphy Family who lost their infant son, Danny.

The family and friends of Mr. Ernesto Sanchez—the father of Rev. Ernesto Sanchez.

For Guidance and Healing:

John, Kelly, Thomas Schultz, Brad Wetzell, Joan & Mike Welsh, Cynthia Holmes, Jackie Poccia, & Helen Melissakis.

These at Home:

Greg Wehner.

These who are in Rehab or Nursing Care Facilities:

John YanderZalm in Brookhaven Health Care Facility, E. Patchogue, NY
Leona Kreamer in Brookhaven Memorial Hospital, Brookhaven, NY
Alice Zahnd in Affinity Skilled Living, 305 Locust Ave. Oakdale, NY
Esther Davies in Brookhaven Health Care Facility, E. Patchogue, NY
Ed Dew in Sunrise Assisted Living, Holbrook, NY

Pray for our church and her future directions!

A College Essay

The great thing about being a child is innocence. You're unacquainted with the hatred, negativity, and hardship you have yet to encounter. Life gets more difficult but we become more knowledgeable, whether it might be through our own experiences or because the influence of others.

A small church in my community has really helped me make that transition from childhood to adulthood.

It all started when I was just looking for some community service for Honor Society, so I volunteered at a soup kitchen.

I'll never forget the look on my mom's face when she came inside to pick me up; as soon as we got in the car she squeezed half the bottle of hand sanitizer in my hand, and asked me how I could deal with that smell. I didn't smell anything, I didn't care that they shook my hand or hugged me. I was in a place where I wanted to be and where I can contribute and feel fulfilled.

Being part of The Patchogue Methodist Church connected me to the people in my community. When I came back for the second time, the woman who oversees the soup kitchen was shocked to see me return. I told her how much I loved being around people who appreciate the little things that we take for granted every day.

They gave me a gift by opening my eyes to a new world that I was unaware of because I was brought up in a secure and safe environment.

They showed me how significant it is to make good choices every day.

When I go to college and start a new chapter in my life, that is when the real test begins. I will no longer have mom or dad looking over my shoulder and guiding me to the right choice.

Through my community service, I have begun to learn about myself and how important the choices we make can either help or hurt us. By my involvement in the soup kitchen I became more aware of my future and the choices I will be making every day. I know that I will be an asset to your freshmen class as I begin my journey in life and that I will be making the right choice to be a part of your college.

—Lauren Bullock

April Birthdays

Apr. 12 William Meeks IV
Apr. 12 Becky Kolacki
Apr. 14 Jean Miller
Apr. 16 Keith Bishop
Apr. 20 Gary Graves
Apr. 21 Leslie Huisman
Apr. 25 Sarah Biederman
Apr. 26 Stephanie Smith
Apr. 28 Robert Zimmerman

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The deadline for the May issue of **The Link** is **Apr. 24**. Please email your copy to gbhoag@optonline.net.

United Methodist Church of Patchogue

April 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2 7:30 p.m.— Maundy Thursday Service	3 GOOD FRIDAY Church Office Closed. No ESL 9-Noon & 3-6— Easter Plant Sale 7:30 p.m.—Good Friday Service	4 9 a.m.-4 p.m.— Easter Plant Sale
5 EASTER 10 a.m.— Communion Wor- ship 2:30 p.m.— Pentecostal MF	6 Church Office Closed 7:00 p.m.—AA	7 9 a.m.—Al Anon 10 a.m.-Noon— Food Pantry 7-9 p.m.— Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—AA	8	9 7:30 p.m.—Choir	10 No ESL 7-9 p.m.— Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—N/A	11
12 10 a.m.—Worship/ Kids/Breakfast Club 11:30 a.m.— Finance 2:30 p.m.— Pentecostal MF	13 7:00 p.m.—AA	14 9 a.m.—Al Anon 10 a.m.-Noon— Food Pantry 7-9 p.m.— Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—AA	15	16 7:30 p.m.—Choir	17 9:30 a.m.—ESL 7-9 p.m.— Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—N/A	18 UMW Meeting
19 10 a.m.—Worship/ Kids/Breakfast Club 2:30 p.m.— Pentecostal MF	20 7:00 p.m.—AA	21 9 a.m.—Al Anon 10 a.m.-Noon— Food Pantry 7-9 p.m.— Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—AA	22	23 7:30 p.m.—Choir	24 9:30 a.m.—ESL 7-9 p.m.— Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—N/A	25
26 10 a.m.—Worship/ Kids/Breakfast Club/Heat Offering 11:30 a.m.— Trustees 2:30 p.m.— Pentecostal MF	27 7:00 p.m.—AA	28 9 a.m.—Al Anon 10 a.m.-Noon— Food Pantry 7-9 p.m.— Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—AA	29	30 7:30 p.m.—Choir		

the Way

May God's peace be with you!

If you read this column on a regular basis—and seriously, how could you not?—you'll remember that I meandered aimlessly last month until I somehow ended up on Micah 6:8.



I provided you with the New International Version, which many feel is one of the more accurate, literal translations available, and I usually go to that one when I want to make a serious point. To re-quote the operative section, what God wants of us is “To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God”.

Of course, I managed to paint myself into a corner with that one, not for the first time. Because the last part of that sentence bears directly on today's thoughts, and because I tend to be somewhat of a weasel, I decided to go easier on myself and look up the translation from The Message, which of course would give me a bit more wiggle-room in order to let myself off the hook. Here it is: “Do what is fair and just to your neighbor, be compassionate and loyal in your love, and don't take yourself too seriously – take God seriously”. THAT worked out well, don't you think?

When Pastor Yoon led us in the prayer of confession this morning my brain really zeroed in on the concept

of being sorry. “Sorry” is one of those words that not only has several uses and meanings, but also can be delivered so as to convey any number of underlying messages. For example, in its uses and meanings Sorry can be an adjective, a board game, or a loose garment in India. Wait, that last one is “sari”. Sorry.

Anyway, it's the adjective I want to deal with here, specifically the fact that it can denote anything from an act of deep humility to an act of open and bitter defiance. How many times have we heard a child (or an adult) say “I'm sorry”, and know that they are anything but? It can be delivered in fear of the consequence of not saying it; it can be said to show that the apologizer is not the least bit apologetic; it can convey the message that “I'm the one saying it, but you are the one really at fault”; and in many other ways, all of which I myself have used as a child (or an adult).

However, sometimes I really mean it. If I've forgotten to do something (which happens often these days), if I've done something badly for someone that I wanted to do well, if I've hurt someone I didn't mean to hurt (vs. someone I DID mean to hurt, see prior paragraph), then I usually have to swallow my pride, admit – first to myself – that I was wrong, and approach that person with love in my heart and humility in my head and say “I'm sorry”. In my experience, people are pretty perceptive around the “I'm sorry” thing, and usually willing to accept a sincere apology, provided it's not for the same thing 347 times in a row.

But what about God? In spite of doing all these manipulations with my brothers and sisters, and in spite of having the Deluxe Weasel-Skills Package (with lifetime free upgrades), when it comes down to one-on-one “I'm sorry” time with my Creator it's all straight-up, respectful and totally honest, right? Quick story: when I ate the chain with the augur on the snow-blower during the blizzard a few weeks ago (due to failure on my part to do something very basic – get the chain out of the way), many bad words and thoughts escaped my brain and lips. I spent a lot of time later apologizing to God, very earnestly and profusely I might add. But in saying that prayer of confession it finally hit me: how often do I say “I'm sorry” and “forgive me” at the same time? With people, certainly, but most especially, with God?

Perhaps that's one of the paradoxes of our faith: through the incredible act of love Jesus performed, our forgiveness is assured. But how often do we get down on our knees in gratitude and say “I'm sorry, forgive me, and thank you, Jesus, for your love”? Sometimes, being a human being (let alone a child of God) is just so challenging, isn't it? Wouldn't it be easier if God just gave us some guidelines? Oh, wait: “...forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who trespass against us.”

Seems he already has.
Yours in Christ,

—Tom Bracken

The following are thoughts that I expressed at the most recent meeting of the Worship Committee. Pastor Yoon asked that I share it with the wider church body though this newsletter.

The Worship Service

Other than our Lord and Savior himself, the worship service is one of the most important things we share together. Our sanctuary is beautiful; my fellow servants in Christ are sincere and often inspiring. I am sometimes moved during the service, but I feel that our worship service as currently constituted is in need of some changes.

I believe our worship experience needs to be more in keeping with what many 21st century people expect.

I'll wager that our service has not changed in 50, 60, or 70 years, but people *have* changed and the world has changed. When new young couples, families, and people come to visit our church and hear hymns from the 1600s with archaic language, I doubt we'll see too many of them again.

Tradition is a good thing, but is *not* everything. We cannot adopt a "well they must learn our language" attitude. Our mission is to make disciples. We cannot become cloistered and inward looking; if we ignore or minimize the fact that many people may not relate to ancient music, we do so at our own peril.

It is important to meet people where they are. When it came to making disciples, Paul said "I become all things to all people."

Please understand that I'm not looking to eliminate traditional hymns; some are beautiful beyond words, but

I think it is important to strike a balance between old and new. New is not just music from *The Faith We Sing*, but also includes praise songs, contemporary songs, interpretative dance, and music from many instruments, not just organ and piano. Guitars and drums can give glory to God every bit as well as organs and pianos; so can trumpets, tambourines, and Tibetan singing bowls.

I further think that the more modern music should be just as much a part of the service as the traditional music, not an add-on or a prelude. My wish is to see a fully blended service music-wise.

You might say that this is just a personal preference of mine but I know I speak for many. In fact, I believe I speak for the majority: at the Call to Action congregational meeting which was held a little over three years ago, it was overwhelmingly agreed that we should add more contemporary music to the service. This change may not be easy initially, as is the case with all new things, but it is our imperative to try.

Our music director, Martha, is hugely talented. I'm sure she, along with others, could offer much to make this form of outreach a reality.

In no way am I disparaging the sincerity, the holiness, or the quality of our choir and music director. I simply think we can, we must, offer more if we are to grow.

—Don Kolacki

A Prayer for Easter

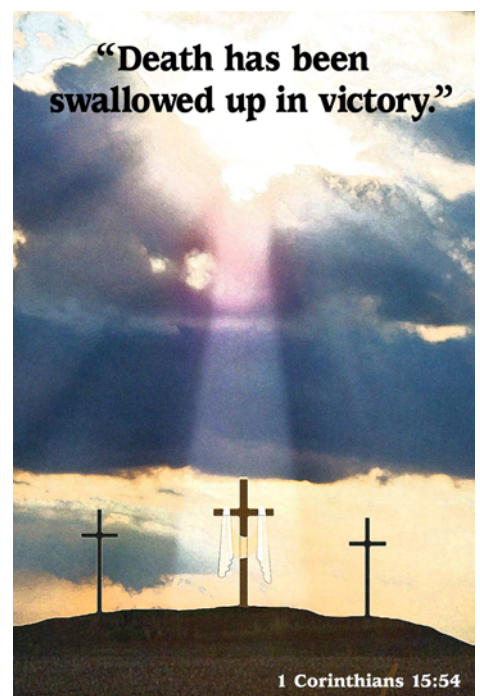
How wonderful, how marvelous, is Your love, Jesus! To think that You were willing to go through that for me!

What a day of rejoicing that must have been when You rose and realized it was all over--You had won the victory! You had accomplished Your mission. You had made the way for the world to be saved. You had gone through the horrors of Hell and death for us, and it was over.

You arose in victory, joy, liberation, and freedom from the hands of evil men, never to have to go through that again--and You did it all to spare us the same. Now we can say with the apostle Paul, "O death, where is your sting? O Hades [grave], where is your victory?" (1 Corinthians 15:55-57).

As I think of the seemingly terrible defeat that You suffered and how it resulted in such a tremendous victory, it fills me with wonder and gives me such hope and peace. Surely You and Your love will see me through whatever troubles may come my way, from now till eternity! Amen.

—thoughts-about-god.com



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"My husband won't miss me 'til he realizes
I have the remote."



A Note About Restoring Hope

Our Restoring Hope capital campaign was completed several years ago but funds may continue to be contributed. All Restoring Hope contributions go to the Trustees which have continuing building expenses but no other current source of revenue.

Who We Are

This month we are focusing on Dianna Peterson, a relatively new member of our faith community.

Dianna is a native Long Islander, born and bred. Growing up in Port Jefferson Station, she attended local schools and has always enjoyed the beaches and local seafood. As a child and young adult, she experienced the warm support of a close knit neighborhood, where residents looked out for each other, especially for the children. Local mom and pop stores were friendly places, where children could safely run errands for their parents.

Sadly, Dianna feels that so much of that closeness has been lost today. Dianna grew up with ten siblings and two half siblings. When I asked what that was like, she smiled and said, "I was the oldest." Which says volumes. She herself has one son and three grandchildren, ages 9, 4, 3. Her son, who has been in the Army for ten years, with a specialization in biochemical engineering, will soon be moving back to Long Island with his family, as he completes his military service. Dianna eagerly awaits his return and spending time with the grandkids.

A chance meeting with our former pastor, Reverend Sanchez, outside of the church one Sunday in 2012, brought her to worship the next week and she has been attending ever since, as her health permits.

In 2011, Dianna suffered two strokes, which forced her to retire early from the health field. It has been a

struggle, but she is slowly getting physically stronger. She credits her strong faith, and the prayers of the congregation, the pastor and her mom with supporting her as she regains her health. When asked what she would like to see happen in this church, she first said that she loves worshipping here, that the members have warm, friendly, good hearts. She would love to see more communication among all the congregation.

As to one thing she would like people to know about her, that would be that she is very friendly and has a giving heart.

Dianna is very excited about soon beginning a course in medical office billing at Hunter Business School.

Blessings to her in this new venture. Thank you Dianna.

—Barbara Becker

No Sprinklers: A Church Homeless Solution

St. Mary's Cathedral in San Francisco is getting bad press over a sprinkler system it installed to keep homeless people from sleeping on church grounds. People are outraged that a church would treat the poor so callously. But St. Mary's isn't alone. Many houses of worship all over the country face the question of how to keep safe, welcoming grounds while being compassionate to homeless neighbors sleeping on porches and in doorways.

Here's what we tried at Mount Vernon Place United Methodist Church in Washington, D.C. A couple of months ago, we started a dialogue

around how to move people off the porches of the church and assist them in moving on. Over the years, the protected and secluded porches had become sleeping quarters for a dozen or so folks, and it was now out of hand. People were using the grounds as bathroom facilities; others were leaving their belongings in plastic-covered 4-foot high mounds.

The conversation, held in a church committee meeting in January, was contentious. Some felt we had an obligation to offer a place to stay if our neighbors were homeless; others felt it was time to reclaim the building as a place that was clean and safe. It took us hours to arrive at a decision, but we did. On March 1, no one would be allowed to stay on the porches or use the grounds for storage. We would hire security to help us enforce this decision. And here is what made our decision different: We would meet weekly with anyone who had lived on the porches to help them make the transition.

The good news was that the church has resources to support the changes we were imagining. If anyone wanted to go home, we had the money to buy a bus ticket. If folks needed something, we would do what we could to provide them with it.

So every Tuesday at 7 a.m., a small group of us met with our homeless neighbors for breakfast and discussion. We talked about what it would take to find permanent housing and kept track of commitments.

Six weeks in, when it was time for everyone to be moved to someplace

Continued on Page 8

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Homeless (from Page 7)

else, we decided that we would continue the community we had formed beyond the March 1 deadline. At our meeting the first week of March, some miracles occurred:

Dominique came for the first time and told us he had a job if he could get a bike helmet. (Bob, a parishioner, left the meeting, went to his nearby home and arrived back moments later with a bike helmet.)

Ivy told us she had had an interview for a job at Starbucks.

Stephen said he was going to interview later that morning for a restaurant job.

Several folks needed help with transportation, so after the meeting Kris, a very committed and active pa-

rishioner, put more money on their church-provided transit cards.

After six weeks of support, no one is living on the porches anymore. It wasn't easy, and we did have challenges. We did have to call the police when Eddie refused to leave his place on the porch. Having to call the police was the single sour note in the trajectory to reclaiming the porches and building an amazing community.

As a pastor, I have had to move people off property in the past. It has always felt punitive and mean. This time it felt different because we gave ample warning; we formed a team to get to know and support everyone individually; we consistently enforced the rules; and we used the resources of the church and the neighborhood to help.

I am convinced that those individuals who were sleeping on the church porches are better off now than they were in January, before we started. There is a way to keep safe, clean grounds while helping our homeless neighbors—and it's both easier and harder than installing sprinkler systems or putting up fences. It requires the investment of time and resources to build relationships, listen and help. The community we formed still gathers at 7 a.m. each Tuesday. I am convinced that those individuals who were sleeping on the church porches are better off now than they were in January, before we started.

—Linda Kaufman, United Methodist Reporter