

# The LINK



UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF PATCHOGUE

Since 1791

July-August 2021

## Light At the End of the Tunnel

**H**ow many times have you heard the expression that there is “light at the end of the tunnel?” I am a bit of a strange bird because I like to know where expressions come from. Many times, the popular expressions we use in our daily conversations come from quotes out of the Bible. So, where does this one come from? Let’s explore.

Through some quick research I discovered that it is an idiom that dates back to the 1880s. One definition is that one can see cause for hope that a bad situation will end. In other words, passing through a dark space into a well illuminated place. So, why do I write about this so-called idiom? Let me explain.

Wouldn’t it be a tragic existence if we lived our lives without hope?

Think about it; every morning waking up with a sense of hopelessness.

That would be a sad way to live, don’t you think?

The light at the end of the tunnel that I see on a daily basis that gets brighter with the passing of each day is the nearing of defeating this dreadful pandemic that has plagued our world for over a year. COVID-19 had a vice grip on people for far too long. I truly thank God and the scientific and pharmaceutical community for developing a vaccine to combat this horrible virus.

What do I use as a barometer to measure this light of hope? Well, I regularly drive down Main Street in Patchogue at various times of the day and noticed that life is returning to our

community. It is as if people have exited their bunkers to bask in the sunshine once again.

Restaurants are up and running, stores are filled with busy shoppers, fewer people wearing masks—all pointing to the way of that light at the end of the tunnel. I am so delighted to see this.

Although Covid had a negative impact on me personally—I still had a different kind of hope. The real hope I clung to is the hope that I find in my faith in Jesus Christ.

**Continued on Page 2**

## WORSHIP IN JULY-AUGUST

**July 4**— Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, Mark 6:1-13

**July 11**—Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, Mark 6:14-29

**July 18**—Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, Mark 6:30-34

**July 25**—Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, John 6:1-21

**August 1**—Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, John 6:24-35

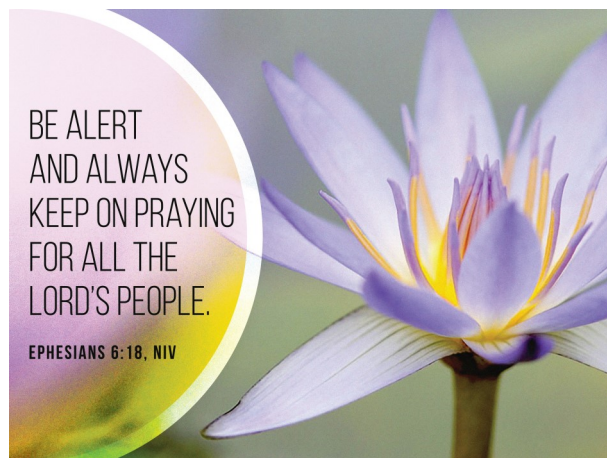
**August 8**—Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, John 6:35-41, 51

**August 15**—Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, John 6:51-58

**August 22**—Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, John 6:56-69

**August 29**—Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, James 1:17-27

Worship is still with some Covid restrictions.



## Circle of Concern

### Healing

**Tom Griffon**, seriously ill with cancer

**Bob Arndst** is undergoing treatment for cancer. (Charlene Schultz)

**Bill Morgan**, a past choir director, is in Brookhaven Health Care Facility.

**Barbara Lyons** is in need of peace, guidance, strength and hope.

### Joy

Sasha Kratz graduated from High School this year.

### Continued Prayers

Rosie Gandley, Harry Higbie,

Tom King, Niall Morrissey,

Bob Arndst, Jay Murdock,

Mary Ann Hannan, Louise Russo.

Anita Helfst, Katie Blumenthal,

Justin Zimmerman, Carol Anderson,

Suzanne Tierney, Diane Dain,

Heather Rubino, Arthur Rice,

Mary Prince, Henry Prince,

Nancy Schaff, Bill Schaff,

Florence, Yarrington Family,

Ulla Ziegler Pereira, Reah, JoAnn ,

Bruce Kirschner, Andrew Acerra,

Christopher Racciopo, Said Mirzaali,

Brenda Klingel, Maryellen Comacho

Suzanne Dalton, Travis Gentile

Kimberly Helfst, Joyce Gabrinowitz

Travis Gentile

**Compiled by Kathy Halliwell**

*Please email Kathy—*

*keats1002@gmail.com with any*

*additions or deletions.*

## These in Rehab or Nursing Care

**Geri Sheridan, Bill Morgan and Robert Krawzak** in Brookhaven Health

Care Facility, 801 Gazzola Dr., East

Patchogue, NY

## July-August Birthdays

**Jul 8** Andrew Jacobs

**Jul 16** Isabelle Christine Wenke

**Jul 20** Jacob Capobianco

**Jul 22** Charlie Magill

**Aug 3** Penelope Weber

**Aug 8** Kevin Rice

**Aug 12** Connor Kingsbury

**Aug 16** Kaylee Capobianco

**Aug 17** Natalie Morgan Palm

**Aug 22** Sasha Kratz

**Aug 23** Bob Prince

**Aug 24** Myong Cha Ferrara

**Aug 24** Lynn Russo

**Aug 26** Lenny Pearson

**Aug 30** Maria Ferrara

**Aug 31** Emma Capobianco

**Aug 31** Eleanor Prince

## Anniversaries

**Jul 5** Pamala & Conrad Queen

**Jul 11** Gail & George Hoag

**Jul 12** Carol & Bruce Kirshner

**Aug 24** Eleanor & Bob Prince

## Light At The End

### (From Page 1)

The Bible has a lot to say about hope. Hope when we are going through turbulent times. Our hope found in God is not some escape from reality. To say that we are not going through a difficult time when we are is like sticking our head in the sand. Yes, we acknowledge that we may be going through a challenging season in our lives—but not without hope. There is a difference.

Hebrews 11:1 states, “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” God is always working behind the scenes. He is ever present, ever knowing and ever powerful. There is nothing too big for God to handle.

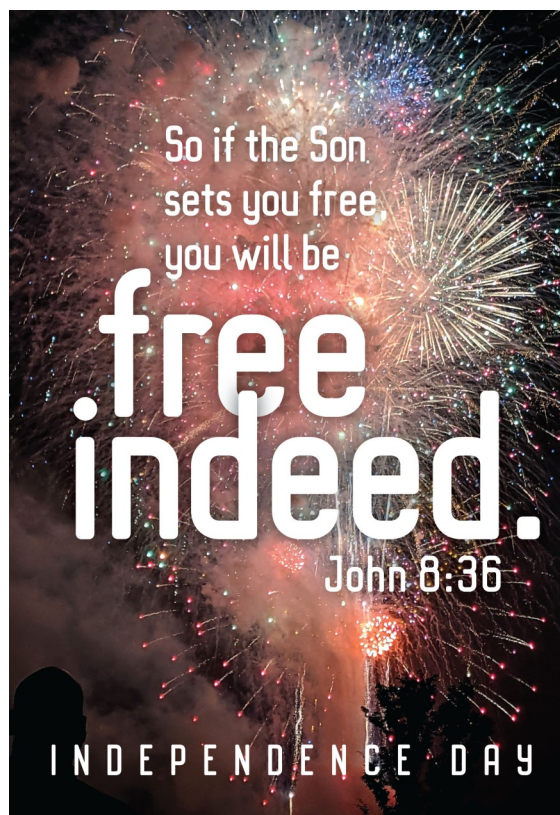
And, that gives me hope—even when I am going through a storm. I end with an encouraging scripture written by the Apostle Paul to the

Church in Rome (Romans 15:13): “May the God of hope fill you with joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in HOPE.”

This Summer is going to be a totally different summer than last year. Enjoy it. But always remember that Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever.

Abounding in Hope  
Together,

—Pastor Chuck



# United Methodist Church of Patchogue July 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4 10:00 a.m.— Church open for worship.	5 <b>Office Closed</b>	6 <b>10:00 a.m.- Noon</b> —Food Pantry	7	8	9	10
11 10:00 a.m.— Church open for worship.	12 <b>Office Closed</b>	13 <b>10:00 a.m.- Noon</b> —Food Pantry	14	15	16	17
18 10:00 a.m.— Church open for worship.	19 <b>Office Closed</b>	20 <b>10:00 a.m.- Noon</b> —Food Pantry	21	22	23	24
25 10:00 a.m.— Church open for worship.	26 <b>Office Closed</b>	27 <b>10:00 a.m.- Noon</b> —Food Pantry	28	29	30	31

## SOS—Three Years In

Three years ago we notified the congregation and our community that our church was in need of major repairs and that we were launching a 5 year capitol campaign to raise the money. That campaign, led by Joan Curtis, took on the name Save Our Sanctuary. SOS for short.

The original campaign announcement, published on our website, outlined the project this way:

In the coming months our congregation will be undertaking major renovations that will include:

(a) take down the interior east sanctuary wall to reinforce the wall and protect the stained-glass window, then replace the wall,

(b) repair the copper valleys on the roof that are corroded and causing leakage into the sanctuary,

(c) replace rotted timber supports in the ceiling,

(d) restore the three stained glass windows to their former glory, and

(e) repair the roof in Wesley Hall.

A total of \$350,000 will be needed to complete all projects.

In a Trustees report published in the Link at that time, Dave Hollowell described the need to demolish the east sanctuary wall above the balcony because of extensive water damage and also the bad condition of the sanctuary roof. He also mentioned that the exterior brick walls required pointing and sealing. The Wesley Hall roof, he said also needed to be replaced. He also mentioned roof rafter

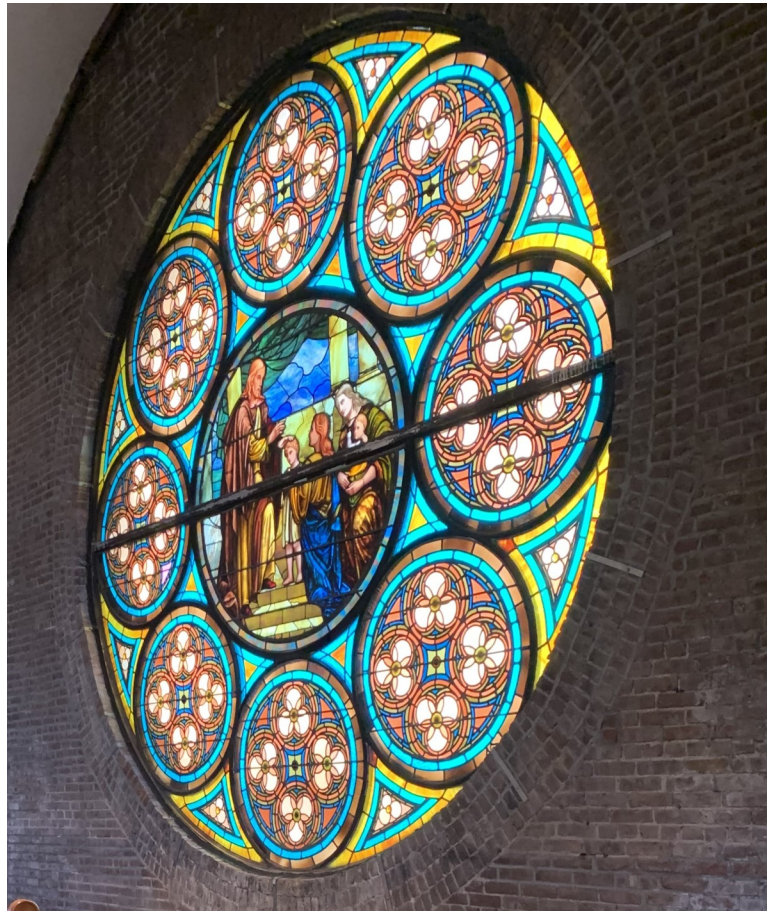
repairs needed in the belfry and the need for a parking lot redo.

Since then, we have received \$151,000 in donations. By the way, 63% of that came from outside our congregation. Together with a 5 year, \$125,000 conference loan and a 30 year low interest \$81,000 SBA loan that we will begin repaying next year, we have brought into the campaign to date \$357,000.

So far, we have spent \$300,000. That includes \$10,000 for the largely donated parking lot and \$6,700 for the Cloud Room carpet which was mostly donated. We also replaced our water line to the street at a cost of \$12,200.

With the money spent, we have accomplished most of what we set out to do.

The exception is the interior of the sanctuary. The east wall was demolished but it has not yet been replaced. The sanctuary will also need to be repainted and new carpeting installed. We did some work on the



The water damaged east sanctuary wall was removed and some repairs were made to this Tiffany window, but the wall still needs to be replaced and more window work is desired.

east rose window but there is still window work that we would like to do.

Unfortunately, most of the work we have done is on the roof (\$42,000 for Wesley Hall) which means it is not something we can see.

We look forward to completing the sanctuary work which, of course, will be much more visible.

We lost a lot of campaign momentum during the pandemic so the income during the past year has been very limited. Of the \$59,000 In pledges at the beginning of the campaign, \$31,000 remains to be paid. The campaign still has two years to run and we look forward to good things ahead.

—George Hoag

## Black Father Prepares Sons For Racial Injustice

Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong. (I Corinthians 16:13)

“I have no positivity to give you in this moment. I’m cleaned out. I ran out of positivity after seeing me in the office for months co-workers still clutched their bags in the hall whenever they saw me. I am out of positivity getting suspended every year of my elementary school for defending myself against these kids who wanted to start shit but found out that my fists hit harder. I am out of positivity when my father, a pastor who wears suits on the daily, has his face pushed into the asphalt because he fits the description of a suspect, causing irreversible damage, only to be set free with a “my bad.” Meanwhile, I have to sit up in college and keep face as my father is laid up in a hospital on the other side of the country.

“What I have for you instead is a level of acidic acrimony the likes of which words have not been created to describe. The fullest extent of the law does not sate my desire for a just end. What I desire is for them to play tetherball with Derick Chauvin’s body as he dangles for 8 minutes and 46 seconds. What I desire is for them to fear ever inflicting pain on us again.

What I desire is to not have a reason to know George Floyd’s name, Or Breonna Taylor’s  
Or Botham Jean’s  
Michael Brown’s  
Sandra Bland’s  
Atatiana Jefferson’s  
Alton Sterling’s

Eric Gardner’s

Ahmaud Arbery’s and too many others.

“This is not a new world you’re experiencing, just one that’s optional for some.”

These words are the sentiments of a 6-foot-5 inch, 26-year-old well-educated, bilingual, sensitive, compassionate, highly skilled, artistic, thoughtful young Black man who is deeply devoted to his family, loyal to his friends, and possesses a keen sense of what is “just.”

These words were written by my youngest son, who dares to live as a fully expressed Black man in a nation steeped in a legacy of racial injustice — a legacy that is baked into every social structure in American society and continues to fester in the hinterland referred to as “unconscious bias.”

As a Black father, from the moment my son was born, there was a stark reality: I could not insulate him from racial injustice, therefore he needed to be equipped and prepared for it.

This is something with which fathers of white children do not have to concern themselves. For the very structures of society, of which racial injustice is part and parcel, provide special protection for white children at the expense of and to the detriment of Black children.

Therefore, just as Scripture (Proverbs) provides examples of fathers giving instruction to their sons to assist them in navigating life, in like manner Black fathers must provide their children lessons on how to stay

alive in a nation where racial injustice permeates every sector of society. This has required Black fathers to instruct our children how to, to use the words of the Apostle Paul, “be on guard.” I have had to talk to my son about what to do if (and most likely when) he is stopped by police; how his appearance as a Black man immediately alarms many white people; being followed around in stores by security just because he is Black; and more.

As a father, I cannot begin to convey that while I understand their necessity, these conversations are also heart-wrenching. In light of this, my question to my white brothers who are fathers is, “When reflecting on the conversations you have had with your children, did they ever sound like the conversations I (and most Black fathers) have had to had with my Black children?”

The Apostle Paul does not however stop with the admonition to be on guard; rather his counsel is “to stand firm; be courageous; and be strong.” These words that Paul chooses convey a central tenet of the pedagogy of a Black father’s instruction and example to his children: firmness speaks to resilience in the midst of racial adversity, and courage acknowledges fear of the sheer magnitude of the challenge of daring to attempt to right the wrongs of an unjust society. And, while refusing to allow this to stifle hope, God’s strength is what will be needed in the press forward as we travail in the midst of our striving for racial injustice.

**Continued on Page 7**

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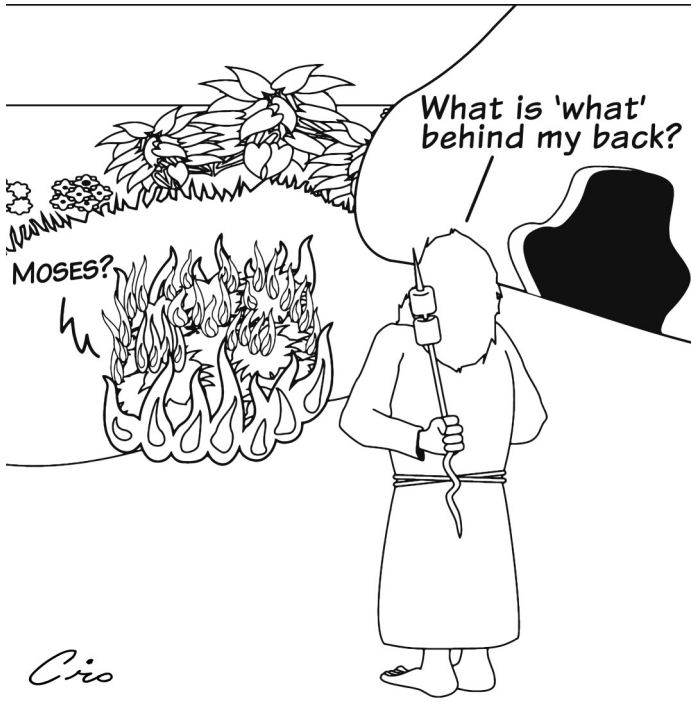
## Lawn Mowers Needed

**L**enny Pearson has been a faithful servant, keeping our church lawn mowed and trimmed. But she underwent shoulder surgery in May and needs to turn over the task to someone else.

It's a labor need only. The church has a lawn mower to use. If this is a project that you would be willing to take on or share, please contact Dave Hollowell or the church office. Thank you.

—Ed Klingel

The deadline for the September issue of **The Link** is August 27.  
Please email your copy to [gbhoag@optonline.net](mailto:gbhoag@optonline.net).



## Racial Injustice (From Page 5)

To my white brothers who are also fathers, will you be on guard to teach your children about racial injustice? Will you be resilient in facing the truth of racial injustice and the privilege that it affords your children? Will you have the courage, given the degree of difficulty, to press towards the creation of a society where your children will stand for justice over privilege? Are you willing to depend on God's strength? For that strength will be needed.

If the future of the church and our nation is going to be better than the past, my earnest prayer is that you will.

—Rev. Dr. Byron Thomas, UMNS

## Online Gamer Ministry

Video games and those who play them have changed a lot since the 1980s.

From the age of Pac-Man, arcades and sitting in a dingy basement in front of a glowing blue screen, video games have now carved out a prominent niche in modern-day society.

Games have improved in size, scope and quality to the point that they are discussed as being art. People can make careers out of playing video games, either competitively or in a streaming context. Entire gaming communities have emerged.

The possibilities for connection seem endless, which is why the Rev. David Petty and CrossFire: faith + gaming are exploring new territory in using video games to engage in ministry.

Petty, senior pastor at St Paul's United Methodist Church in Colorado Springs, Colorado, launched the ministry in 2017.

"As a kid, I loved playing games. As an adult, I was often told that games were a waste of time, but that so many other 'leisure' activities were not a waste of time," he said. "I came to realize that it was all about perspective."

This perspective led him to explore how people came together to form groups and bonds around common interests. It also led him to an unexpected insight: Churches could learn from gamers.

"I found many gaming communities with a stronger sense of community than some of the local churches I had known," he said.

He began to consider whether there could be a church of gamers. He started with that idea and created a group of people to explore it. That group became the very church for gamers he had envisioned.

CrossFire is what Petty calls an affinity group, which exists in a number of digital spaces. The ministry utilizes several different avenues to reach those who need it, from community-building platforms like Facebook and Discord, to voice chat, to a live Twitch stream where they play games while engaging in conversation with anyone who drops by, as well as raising money for a charity of the month.

There's even a podcast to gain a voice within both church and gaming spheres. On the podcast, Petty and co-host Russ Dornisch, whose wife is a

United Methodist pastor, start conversations around topics like healthy gaming habits, parenting and social justice, and even included a Lenten devotional series this year.

Petty said that while their online engagements do initiate theological discussions, field prayer requests or lift each other up in difficult times, they also sometimes just talk about games or Marvel movies without any specific references to faith and spirituality. For Petty, this is intentional. He believes that relationships are more important than content.

"Church plants aren't successful because they have the most attractive logo or the most energetic preacher," he said. "They are successful because they create real and authentic community around people who have a shared goal.

"I don't ever want to be a social media influencer. I just want to see people connect with one another around the shared interests of their faith and a love of gaming."

Lonnie 'Styxx' White described CrossFire as "a place where I can discuss topics like the deeper themes of The Last of Us or Mass Effect, as well as how forgiveness is good for the soul and delve into what it means to be a Christian in today's digital age."

"It has allowed me to find acceptance as a geek/gamer and Christian," White said.

With the outbreak of COVID-19 in 2020, physical spaces for ministry became impossible or difficult to access in many communities. Utilizing a

**Continued on Page 8**

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 Camille Flynn, Administrative Assistant  
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## Gamer Ministry (From Page 7)

digital space allowed CrossFire to expand and connect with those who really needed it.

“The long-standing debates about whether online church was ‘valid’ ended. For most of us, online church was the only safe way to do church,” Petty wrote in a commentary for Re-think Church, a seeker ministry of United Methodist Communications.

Petty can already highlight a number of success stories. and events in the life of The United Methodist Church.

Another story involves a woman stopping by the community Discord on a random Monday night. She was in distress and struggling with parts of her personal life, including her faith.

CrossFire’s approach was to talk to her and ensure that she knew that there was a community that cared about her and was always available to help her and walk with her on her journey.

Petty often hears from people who are surprised that someone could be a Christian and still play video games. Despite the growth that video games have experienced over the past several decades, there is still a stigma surrounding gamers that CrossFire hopes to remove for both kids and adults who love God and love games as well.

“Gamers as a demographic are vastly misunderstood, which is to the detriment of the church’s ability to meet people where they are,” said group member Brian 'R3d Letter'

Hughes. “Crossfire is one of the few online places to be in community with people who both share my love for God and gaming.”

Even as people return to meeting in person, he expects the ministry to continue growing. He said that Cross-Fire was a “viable ministry before the pandemic” and he doesn’t expect that to change as the world returns to some semblance of normality.

“We are constantly working on every area of CrossFire to make sure we can have a great community that provides opportunities for connection, mission and devotion,” Petty said. “This ministry is open to everyone. We can all find a home here.”

—Aaron Cross, UMNS