

...from the Heart

Published quarterly by the Patchogue Church of the Nazarene Summer 2017



I am reading a book by Joyce Rupp called, *“Praying Our Goodbyes.”* My good friend, Pastor Larry Mancini recommended it to me and thought it would be very appropriate for me to read it at this time. If you haven’t heard yet, I am retiring as Senior Pastor of the Patchogue Church of the Nazarene and will be moving to North Carolina in July.

The author of the book says that our journey in life is a pattern of hello – goodbye – hello; of life, death, and resurrection. Everyone has goodbyes – times of losing someone or something that has given meaning and value to life. She writes, “We may be harshly bruised by life’s farewells, but it is possible to be healed. We can become whole again. I believe that if we are willing to move inside the heart of the experience, to live patiently through the process even as we acknowledge the difficult, painful emotions, we can experience the wonder of spiritual growth and the marvel of new depths of faith in our relationship with God and with others.”

This *goodbye* for Ann and me has been difficult. It is hard to say goodbye to people and places, some that we’ve known all our life that have given meaning and value to our life. Yet, we look forward to being near (saying *hello*) to my son, daughter-in-law and grandson.

One morning, while reflecting on these things and praying, I read this in *“Praying Our Goodbyes,”* which encouraged me and gave me hope.

“Jesus was not spared the ache and the struggle of letting go ... because He was so fully human, so much like all of us who travel the hello-goodbye-hello pattern of the human journey.

“Leave-taking was a familiar part of the last three years of His life. It began with a goodbye to almost thirty years of security in His hometown (Nazareth), where a tug inside of Him said, ‘It’s time you moved on.’ It was time for Him to walk away from everyone and everything that He had known- His home, His family, His friends, His work, His favorite places of recreation, relaxation and prayer, His at-homeness with the town and the surrounding area.

“The walk away from His secure world took Jesus into a very significant rite of passage: His forty days in the desert where He said a prayerful farewell to all those years of Nazareth and came to terms with the letting go that was being asked of Him. He felt a power within Himself that pulled Him forth into a whole new world of ministry. Luke tells us that Jesus left the desert ‘with the power of the Spirit in Him’ (Lk 4:14). It was the power to say goodbye in order to say hello.

“It was the power working in Jesus and the ever-deepening love of His Father that enabled Jesus to walk...”

By the example of Jesus, the power of the Spirit and the ever-deepening love of the Father I am enabled to walk, to move on, allowing myself to develop new friendships, to love deeply, and to serve, knowing it will mean the price of farewell. Yet, by the resurrection of Jesus that we just celebrated on Easter, I know there is life even after death, there is something beyond our goodbyes. This is where my / our strength and hope lie.

I will miss you all very much. I will never forget you, I will never forget your love, and I will not stop praying for you.

"And now I entrust you to God and the message of his grace that is able to build you up and give you an inheritance with all those he has set apart for himself.

- Acts 20:32 (New Living Translation)

And so for the last time in these quarterly newsletters I affirm...

and that's... from the heart.

F.T.H.
Pastor Jeff



Weekly Schedule

Sunday

10am - Service - Nursery available
10:45am - Children's Sunday School - Fellowship Hall
10:45am - Teen Bible Study - HPYC Building
First Sunday of the Month - Holy Communion
Third Sunday of the month - Children's Missionary Workshop

Monday

7pm - First & Third Monday of the month - September through April - M.E.N.
(Men's Encouragement Network) - Fellowship Hall

Tuesday

7pm - Every Tuesday. Ladies - In - Touch at Mary Ann Malcolm's Home

Wednesday

7pm - Second and Fourth Wednesday each month - East End Bible Study - Mercurio home .
7:30pm - Every Wednesday - Bible Study, Fellowship & Games HPYC Building
7:30pm - First & Third Wednesday each month - Kairos - Young Adult Bible Study- Fellowship Hall

Thursday

10am-12noon - Every Thursday - Ladies Prayer & Bible Study Group- HPYC Building
7pm - Second Thursday each month - September through June - Ladies Sewing Circle - HPYC Building

Saturday

8am - First Saturday of each month - September through April - M.E.N.'s Breakfast - Fellowship Hall
7pm - First Saturday of each month - September through June - Good News Bowlers at Bowl Long Island Patchogue



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Check out our website at www.patchnaz.net for Sermons, Bible Studies
and other Church activities.



Baby Dedication

April 2, 2017

Patrick Norman Barker Jr.

Born on November 9, 2016

His parents are Kasha Marie and Patrick Barker.

Grandparents are Willie & Lauren Barker

Proud Uncle Will Barker

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On Sunday May 21, 2017 Wedding Bells rang for Frank Donato & Alissa Lamberti. Frank is on the Church Board, is co-leader of the Young Adult Group and works on our audio visual. He went on the last Mission Trip to Haiti.

Alissa is part of our Worship Team and also sings in the choir. We all wish them much Love & Happiness.

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Summer

June - June 4 - Children receive their First Holy Communion.

June 18 - Father's Day - Gift for the Dad's.



July - July 4 - Independence Day

July 23 - Save the Date - Church BBQ .



August - Keep Cool.



**Check out our website at www.patchnaz.net for other summer events not yet scheduled as of this printing.

God demands perfection, but he knows that we're not going to be able to give it. We come into this life with a bad score from the first frame. To be right with God, He needed to make another way. That is why God came into this world.

Jesus Christ is the only human being to ever throw strikes in all ten frames. The Bible says that Jesus was tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin (Hebrews 4:15). He always knocked down every pin and never left any standing. Jesus, the Son of God, was the only person to ever get the perfect 300. He is the only one to win the prize rather than the penalty.

When we look at the score board, we see our gutter balls and Christ's perfect game. The amazing thing is what Jesus offers to do for us. Jesus offers to switch scores.

The Bible states, "We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:20b-21). In effect, Jesus offers to erase His name from His score and to put your name there. In exchange, He agrees to claim your failed score. You get His prize. He takes your penalty. That is what the sinless Son of God was doing on the cross. The Lord died on the cross in the place of everyone who will trust Him as their substitute. Because of what Christ did, God is willing to look at you and see Christ's 300 rather than what you threw.

Will you turn to Him and accept Christ's offer? Or will you keep trying to get your own perfect score?

Dr. Nate Archer, First Baptist Church of Middleville MI - May 16, 2012



FOOD PANTRY NEWS

Recently the World Outreach Church donated groceries and meat from their food pantry, to our food pantry. It came at a time when our food supply was very low. Please give to the pantry so we can continue to help all who come to our church door. Our food pantry is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10am till 2pm, and on Sunday after the Church service. Thank you for your support.

MaryAnn Mavridis



"... for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me..." Matthew 25: 35 (esv)



Now I am giving him to the LORD, and he will belong to the LORD his whole life. (NLT)

And now I have dedicated him to GOD. He's dedicated to GOD for life. (MSG)

John and I had the honor and privilege of dedicating our grandson, Samuel Nicholas Franco, to the Lord on Saturday, May 6, 2017. It was just such a wonderful experience.

I started thinking about our families. Here we are, two strangers who happened to attend the same church and became friends. Our children, Rob and Krystn, started dating, and then they got married. Now they have a family of their own. I also thought of how we dedicated them to the Lord when they were small, and now they are dedicating their children to the Lord. God honors our commitments to Him. If we take these things seriously, so does God. We have been blessed.

We didn't set out to be blessed, just obedient. We didn't think about what would happen twenty-five or thirty years later. We were just doing what we thought God would have us do. But He has blessed us.

We dedicated our three sons, just as John and Jen dedicated their three girls, when they were little. Now, so many years later, they are all married with families of their own, and they are dedicating their children to the Lord, following the pattern. I expect, and hope to see the day, when their children will marry and have families that are dedicated to the Lord as well.

We dedicated our children to the Lord in the hope they would someday in the future, receive His love and grace and follow Him. However, there are no guarantees in the child rearing business. There were times when we didn't think they would find Jesus for themselves, but they did. This made all the difference in their lives and the lives of their children now. Dedication is another step of faith that parents make as well as an act of obedience. As we respond to what we believe God is leading us to do, we take action for Him. We have no idea what will happen next and down the road of life.

What might God be directing you to do for Him – not for yourself, but for Him? Whatever it is, you may not know how that will play out down the road, but if you obey and put into action what you believe He is calling you to do, you can't lose. God will honor your obedience to Him. He will bless you somewhere in the process, even if the end result is not what you thought it might be. He has a plan that is far better than you can imagine. His plans for us are perfect. So why do we doubt? Why do we fear? He has our lives in the palm of His hand, and He will not let us fail completely.

If we give our plans to God and trust Him to see them through, we will be blessed. I am still learning. I rely on my own abilities for almost everything. I do OK with that, but is it really what God wants and expects of me? Maybe not. He gave me the abilities that I rely on, but I am still controlling in many ways. What would He rather see of me and of you? I think of the words of an old hymn ...

***“When we walk with the Lord in the light of His word, what a glory He sheds on our way!
While we do His good will, He abides with us still, and with all who will trust and obey.*”**

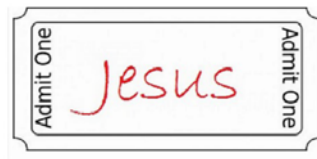
Trust and obey, for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.”

May God Bless you as you follow His leading and trust and obey Him.
Pastor Nick

Your ticket is stamped

On a train trip, a pastor struck up a conversation with a seatmate who thought character and good works led to salvation. The pastor wasn't making progress but had a realization when the conductor collected tickets, quickly checking the date before stamping each one.

After the conductor passed by, the pastor told his fellow passenger: “All the conductor looked at was your ticket. He did not inquire about your character. He didn't care who you were – whether you were a good or moral man or a criminal. So it is with salvation.



You need only God's 'ticket to heaven' stamped by the blood of Jesus Christ.”

Outreach

n. (out'rēch')

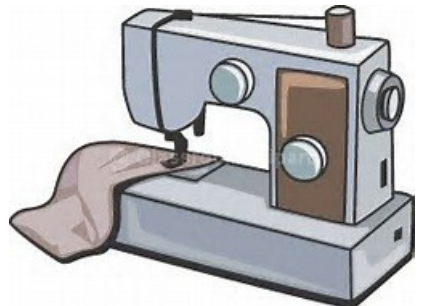
1. The act or process of reaching out.
2. A systematic attempt to provide services beyond conventional limits, as to particular segments of a community.

The ladies of Long Island Quilts for kids was looking for another opportunity to bless young girls with the sundresses we have been making. We have sent some along on the last two mission trips to Haiti. When I was asked if I had any other places we could send dresses to the Lord quickened my heart to recall "Kaya's kids" Paradise Orphanage in Burkina Faso. The problem would be getting the dresses there. Through normal channels it would cost almost \$500 to get a box of goods there and that would have made our efforts fruitless. Well God always has a plan and his timing is always perfect. After contacting Howie Makofsky, who along with his family has played an integral roll in founding the Orphanage, he mentioned he would be on Long Island to take part in a documentary being filmed in late April and had someone who would be willing to ship the box for us. PTL

I just recently finished packing a box filled with dresses and shorts headed for the Paradise Orphanage and sent them off with Howie. With the help of multiple women giving of their time and talents we managed to pack 50 sundresses and 50 pairs of boy's shorts. Such simple projects with far reaching results. Our outreach to others doesn't need to go as far out as Africa, there are plenty of places and people that can be blessed by the giving of your time and talents. Your "talent" is God given and inspired, and He can use it no matter what it is. Making meals, driving, singing, sewing, even shopping!!! There is someone that can be blessed when you give of yourself, your time and your talents – that is your outreach - and you will be blessed in the process.

May we all discover blessed opportunities to serve God in everything we do.

Corinne Franco





UNITY

“...with diligence, preserve the unity of the Spirit...”Ephesians 4:3

“...that they may be one...” John 17:20-23

Conflict and Conviction

“...The works of the flesh are evident...hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions...” Galatians 5:20

I believed I had the right to speak my mind until someone else had the courage and integrity to tell me I was wrong and pointed out the hurt I had caused. Revisiting my words, God made me read them through His sad eyes. What I had said was out of line and void of respect or kindness. Writing an apology became a painful reminder of my insensitivity. Taking the time to get the words right- type, erase, type, also meant retyping the conviction levied against me by the Holy Spirit. *Wrong, disrespectful, unloving, unkind. Guilty!*

They had every right to refuse me and I was afraid they would. Where would that leave us both? In addition, Communion Sunday was coming and I was scheduled to serve. How could I while this was unresolved?

I sent the apology. An hour passed; nothing. While I so much wanted to hear back before going to bed a reply did not come. It was not a restful night.

What's The Difference?

“Put aside...wrath, anger...put on compassion, kindness, humility, and forgiveness...” Colossians 3:8, 12-13. “...and go...be reconciled...” Matthew 5:24.

Although the words seem the same they are quite different. Forgiveness, while difficult, is the easier of the two. We can forgive without reconciliation. We can forgive someone in secret with or without our ever telling them we've bestowed it and we may simultaneously never want to be in their presence at all. It's like saying, "I forgive you because I can't go around feeling like this, but I never want to cross paths with you because I'll be hurt all over again." Somewhere in our heart-home, we've made a little room for our hurts, grudges, pain, and resentments. We close the door but never lock it. Consciously or subconsciously, whenever we need to feed those emotions, we go to that room for food.

Reconciliation, on the other hand (come to think of it, reconciliation is the ‘other hand’) is much more difficult. Reconciliation can only happen openly, face to face. It is the high and loving companion to forgiveness; restoration in the complete sense of the word. No heart-room for harboring old hurts. Reconciliation makes eye contact. It genuinely smiles as it says to the other person, “I don’t hold anything against you. My heart is free. It’s in the past. Let’s be at peace.”

(Only the Lord can bring this kind of absolute healing to your battered heart. If you *really* want it, He’ll do it!)

Forgiveness, Reconciliation, and Restoration

“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness...”
Galatians 5:20

Early in the morning, I checked my email. Forgiveness granted! What a relief. It could have been enough for me, but God wanted reconciliation. At church on Communion Sunday, prior to the start of services, I asked. Well, I couldn’t really speak. All I could do was offer my embrace and whisper, “I’m sorry.”

They had every right to cling to the hurt. They had every right to hold those wounds and build that little room. *They had every right to refuse to be reconciled.*

But they didn’t claim their rights.

“...blessed are the gentle...the merciful...the peacemakers...” Matthew 5: 5,7,9.
“...love does not keep a record of wrongs...” 1 Corinthians 13:5.

Without hesitation, my embrace was returned. Peace and light defeated conflict and dark. Did this erase the memory? No. Was the whole event forgotten in an instant? Of course not. But we chose to exchange the conflict for peace. We set aside our ‘right-ness’ for His righteousness. We experienced something very dear to God’s heart and something He wants us *all* to experience: the complete healing power of both forgiveness *and* reconciliation. Hand in hand it’s how He makes us right with each other, and Himself.

“...a new commandment I give to you...love one another...as I have loved you”...
John 13:34-35

Sue Cerruto



