

...from the Heart

Published quarterly by the Patchogue Church of the Nazarene



His Presence

I had recently been reminded that the Lord knows in advance everything... that is *going* to happen; that means nothing takes Him by surprise, including the crises that take place in *our lives*. Upon further reflection, I thought, well, it doesn't take Him by surprise, but it definitely has a way of startling me!

There is a verse from the book of Proverbs which says, ***You need not be afraid of sudden disaster.*** To be totally honest with you, it's easy to get caught off guard, to find your heart in your throat, or for it to skip a beat. How could wise King Solomon pen such advice? Could it be he retained something his father, King David, expressed in one of his many Psalms? No matter where you find yourself, and no matter what you could be going through, the Lord is Present.

There's a song we sing in the church which proclaims *the whole earth is filled, filled with His glory* (His presence) *filled with His glory*. The Lord is present 24/7, 365 days of the year. Now, if this is true, and it is, how is it we get ambushed? We get taken by surprise when we are *unaware* of His presence.

And how is it, that we lose sight of His company? We live in a world that serves up more distractions than we can count. I will not bore you with any list. But what I will do, is suggest you install an alarm system and take note of when it goes off: When you receive bad news concerning yourself or someone you love; when you're rattled by current events, whether in our nation or halfway around the world; take note of the alarm going off in you: a troubled heart, feelings of insecurity, a hostile takeover of your mind and emotions!

At that moment, where is the God who created this world? Where is the Savior of the world... who said, ***I will always be with you!*** He is closer to you than the clothing on your back.

Solomon could say, don't be afraid, because he knew the Lord was near. When we're living aware of His presence, there's peace from God, which ***surpasses all our understanding***. Our relationship with Him is our sure footing in the face of hardship, danger, disaster, and even death. This is why Solomon could then write in the following verse, ***the Lord is your security***. He is trustworthy!

As I intimated earlier, there's much that is thrown before us each day. Each of us deals with our share of distractions. Even good King Solomon became preoccupied and lost sight of the Lord's presence.

From time to time, each of us loses sight of how near the Lord is. When the alarm goes off and the monitoring company calls, pick up the phone. Acknowledge what has happened and give them your password. Hang up the phone, remember the Lord's love is everlasting, and start again.

As I so often say to my grown children, Love you much!

Pastor Vin



...from the Heart

Published quarterly by the Patchogue Church of the Nazarene
2 Nazarene Way in Patchogue, NY.

Mail: 65 Franklin Street

Patchogue, NY 11772

SUNDAY SERVICE 10AM

Phone/Fax 631-289-3483

Senior Pastor: Vincent Linguiti

FOOD PANTRY

OPEN: MON, WED, FRI 10AM - 2PM

65 Franklin St. (Rear Entrance)

For our weekly schedule of meetings, check out our website at
www.patchnaz.net Sermons live stream on Facebook.

Find us on YouTube



VBS 2022 – Monumental Love

The theme of the week is the greatest lesson we could ever learn about God: His Awesome Love is Always With Us! Our Vacation Bible School (VBS) program this year, Monumental, was an absolute blast! Each night, kids learned a special lesson about God's Greatness and Presence in every moment of our lives: God loves us no matter what, God is with us everywhere, God is in charge, God is stronger than anything, and God is surprising. It was an honor to coordinate this event for our kids. We had 30 happy, energetic students

that attended faithfully all week, and came back on Sunday for our big performance! If you were unable to attend, I would highly recommend looking up that service on our YouTube channel; watching the kids worship God is a joy!

Our VBS week ran from July 11-15, with a special performance for our church on Sunday, July 17th.

Directly after service, we enjoyed a time of fellowship during our annual Church Picnic (thank you Sue Cerruto for putting together such a wonderful event!). Every day was filled with inspiring messages, music, crafts, Bible stories, fun games, and a mission to help those around us in need through Lighthouse Mission. The kids and volunteers attended each night with smiles on their faces and God's Love in their hearts. Each child was excited to see what fun activities were planned for each night, which would not have been possible without the devotion of our incredible station leaders: Mary Kate La Spisa, our Bible Teacher; Desiree Boutsikos, our Craft Leader; and Michael Caiazzo and Matt Boutsikos, our Missions and Recreation Leaders. Every leader was integral throughout the week. Our teens stepped into the role of Team Leader, which let them engage directly with the younger kids and help them navigate each station. The kids loved being with our teens, and you could see how much the kids looked up to them as role models. It touched my heart to watch their interactions all week. I can't thank all of our volunteers enough for the time, love, prayer, and energy they brought leading up to the week, and throughout the event itself. This would never work without them!

For this year's mission, I felt led to show the kids that there are people in need all around them. The kids learned about all of the wonderful work that happens all year long at Lighthouse. On Monday night, Michael, with the help of Simeon and Malachi, played an interactive game that modeled going out in the community to give out food and other essential items. The kids were inspired and brought monetary donations each night. Our goal was to raise \$250 by the end of the week. We crushed that goal by Thursday night, and when I asked the kids if we should stop there, they emphatically answered NO! They were beyond excited to see the number grow, and it kept growing until Sunday. In all, we raised \$394.16! What a joy to be able to give freely, joyfully, and in abundance!!



Continue to pray for the kids that attended, and for everyone who was a part of the experience. God-willing, lives were changed for the better, and seeds were planted that will lead to strong roots of faith. I know it is early to think about next year, but whenever the kids, or VBS itself, come to mind, please pray for continued excitement, growth, and success in our program.

In Christ, Sue Herrmann ☺

My “Garden of Weedin’”

This summer my vegetable garden looked more like a field of weeds than anything else. I started the season with clean garden beds or so I thought. Everything was nice and neat until the rains came and then more rain. Suddenly the weeds were more plentiful than the vegetables. I just could not get ahead of it. I cleared it out and then it happened all over again. As I pulled out the nasty things I ended up pulling up things like baby beets and carrots along with them. I was pulling the weeds along with the fruit – sound familiar? Right now after yet another round of weeding it looks like I may have it under control, but I am sure the weeds will creep right back in. Where did they come from? I read that as we pull the weeds we are moving and planting other weed seeds as we do it. The seeds were already there. When I tilled up the soil to plant my seeds I most likely moved the weed seeds to the surface and planted them myself.

We have good intentions when we get started on a beautiful garden, but unless you stay diligent, the weeds will get ahead of you.

I came across this little saying: ***Your mind is a Garden, Your thoughts are the Seeds. You can grow Flowers or you can grow***

Weeds. Maybe sometimes we plant weed seeds without knowing it. Sometimes we plant the seeds thinking we are going to grow flowers but somehow other thoughts move in and we end up pushing the weed seeds in deeper. A little here and there until the weeds take over. 2 Corinthians 10:5 says to take every thought captive. It’s hard to keep your Garden (mind) weed (sin) free but that doesn’t mean you should stop pulling them out and cleaning up your soil.

What seeds are hiding in your soil waiting to grow? Do your planting for the Lord. If weeds start to creep in pull them out by the roots!

Now don’t even get me started on the battle with bugs and squirrels!

Corinne Franco, Church Treasurer



Plant a seed of Faith!



FAITH PROMISE gifts are a part of our church’s World Evangelism giving.

This along with the Thanksgiving and Easter offerings helps us share Christ’s transformational love with the world and fulfill our call to make Christ-like disciples in the nations. A FAITH PROMISE is exactly what it states—a promise made in faith between an individual and God over and above your tithe and goes towards the World Evangelism Fund.

Your gifts to FAITH PROMISE, THANKSGIVING & EASTER OFFERINGS provide for many types of ministry in the global Church of the Nazarene. It is an opportunity to allow God to show how He provides when we open our hearts in generosity.

FAITH PROMISE gifts are given systematically for global missions throughout the year. We encourage you to pray about the amount you plan to give for global missions. You can choose to give weekly, monthly, or a one-time gift.



WOMEN'S MINISTRY

MY GOODNESS HOW THE MONTHS FLY BY! I MUST ADMIT THAT AS WE HAVE HAD SO MANY HOT, HUMID DAYS OF SUMMER, I AM REALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO THE COOLER AUTUMN WEATHER.

OUR THURSDAY LADIES GROUP CONTINUES TO MEET ALL-YEAR LONG AND WE HAVE ENJOYED OUR TIMES TOGETHER. DURING THE SUMMER WE DON'T DO A FORMAL STUDY BUT HAVE A MORE CASUAL TIME OF PRAYER, DEVOTIONS AND SINGING. THERE IS ALSO A LOT OF SHARING, CARING AND LAUGHTER THAT GOES ON EACH WEEK.

THIS FALL WE WILL BE STARTING A NEW BOOK ENTITLED, "FACES OF FRIENDSHIP" BY DEBI PRYDE. IT WILL SHARE DIFFERENT BIBLICAL FRIENDSHIPS; SOME GOOD, KIND AND ENCOURAGING AND OTHERS DISAPPOINTING AND DESTRUCTIVE. FRIENDS ARE SUCH AN IMPORTANT PART OF OUR LIVES AND IT IS IMPORTANT TO NURTURE AND TREASURE THOSE RELATIONSHIPS.

AS ALWAYS, ALL LADIES ARE WELCOME TO JOIN US EACH THURSDAY MORNING AT 10A.M. IN THE SANCTUARY.

COVID STOPPED MANY ACTIVITIES IN OUR CHURCH, ONE OF THEM BEING THE SATURDAY LADIES BRUNCHES. IF ALL STAYS WELL, I PLAN TO HAVE A BRUNCH ON THE SECOND SATURDAY OF OCTOBER. THESE ARE INFORMAL TIMES OF JUST ENJOYING GOOD FOOD AND GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER BETTER. WE USUALLY SHARE A SHORT DEVOTION AND OUR HEARTS WITH ONE ANOTHER. I WILL HAND-OUT A REMINDER AS THE TIME GETS CLOSER.

EACH SEASON HAS MANY DIFFERENT ASPECTS TO IT AND WE ALL HAVE OUR FAVORITES. AS WE ENTER INTO THE LAST QUARTER OF 2022, MAY WE ENJOY EACH DAY THE LORD BLESSES US WITH AND LIVE OUR LIVES SEEKING, SERVING AND HONORING HIM IN ALL WE DO.
IN CHRIST,
MARY ANN



Wedding
IN THE CHURCH

Blanca Perez & Jeffrey Ray were married on August 20, 2022.
The ceremony was performed by Pastor Vincent Linguiti,
Senior Pastor of our Church. We wish the Happy Couple
many years of Marital Bliss!

Mining for Gold

1 Peter 1:6-7 (NLT) - *So be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you must endure many trials for a little while. These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold—though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world.*

On January 24, 1848 gold was found by James W. Marshall at Sutter's Mill in Coloma, California. This discovery caused an international frenzy as over 300,000 people made their way to California in search for gold and fortune. This was known as the great California Gold Rush. It lasted from 1848 to 1855 and peaked in 1849. These gold seekers became known as the Forty-niners. They were so determined to find this precious metal that they left homes, jobs, and even family behind and made their way to Northern California. However, very few actually became rich or even made out better than they were when they started their diligent search.



We seem to have a tendency to become motivated by worldly riches and fame. We too will often drop everything and run after the latest craze. Often we find our search to be futile too. We have been given the answer to our quest for what is truly valuable in the Word of God. The secret is found in many places in the Bible, but I wanted to cite one example found in 1 Peter.

We should be glad and find great joy even in our times of trial because we know what lies beyond the trials and hardships. It is during these tough times that our faith is tested and grows stronger as we press forward with God. Our goal and the true precious commodity is not found in gold or other riches. It is found in our faith that is shown to be genuine. Peter tells us that genuine faith is more valuable than gold, even refined gold.

James 1:2-4 (NLT) - *Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.*

Many times when trials come our way we look for opportunities to mine and pan for gold thinking that will satisfy us and get us through the tough times. Actually, the opposite is true. Stay the course with perseverance and God will not only take us through, but He will also cause growth in our faith. We will then understand what is truly more valuable than worldly things.

Yes there's gold in them thar hills, but there's something more precious and valuable than gold in our life of faith in Jesus Christ. We have the promises of God to lean on. Our future is secure, and we are rich in Him. We will not lack anything as we place our treasure in the heavenly realm.

Blessings and Peace to you in Christ,
Pastor Nick

Be Not Deceived

For Mother's Day, Stephen and Toni gave me a large potted calla lily, and potted succulents in a unique container made of four cassette tapes glued together to form a box. One cassette was a head-cleaner, two were blanks, and the other was 'Music of Wagner', the German



composer. I thought it a very clever use of old cassettes and especially nostalgic for this baby-boomer. The topsoil was hidden by a layer of small pebbles which added a desert-like theme to the whole thing. Sitting on my dining room table, which is more of a mail center, the planter looked like a small island in the middle of a sea of paper. About a week later, I watered it for the first time. To my dismay, the water came out between the holes of the cassettes and from underneath the planter! Grabbing a towel to mop up the water, I muttered to myself about the designer not being very clever after all.

I put the still-dripping planter in the sink until it was dry and then placed it by the kitchen window. Several days later, I put it in the sink to water it and let it dry. As I moved it to the window, something didn't look right. I tugged on one of the leaves. It felt rubbery. What was that green layer under the pebbles? Attempting to move them, I saw they were glued to the...wait, *glued*? I looked at the underside of the planter. Oh yes, twice now I had watered a fake plant stuck in green Styrofoam covered with glued-on pebbles surrounded by four cassette tapes. When it leaked the first time, I faulted the person who designed it. Because I assumed it was real, I never bothered to inspect it. Ego and pride kept me from allowing that I could be deceived, thus I was a prime candidate for it!

While the Bible starts and ends with perfection, deception appears throughout. From Genesis 3 to Revelation 20 there are roughly 428 instances and variations of the word *deceive**. Scripture tells us about the fall of Satan, the most self-deceived creature that ever existed. He is a liar and the father of lies. His deception is all around us and, because of original sin, in us; our heart, mind, and all our senses can be deceived. However, Matthew 24:24 is our promise—a true and faithful Christian will not ultimately be deceived.

How do you protect yourself against deception?

Make sure you are a child of God. Unbelievers have no protection in fact, they are prime targets for it**. Memorize Scripture! You may not always have your phone app or Bible handy. We're in a battle, so use Scripture correctly. Misquoting or using it out of context can do more harm than good. Pray-resist-stand. Wait for your marching orders. Hold your ground. Don't give the enemy territory that belongs to God. Expect bruises and scars. Be patient. Remember- you are not alone. Reach out. Gather. Keep in fellowship with other believers. Bear one another's burdens. Sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with thankfulness. Meditate on the Word. Fill your heart and mind with the things that honor God and glorify Him. Stay close to God. The battle is His. He is your strong tower, your refuge, your strength, and your protection. He has given you everything you need to withstand the enemy, so put it to use. He will give you the victory!

-Sue Cerruto

Now that I've made my private chagrin public, allow me to further humiliate myself. I hold an Associate Degree in Applied Science in General Horticulture. Oh yes! Four semesters on the Dean's List. I spent two years learning about plants, gardens, trees, landscaping, greenhouse operation, and field growing. In-between semesters, I worked for two summers at the Queens Botanical Garden and, after graduating college, I worked for Flower Time Nurseries. (Anyone remember that company?) Even with training and experience I'd been deceived, but *thanks* to training and experience the deception was short-lived.

*Strong's Concordance 4105 *planáo* - to go astray, get off-course, to err, to deviate from the correct path, to roam into error, to wander, to be misled. <https://biblehub.com/greek/4105.htm>

** Romans 1: 28-31



Ava Virginia Cerruto was dedicated to the Lord on June 25, 2022. She was born on September 7, 2021 to Stephen & Toni Cerruto. We look forward to watching little Ava grow up. Maybe she will follow in her Grandmother's footsteps and go into Horticulture or become a writer.

Prayer 101



We've been having a wonderful time of prayer on Wednesday nights here at Patchogue. We started the prayer meetings shortly after Pentecost, and it has been refreshing to see the Holy Spirit at work. I'd welcome you to join us as we pray; there is no obligation to pray out loud. Maybe you are new to the discipline of prayer, and don't know where to start – don't worry about it! Jesus' disciples felt the same kind of trepidation, and they were direct witnesses to the supreme expert on prayer! In Luke's gospel, they came to Jesus and said, "Teach us to pray."

Jesus' answer to their request is of course known all over the world. We call it the Lord's Prayer, and if you're just starting out on the path of Christian discipline, or if you've been a faithful follower of Jesus for many years, there is power and wisdom to find in Jesus' words. It begins, "Our Father who art in heaven." Right from the beginning, we see that Christian prayer is different from other types of prayer. People from all kinds of religions pray; Muslims are called to prayer five times a day; devout Jews pray at least three times a day. But Christian prayer is marked first of all by our addressing God as Father. He is a Father, whose only Son is Jesus Christ. And later, we see that we address God through the Holy Spirit. Therefore Christian prayer is a distinctly Trinitarian act: we pray to the Father, through the Son, in the power of the Holy Spirit. That's a lot to take in all at once, but just know that we come to the Father as his children, as those adopted into his family.

Jesus goes on to say, "Hallowed be Thy name." The name of the Lord is hallowed, or, as we would say today, is made holy; or, even simpler still, is set apart from all other things. The holiness of God means that there is nothing on this world or in the heavens that resembles Him. The only One who is the direct image of God is our Lord Jesus Christ; He is the God-man, the one who advocates on our behalf (1 John 2:1). John writes that our fellowship is with God the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ (1 John 1:3). We enter into that fellowship by nature of Jesus' death on the cross, and we sustain that fellowship through prayer with one another. That's still a lot to take in, but just know that Christian prayer takes seriously God's holiness, his "other-ness," and that we are able to approach him by nature of Jesus' death on the cross and resurrection from the grave.

Going on, Jesus says "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done." Christian prayer is not me-centered. Prayer is focusing on God's divine plan for the earth. We sometimes gloss over the kingdom language in the Bible because after all, we live in a representative democracy, not in a monarchy or theocracy. But the idea of the Kingdom of God is essential for the Christian life; our whole endeavor is wrapped up in God's purposes. When we pray, we seek to know what those purposes are.

Our goal should not be to convince God to go along with whatever we've been planning; nor is it to seek the Lord's blessings on something we've already done; it isn't even to persuade God to take action be it in a healing, or some other kind of divine breakthrough. This trips a lot of us up, because we think, "Why should I pray when God knows everything anyway? Why should I pray when God is sovereign and is going to carry out His plan anyway?" They're tricky questions, to be sure, but when our focus is less on our prerogative and more to be a worker in God's kingdom, the questions become less bothersome. They still exist, but we put all of our trust in the fact that God's purposes are going to be fulfilled, one way or another.



I've written too much, it seems, but I'd like to end by extending the invitation once again. Let this be your chance to grow in faith; we're a loving bunch, we won't make you feel uncomfortable. Let's pray together for one another, for the nation, for our families, and for the kingdom to come, on earth as it is in heaven. Jon Ollett



Present Tense

After "turkey day" came and went last year, a pastor challenged church members to ask one another not "How *was* your Thanksgiving?" but "How *is* your Thanksgiving?" After all, giving thanks should be an ongoing act.



That doesn't always need to be profoundly deep, either. A.J. Jacobs, author of *Thanks a Thousand*, once asked a philosophy-professor friend what he was grateful for. The shockingly simple reply? "Sometimes I'm just grateful I have arms." That odd but spot-on answer shows the importance, Jacobs says, of being "thankful for things so omnipresent that they can escape our notice." So ... how *is* your Thanksgiving?

From Newsletter Newsletter



Deepest Sympathy and Prayers to Melba Hopkins on the passing of her Sister, Elaine Nelson.

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?



Magicians entertain us with *sleight of hand* tricks that they refer to as magic.

It seems that magicians and politicians have something in common. They challenge us to focus intently as they produce coins, birds or life altering laws seemingly out of thin air. We know this isn't real but even as we gaze intently, we still can't explain how we're being fooled. But what if we were to change our seated viewing position from front to side? For years my wife Jen and I have done a daily two mile walk, following mostly the same pattern and route. One day we reversed our approach, walking the same route but from the opposite direction. The same places we had studied for years appeared amazingly different because of a slight change in our perspective.

Anyone who has attended Sunday school, listened to Sunday sermons, sat in on a Bible study or read the New Testament, has heard the account of the, *Good Samaritan*. The story, found in the Tenth chapter of Luke, is so well known that many hospitals across our nation have adopted the name. Though you've heard the story many times, I invite you to look at it from a different perspective. Consider this ... the question, (*Who is my neighbor?*), which prompted Jesus to tell the story of the Good Samaritan, was asked by an expert in religious law, not by Jesus. Luke tells us that the man who put the question to Jesus wasn't interested in the truth, he wanted to create, at least an air of confusion, at best public humiliation for Jesus.

Who is my neighbor? The question has echoed through the centuries. Jesus answered it for the pious religious expert and for all of us, but have we ever really understood it? The past two years, have presented challenges, the like of which none of us had ever encountered. Life itself at times seemed almost unrecognizable. In the process of this there were when times we knew what we were seeing and hearing wasn't the truth, causing even greater confusion and division. We became more concerned with, who is my enemy, than who is my neighbor. Amazingly Jesus never treated the man, who was clearly trying to do him harm, as an enemy. He never called him out, revealing what was really in his heart. Instead Jesus offered his enemy the pathway to eternal life, treating his enemy as if he were his friend or his neighbor.

How do you answer the question, who is my neighbor? Yes of course, you know the people who live on your block, complex, community or workplace but does that cover it? The Samaritan became friend (neighbor) to a total stranger sharing the love of God not through words, but actions. Take a closer look. There are people hurting, in need of a caring word or expression of kindness in your neighborhood, grocery store or even church. You don't need to offer them the plan of salvation (there was no dialogue between the Samaritan and the man he rescued) a smile, a friendly greeting, a cup of coffee, a few moments of your time might change everything. Recently a teenager noticed a car parked along the curbside with a woman sitting inside. Stopping to check on her he asked if he could help. The woman seized the opportunity pouring out her heart. The teenager shared what God gave him, a few encouraging words from the book of Isaiah, about God never leaving us. The woman began to weep telling him that she had planned to end her life that night but his kindness had given her new hope.

Pray that God will open your eyes, change your perspective, allow you to see what you have been missing. Here's the amazing part, when we reach out to others, we become an extension of God Himself, we not only offer help we receive it as well. There's a mission field out there needing your involvement, its right there in your neighborhood.

Serving Him together,
Pastor John



High School Graduates

Emily McKeever – June 17
Our Savior New American
High School

Victoria LaSpisa – June 23
Patchogue-Medford High School



COMING UP...

SEPTEMBER

Sept 5 - Labor Day
Sept 11 - Patriot Day
Sept. 22 - First day of Autumn

OCTOBER

PASTOR APPRECIATION MONTH

Oct 8 - Ladies Brunch

NOVEMBER

Nov 6 - Daylight Savings Time Ends
Nov 8 - Election Day
Nov 11 - Veterans Day
Nov 24 - Thanksgiving Day