

# ...from the heart

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Spring 2013



## Inside

Forever Family Update	2
Weekly Schedule	2
Women's Ministry	3
<i>A Shadow of Things to come</i>	4
<i>He has Risen, He's not Here</i>	5
Buildings and Grounds Update	6
Young Adult Ministry	7
Support Groups	7
Daily Bible Readings	8
M.E.N.	9
Café Cristo	10
On Our Calendar	11



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**Patchogue Church of  
the Nazarene Group**

## Looking for Life among the Dead ?

Luke 24:1-6a

But very early on Sunday morning the women went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. They found that the stone had been rolled away from the entrance. So they went in, but they didn't find the body of the Lord Jesus. As they stood there puzzled, two men suddenly appeared to them, clothed in dazzling robes.

The women were terrified and bowed with their faces to the ground. Then the men asked, "Why are you looking among the dead for someone who is alive? He isn't here! He is risen from the dead!"

God created us, but we were tempted to believe that we didn't need God; we could be our own gods.

Gen 3:4b-6

The serpent replied to the woman. "God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God ..." The woman was convinced...she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it, too.

This idea of not needing God, or taking the control, or trusting in something other than God is still the temptation and sin of today.

God knew we would sin, and so from the very beginning, long before Jesus was born, God had a plan. Jesus is (Rev 13:8 NIV), "The Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world."

God the Son would come to earth for the purpose of doing for us what we could not do for ourselves: Jesus forgives our sins by dying on the Cross to make us right with God. Jesus is the sacrificial Lamb given for us in fulfillment of God's eternal plan, and His resurrection from the dead proves it.

God did this because it has always been His purpose and desire that we would know Him ... for eternity. We were created to know the glory of God. This and this alone is what satisfies the longing in every human soul - His glory.

What is His glory? It is God with us. I'm not just talking about God's omnipresence; I'm not talking about the fact that God is everywhere and always present. I'm talking about God making His presence known to you. Just like when the Lord said to Moses (Ex 33:14) "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." Or when Jesus said (Matt 28:20), "Be sure of this: I am with you always." Jesus said this after His resurrection from the dead. He is risen, just as He said; He is alive, and you can know Him and His glory (Presence). This is what

*(continued on back cover)*

# Forever Family Update



## Our Sympathy and Prayers:

Roger Pokorny

Reunited with our Lord on February 3<sup>rd</sup>

## Baby Dedicated to the Lord:

Malachi Paul Caiazzo

February 17th



## Weekly Schedule

- Sunday** 10am Worship Service; Kidmo: Church for Kids; Teen Worship Service (2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays of the month); 10:45am Teen Bible Study (1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays)
- Monday** 7pm M.E.N. (Every other week)
- Tuesday** 7pm Ladies In-Touch at MaryAnn Malcolm's home, Bellport (286-2435)
- Wednesday** 7pm Ashes to Fire Bible Study in the Fellowship Hall (ends May22)  
7pm East End Home Fellowship at the Mercurio's home, Center Moriches (478-4852)
- Thursday** 11am Ministry at McPeak's Assisted Living (1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday)  
6:45pm Divorce Care  
7pm Church Board Meeting (2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month)  
7pm Ladies Sewing Circle (3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month)
- Friday** 12-1pm Food & /Clothing distribution, at Terry St., Patchogue Village with Lighthouse Mission  
6:30pm Café Cristo (Coffee House for 11 grade – college)
- Saturday** 8am Men's Breakfast (1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of month)  
7pm Good News Bowlers (1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of month)  
8pm Young Adult Fellowship & Bible Study, Fellowship Hall (Session ends May 18).

# On Our Calendar

*Holy Communion Served the first Sunday of the Month*



**2** 11am -2pm Divorce Care / DC4Kids kick-off (regular sessions begin March 7<sup>th</sup>)

**9** 9:30 am Ladies' Brunch (Fellowship Hall)

**DON'T FORGET: SET CLOCKS AHEAD BEFORE BED!**

**11** 7pm Christian Training & Ministry Board (CTMB) meeting (HPYC Building)

**20** FIRST DAY OF SPRING

**24** Palm Sunday (palms distributed)



**Holy Week**



**29** 7pm Good Friday Service

**31** Easter: Resurrection Sunday: 8:45am Breakfast in the Fellowship Hall;  
10am Easter Cantata



**18-20** District Assembly for Metro NY Church of the Nazarene (New Jersey)

**26** 7pm Movie Nite hosted by Divorce Care: "Fireproof" - A movie dealing with the marriage relationship



**4** Good News Bowlers League Fellowship at the Church (after bowling)

**12** Mother's Day (Gifts for the Ladies)



**19** Pentecost Sunday

**24** Divorce Care hosts Movie Nite: "Joseph" (a production of the Sight & Sound Theater)



# HOT CROSS BUNS

Make this traditional Easter recipe to remember how Christ gave his life for you.

## What you need:

- 1 can (12 oz.) evaporated milk
- 1 stick (½ cup) butter, melted
- ½ cup sugar
- Pinch of salt
- 1½ Tablespoons yeast
- 1 egg, beaten
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon nutmeg
- 5 cups flour
- Icing
- An adult to help

## What you do:

1. In large bowl, combine the first eight ingredients.
2. Stir in flour, one cup at a time, to form soft dough. Knead on a floured surface until smooth and elastic (about five minutes).
3. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease top. Cover and let rise until doubled (about one hour).
4. Knead out air bubbles. Form six two-inch balls.
5. Place two inches apart on a greased cookie sheet. Cover and let rise until doubled (about 30 minutes).
6. Bake at 375 degrees until golden (13 to 15 minutes). Cool on wire racks.
7. Add icing in a cross shape. Enjoy!

# Women's Ministry

As I write this article for the Newsletter, spring seems very far away with the piles of snow all around us! It will be here, though, before we know it, and all of the flowers are waiting to burst forth under the frozen earth. Sometimes our lives feel frozen like the ground; harsh, cold and lifeless. But even though we might not feel it, God's love is there for us if we open our hearts to receive it.



The ladies at In-Touch have just finished up a book entitled A Better Country. It is about preparing ourselves for heaven while we are here on earth, and has really been very enlightening. I think we have all been blessed as we have come to understand the amazing love that our Savior has for us and what awaits us when we enter His presence for eternity.

We will be joining the other small groups as we do the Ashes to Fire series from Lent to Pentecost.

The Women's Ministry will once again be sponsoring Operation Christmas Child. We had such success with collecting items each month for the shoeboxes that we will be doing that once again. Look in the bulletin starting in March for the items we will be collecting. Let's see if we can beat last year's shoebox count! On Saturday, March 9, we will be having a brunch in the church Fellowship Hall at 9:30am. I will be handing out flyers to remind you of the date and time. Come out and fellowship with your sisters for a time of food and fun.

During this time of Lent, let us truly seek to spend time with the Lord. We can find all sorts of excuses for why we don't have time to do that, but we will find the time to do what we really want.

The only way our faith can grow and flourish is to draw close to God, opening our hearts and ears to hear what He needs to tell us, whether we like it or not. Once we learn to recognize His voice, we must be willing to be obedient to what He asks us to do. My prayer is that we will all focus on the wonderful gift of salvation and redemption that the Lord has provided for us through His love that held Him to the Cross.

Be blessed,

Mary Ann

# CAFÉ CRISTO



Café Cristo took a short hiatus during the holidays. but during the break we were very encouraged when a few of the kids came to us and expressed a willingness to step up and deliver lessons to the group. When Café returned, we were blessed with a

two part lesson delivered by Jason Koontz and Willie Barker on what it means to be a disciple of Jesus. Crowds continue to remain strong, as we continually average between 8 and 12 guests a night. We can definitely see the effect this ministry is having on the attendees; several new people have showed up via word of mouth from one of the regulars.

This spring we will again be joining the church for the Ashes to Fire series that runs between Ash Wednesday and Pentecost. Last year it proved to be a success for Café and for the church as a whole, so it was a no brainer for us to do it again. We also feel that the material will give those kids who are willing to step up and lead some form of structure so they don't feel overwhelmed when planning their talks. The "fun nights" have been a success in that we've been able to really bond with the kids and get to know them outside of a "church" setting. We'll be having more fun nights in the coming weeks.

Do you know of a high-school/college age person that could benefit from a warm, friendly environment that would give him/her an opportunity to either experience God for the first time or reconnect with Him? If so, then we'd love to have them at the Café. We meet at 6:30PM on Fridays at HYPC. For more information please contact Harris and Evie Noor, Stephen Cerruto, or myself.

In Christ,

Frank Donato

## **Heart Attitude** by Bill Crowder (from *Our Daily Bread*)

I love watching the skill and passion of great athletes as they give their all on the field. It shows their love for the game. Conversely, when a long season is winding down and a team is already eliminated from any opportunity for championship or playoff games, sometimes it seems that the players are merely "going through the motions." Their lack of passion can be disappointing to fans who have paid to watch a good game.

Passion is a key aspect of our personal lives as well. Our heart attitude toward the Lord is revealed in how we serve Him. The apostle Paul said that our service includes the way we go about our daily work. In Ephesians 6:6-7, we read that we are to approach our work, "not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men."

For me, the key in that verse is "from the heart." I have a heavenly Father who loves me deeply and sacrificed His Son for me. How can I do anything less than give my very best for Him? The passion to live for God that comes "from the heart" provides our best response to the One who has done so much for us.

## A SHADOW of THINGS TO COME

Another Groundhog Day has come and gone, with February weather suggesting the furry critter's shadowy forecast was right on the mark. Old Man Winter seemed to strengthen his frosty grip when Nemo dropped thirty-three inches of paralyzing snow on New York's longest island. Yet, we remain confident that spring will eventually defrost those icy fingers sending winter's chill packing.

Sunday morning after the storm, I stood outdoors in the brilliant sunshine soaking in as much vitamin D as the 14 degree temperature would allow. Close by, an unseen sparrow was singing his heart out. It sounded like he was rejoicing in the brightness of a new day. Having survived so great a test, he sang of the hope we all share for new beginnings. People who call New York home, know that winter is the last part of a four season climate. Winter has its beginnings in the last days of the old year but occupies several months of the New Year. This year, the vernal equinox, which marks the first day of spring, is at 7:02 A.M. (EDT) March 20. The question could be asked ... is winter the end or beginning of the year's seasonal cycle?

The answer is a matter of perspective. Winter is not something we can dismiss or ignore by positive thinking or preventative planning. Winter is a part of life, an endurance course that all of us must pass through to get to the gentle breezes and fragrant flowers of spring. Its frosty personality is part of what defines us as New Yorkers. We can spin our wheels fighting it, or accept and embrace its challenges; either way, winter will remain a seasonal, life-long companion.



There are striking similarities between seasons and Christian living. As believers, we happily embrace the *pleasant* experiences of life. We bask in the warm familiar days, like summer, that allow us to kick back with a feeling of self-assurance. When personal or situational changes present themselves to us, like the crisp air of autumn, we go with the flow, reminding ourselves that the only constant in life is change. However, when life turns a cold shoulder toward us as does winter ... our mind set is to dig in and get through it as quickly as possible.

In his book The Pastor, Reverend Eugene Peterson refers to what he calls, "necessary stretches of boredom, pain and suffering," as an unavoidable part of the Christian experience. Dorothy Day called this experience "the long loneliness."

There was a time I believed that these moments of darkness, when life seemed ready to swallow you whole and prayers sounded like echoes, occurred because of personal mistakes.

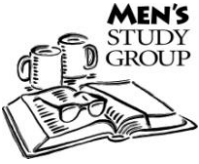
I imagined that if I could just understand where I'd made a wrong turn, I could prevent these moments of pain and suffering from ever happening again. The cold and dreary days of life, even for a Christian, could be avoided once and for all! However, I've come to understand, and somewhat grudgingly accept, what Peter explained to us in his first letter:

*"Dear friends, don't be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. Instead, be very glad -- because these trials will make you partners with Christ in his suffering, and afterward you will have the wonderful joy of sharing his glory when it is displayed to all the world."* 1 Peter 4:12-19 (NLT)

*(Continued on page 6)*

# MEN'S ENCOURAGEMENT NETWORK

## M.E.N.



The New Year has started off with a bang; we now have 15 to 18 men attending our Monday night Bible study and the same number come to the monthly breakfast.

We have started something new at the Bible study and it's working out great. Each time we meet, someone different presents a devotional.

Each man can choose his own topic, and after a short presentation there is always a lively discussion.

What a great gift it is to watch the fellowship that is growing among this group. I am convinced that God is using this ministry to grow and to bless our church.

In loving service,

Jim Brennan



### BIBLE QUIZ:

When Jesus was crucified, over what time period did darkness cover the earth?

- A. 9 p.m. to 6 a.m.
- B. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- C. 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- D. 12 noon to 3 p.m.

Answer: See Mark 15:33

# *He Has Risen - He's Not Here*

They went to the grave, and an angel told them, "He has risen! He is not here!" (Mk. 16:6)

We often think of Jesus as a man who was crucified for our sin. He suffered, died, and was buried. He is the One who died in our place, but that is not the end of the story. He is not some ancient character of the Bible who is no longer alive.

The Law required a blood sacrifice for the forgiveness of sin. For years it had been the blood of a goat to stand in for the sins of the people of Israel. Now, Jesus stands in as the substitutionary death for all

humankind. The only way He could accomplish this is if he was sinless, and by being the only means possible to bring about true forgiveness of sin.

This was not the only thing He came to accomplish, however. The Bible says, "The wages of sin is death." (Rom. 6:23). The only way He could overcome death on our behalf was to be raised from the dead. After His resurrection, He revealed Himself alive to many over many days, and then He ascended to Heaven. He remains alive to this day making intercession for all who believe.

He accomplished for us the forgiveness of sin by the shedding of His own blood, fulfilling the requirements of the Law in perfection. Not only this, but He didn't

stay dead. He conquered death by His resurrection, proving to us all that there is life in Him. If He rose from the dead, we too will rise to new life in Christ.

We are not like the unbelievers who think we die and that's the end of it all. We live as people with hope in the resurrection. This makes all the difference. If we were to have our sins forgiven, but then just died and that was the end of it all, what good would that be for us? No, we know there is life after this life: eternal life. If we are

children of God by faith in Jesus, we will spend that eternal life in His presence as promised and documented in the Bible.

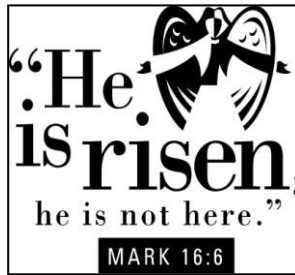
This should be the motivation of us all to live our life here by faith in the risen Christ. This should give us the motivation to live a holy life

acceptable to the Lord. We are going to fall along the way, but He has provided a means of forgiveness and restoration. We can come back into His presence by repenting and acknowledging our shortcomings. He is willing to forgive and restore us. That's the blessing of the Christian life.

All this is made possible by Jesus, and proven to us by His resurrection on that Sunday long ago. We have reason to celebrate. Resurrection Day (Easter) is the happiest holiday on the Christian calendar. Take the time to celebrate and be thankful.

Happy Easter to you and your family,

*Pastor Nick*





# Daily Bible Readings

~Taken from our *Ashes to Fire*  
Devotional~

- ☐ Mark 12:28-34
- ☐ Luke 18:9-14
- ☐ John 4:43-54
- ☐ Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32
- ☐ John 5:1-16
- ☐ John 5:17-30
- ☐ John 5:31-47
- ☐ John 7:1-2, 10, 25-30
- ☐ John 7:40-53
- ☐ John 12:1-8
- ☐ John 11:1-45
- ☐ John 8:21-30
- ☐ John 8:31-42
- ☐ John 8:51-59
- ☐ John 10:31-42
- ☐ John 11:45-56
- ☐ Luke 19:28-40
- ☐ John 12:1-11
- ☐ John 13:21-38
- ☐ Matthew 26:14-25
- ☐ Luke 4:16-21
- ☐ John 19:16-37
- ☐ Romans 8:1-11
- ☐ John 20:1-18
- ☐ Luke 24:1-7
- ☐ Luke 24:8-12
- ☐ Luke 24:13-35
- ☐ Luke 24:35-48
- ☐ John 21:1-14
- ☐ Mark 16:9-15
- ☐ John 20:19-31
- ☐ John 3:1-8
- ☐ John 3:7b-15
- ☐ John 3:16-21



- ☐ John 3:31-36
- ☐ John 6:1-15
- ☐ John 6:16-21
- ☐ John 21:1-19
- ☐ John 6:22-29
- ☐ John 6:30-35
- ☐ John 6:35-40
- ☐ John 6:44-51
- ☐ John 6:52-59
- ☐ John 6:60-69
- ☐ John 10:22-30
- ☐ John 10:1-10
- ☐ John 10:11-18
- ☐ John 12:44-50
- ☐ John 13:16-20
- ☐ John 14:1-6
- ☐ John 14:7-14
- ☐ John 13:31-35
- ☐ John 14:21-26
- ☐ John 14:27-31
- ☐ John 15:1-8
- ☐ John 15:9-11
- ☐ John 15:12-17
- ☐ John 15:18-21
- ☐ John 14:23-29
- ☐ John 15:26-16:4
- ☐ John 16:5-11
- ☐ John 16:12-15
- ☐ John 16:16-20
- ☐ John 16:20-23
- ☐ John 16:23b-28
- ☐ John 17:20-26
- ☐ John 16:29-33
- ☐ John 17:1-11a
- ☐ John 17:11b-19
- ☐ John 17:20-26
- ☐ John 21:15-19
- ☐ John 21:20-25
- ☐ John 14:8-17, 25-27

("A Shadow of Things to Come" continued from page 4)

I believe our church here at Patchogue Nazarene has endured one of those dark periods that Eugene Peterson labeled as "necessary suffering." But just as spring surely follows winter, so too is God absolutely faithful. We as a body of believers are seeing the first emerging signs of spiritual revival after a long winter. It began when leaders of the church responded to the prompting of God's Spirit to a call for daily prayer for our church and nation. From the CTMB to the Church Board, to small groups, to individual members of the congregation, prayer has been going up to God on a daily basis and now tangible results are surfacing much like the emergence of spring's first buds pushing up through soil to receive sunshine. Have you felt it? There's a freshness, an anticipation of the presence of the Holy Spirit in every gathering, every small group meeting.

As we enter this season of Lent leading up to Easter Sunday, this is the perfect format to continue and increase our individual and collective rededication to the Lord. This is the road that leads to new spiritual life, not only within our church, but in the communities that lay outside of it. Let's continue to travel this road together as the family of believers we've become and see where it takes us. Spring time might be just around the corner.

Serving Him Together,  
John Mercurio

## **Buildings and Grounds Update**

Current Funds Raised: over \$6,000

*What have we done so far?*



New sign installed in the front of the church!



Construction of Overflow Seating Area, Crying Room and Usher Supply Room is underway! A big thank you to Brain Franco for all of the work he has done so far ☺

*What other plans so we have?*

- The new exterior sign needs finishing touches such as exterior lighting, rewiring, irrigation adjustments and landscaping which will begin in the warmer spring weather.
- Complete the conversion of the back offices
- Install 2 chairlifts in the back entrance

**\*\*Thank you for your gracious gifts thus far, but as you can see, we still have quite a bit to accomplish. Please continue to keep these projects in prayer, and if you feel led, make an offering to the Buildings and Grounds fund. If you have any questions about any of the projects, feel free to speak to John Mercurio.\*\***

# Young Adult Ministry

After a winter break, the Young Adult Ministries is beginning Ashes to Fire Part 3 with the rest of the Church. We will be taking turns presenting the lessons, as this has been very beneficial in the past.

We are all excited about this year's Ashes to Fire study. The hope is to be renewed and refreshed in faith through the Lord's presence. The Young Adult Bible Study has built many relationships that have grown to be very strong bonds. What a blessing like-minded Christian friends are!

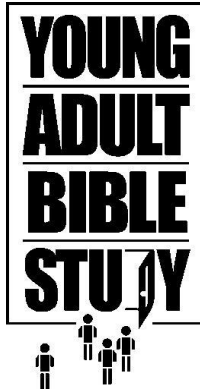
We have changed our format up: We will still meet every Saturday at 8pm in the Fellowship Hall from 2/16- to 5/18, with the following exceptions:

- 3/2 – Will meet on 3/3 instead
- 4/6 – Will meet on 4/7 instead
- 4/13- Will meet on 4/14 instead
- 5/4 – Will meet on 5/5 instead

Come and Join us for a time filled with the Word, Fellowship and tons of Fun!

In Christ,

*Megan Mahler*



## SUPPORT GROUPS

Our Fall Session ended in January after a couple of rescheduling issues due to Super Storm Sandy, and we took the month of February off.

Our Spring session begins with a special Kick-Off on Saturday, March 2<sup>nd</sup> and we will move to our normal Thursday night slot on March 7<sup>th</sup>.

Our Spring session will be our first using the new updated seminars from Church Initiative. We have previewed a few sessions; they have been enhanced greatly, and will provide our participants with more assistance than before.



We will also continue our Friday Night at the Movies program. We are currently showing "Fireproof" and the Sight and

Sound production of "Joseph". We will be adding a 3<sup>rd</sup> night with the showing of "Courageous". These movie nights are open to all, and the dates will be announced as the time gets closer.

New to our team this session is Evie Noor, who will be assisting Darrin with the DC4K program.

The Divorce Recovery Prayer Team is still going strong and continues to pray for the group participants weekly; they receive weekly updates on specific requests. If you would like to become a part of the Prayer Team, please let me know. The participants really feel the power of prayer.

During the current year, we will also be attempting to restart our Grief Share Support Program and will be working towards that in the second quarter.

In His Service,  
Scott Smith  
Support Groups Director

### A Word of Wisdom

You cannot stay where you are and go with God. You cannot continue doing things your way and accomplish God's purpose in his ways. Your thinking cannot come close to God's thoughts. For you to do the will of God, you must adjust your life to him, his purposes and his ways. - Henry Blackaby

your soul is longing for, and your soul will not rest until it rests in God.

So let me ask you, "Why are you looking among the dead for someone who is alive?" Why do you try to fill the longing within your soul with material things, your own ideas and strategies; why try to be like God, when you can have God; why try to have a false glory in yourself when you can have the real thing; and why trust in things that are not alive and cannot give life?

"He is risen from the dead!" He is alive! And He wants to raise you up too and make you alive; not just at the end of your life, but right now. Whenever someone turns from sin to the Lord Jesus, they suddenly recognize that God is a living, personal Presence, and God's Spirit frees us and gives us rest.

2 Corinthians 3:16-18a

But whenever someone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. For the Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord.

Do you feel like something is missing from your life? Are you still trying to fill a void with everything but God? Do you believe in God, yet you are not experiencing the manifestation of His glorious Presence with you, in you? Turn from all other gods and let Christ reveal Himself in fresh ways.

"Why are you looking among the dead for someone who is alive? He isn't here! He is risen from the dead!"

Join us on Easter morning, Resurrection Sunday. The story of Jesus does not end with His death and burial. I know belief is not easy, God knows that too, so He will pursue, assist and enable belief. After all, it has always been His plan to reveal Himself to you.

And that's ...

F.T.H.  
Pastor Jerry



Pastor's daily "GOOD MORNING!" message includes updates and announcements on church activities, prayer requests, a devotional, of course some jokes, quotes, trivia, news and some other things of interest. To begin receiving "Good Morning" send an email address to: [pastor.jerry@verizon.net](mailto:pastor.jerry@verizon.net) and he will add you to the daily distribution.

## *"from the Heart"*

is published quarterly by he

### **Church of the Nazarene**

2 Nazarene Way, Patchogue, NY 11772

Church: 631-654-3795 /Office: 631-289-3483

Email: [pastor.jerry@verizon.net](mailto:pastor.jerry@verizon.net)

Web Site: [www.patchnaz.net](http://www.patchnaz.net)

**Sunday Service at 10 a.m.**

**Senior Pastor: Rev. Jerry Bonfiglio**

**Associate Pastor: Rev. Nick Franco**

## **His Place Youth Center**

65 Franklin St., Patchogue, NY

631- 758-9525

Newsletter Design Editor: Suzanne Herrmann

