

...from the Heart

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I've been thinking... what a statement, truth is, I'm *always* thinking. I have never been more aware than I have been in the past couple of years that the mind rarely, if ever, takes a vacation! I digress. I've been thinking, what is the church? Two things come to mind, and they do so as I look around me at the caring community faith/family the Lord has placed Kathy and me in... and the simple words of Jesus.

***Where two or three gather together as my followers,
I am there among them.***

The God who promised to be with us and never leave or desert us, who is with us when no one else is around, also invites us to gather together.

Those who follow Him throughout their week gather for mutual encouragement, regardless of size and number. The church comes in different shapes and varies in its practices.

Yet one thing holds true... **He is Present.** I see. I sense. I hear Him. I watch Him move among us in and through our gatherings and through emails, texts, and phone conversations.

All the above is at the heart of the church. No, it is the church!

Jesus said, ***By this all people will know that you are my disciples,
if you have love for one another.***

I count my blessings: His presence in the hearts of His people here, in this place.

Pastor Vin

New Little Punkins



Rose Charlotte Lorusso

6/2/2023

7lbs 7oz

Dad and Mom – Matt & Tiffany Lorusso

Big Sister – Eliza

Benjamin David Guevara

8/10/2023

7lbs 4oz

Dad and Mom – Paul & Holly Guevara

Big Brothers – Timothy and Caleb

*Sympathy & Prayers
to Linda Boughey on
the passing of her best friend, Ron.*



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Senior Pastor Vincent Linguiti

Sunday Service at 10am

For our weekly schedule of meetings, check
out our website at www.patchnaz.net

Sermons live stream on Facebook. Find us on You Tube.

FOOD PANTRY - MON, WED, FRI - 10am - 2pm 65 Franklin St. (Rear Entrance)

Be Doers of the Word - James 1:22

“Actions speak louder than words.” This would be James’ theme song or key thought in the New Testament book that bears his name. He teaches very practical, relevant lessons for believers then and now. Sometimes we think the Bible contains great stories and/or theological lessons, but there are also some very relevant and applicable teachings that we can hold onto today in 2023.

With this thought in mind, I will be leading a Small Group Bible Study beginning Wed. Sept 13 and running six weeks through Oct 18, 2023 in the Fellowship hall at the church. I chose the Fellowship Hall for the intimacy factor and so we can offer this study time using Zoom. I am preparing the lesson plan for this venture now. I will be using a book by Max Lucado called Life Lessons from James as the base for the interactive study. I also have my own material that I have prepared to supplement Max’s book as needed. I think it will be a nice time to spend together for fellowship, prayer and study. I am planning on a 90 minute session each week. Half hour of prayer and coffee and two half hour lessons. Max has 12 lessons in James, but I think we can make that a little shorter by doubling up – two lessons per week.

James is considered a teacher of very applicable lessons. His teachings resemble Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount. He is the half-brother of Jesus and had some insight into the Lord’s heart. Although he was not a true believer in Jesus during the Lord’s earthly ministry, he must have been paying close attention. After his conversion, he had a lot of insight to relay to humanity. He became the head of the Jerusalem church and was visited by Paul and others looking for advice from the council there regarding certain doctrinal issues that arose in the early church.

Do you find yourself blurting out something as a reaction to a situation and then wish you could take it back? Do you find actually applying the Word to your daily circumstances unrealistic? Do you ever feel that your prayers are not being heard or that God is ignoring you for some reason? Do you squirm and anguish when things come up against you thinking that God does not care about you and is not helping you? These are all normal issues for us today, and the book of James takes these and other things into account as he gives us practical advice.

Please consider coming out for this short but relevant study in the Word. We will be looking at the entire book of James. If you cannot come out in person, we will also offer the lessons via Zoom. Come in person or via Zoom every Wed. Sept 13 through Oct 18 at 7:00. A zoom link will be sent out to all interested. Please let me know if you will be attending or viewing via Zoom as soon as you can. Each lesson is a separate study, so you can join at any point during the six weeks. Don’t hesitate if you miss a week. Pick up at a new starting point each session.

I am looking forward to being with you in person or online for this interactive study in the book of James.

Blessings,
Pastor Nick





VBS 2023 – Shining Jesus' Light

What an out-of-this-world adventure we had! Our Vacation Bible School (VBS) program this year, Stellar, was an absolute blast! Each night the kids learned a new way that they could Shine Jesus' Light in their everyday lives: When life feels dark, When people don't get along, When good things happen, When people are sad, and When people need help. It was an honor to coordinate this event for our kids. We had 30 happy, energetic students that attended faithfully all week, and many were able to come back on Sunday for our big performance! We even had a special guest, our very own Pastor-naut, Pastor Vin! If you were unable to attend service that day, 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 10-14, with a special performance for our church on Sunday, July 16th. 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!). No amount of rain could dampen our fun! 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 Frank Donato, our Missions and Recreation Leader. Every leader was integral throughout the week. Our teens stepped into various assisting roles, 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. 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 on Friday night, so much so that we doubled our goal! They were beyond excited to see the number grow. In all, our kids and families raised \$510.56!!! 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 ☺





Train Up a Child (Proverbs 22:6)

Teaching your children generosity starts with learning to share toys and snacks and the things that seem to matter most to them when they learn the word **mine**. But as they grow older saving and buying things that they want holds more importance to them. So how do they learn to share their money? Well first it comes from how their parents view money and how willing they are to share in charitable giving. Parents lead by example in turn children follow. In today's society is a ME/MINE generation. When you give encourage your children to also bring their offering whether it be pennies, nickels or dimes, it helps lead to a generous heart into the future. Several years back our Children's Ministry started sponsoring a child through Nazarene Compassionate Ministry, his name is Adan from Pakistan. The cost of sponsorship is \$30 per month. This is a great opportunity for your children to be involved in giving in any amount. They can bring their offering marked "Adan" to Sunday School or put it in one of the offering baskets provided at the front and rear of the church. Take some time to explain the concept of generosity to your children. This will help them feel good about giving and more likely to become generous givers in the future.

Corinne Franco, Treasurer

This year's VBS collection was \$510.56 donated to the Lighthouse Mission in Bellport.
www.lighthousemission.com/

Learn more about child sponsorship through Nazarene Compassionate Ministries at
<https://cs.ncm.org/>

September is Alabaster month. By collecting your spare change the Alabaster Offering provides funds for property and buildings around the world. Pick up a box in the foyer and bring it back in February. <https://nazarene.org/alabaster>

November is the Offering of Thanks (Thanksgiving) for World Evangelism. This Offering will be taken again in April at Easter. The World Evangelism Fund combines gifts from each person and church to fund ministries everywhere, thereby fueling the Church of the Nazarene's mission of making Christ-like disciples in all nations. <https://nazarene.org/wef>

Falling Leaves

Fall would be my favorite season if it weren't for the falling leaves. I love the crisp mornings, the apple picking, the pumpkin decorations, the preparation for Thanksgiving, but the leaf piles I could do without. To be honest, there are still a few piles from last year behind the shed that I haven't picked up yet. It's also pretty expensive; one year we paid an exorbitant amount for a landscaper to pick up the leaves; last year we spent an exorbitant amount on those brown landscaping bags from Home Depot – well over 200 bags!



There's a poem by Robert Frost that I particularly like, and he seems to share the same attitude. He begins the poem "In Hardwood Groves," with the line "The same leaves over and over again!" He sounds exasperated just by the sight of those leaves. Yet, as he continues to reflect on the cycle of trees, his exasperation makes way for honest reflection. "Before the leaves can mount again . . . They must go down into the dark decayed." There's a mysterious process at work here, where every leaf provides the ways and the means for the next generation of leaves. Yet, that process necessarily involves death. "They *must* be pierced by flowers and put Beneath the feet of dancing flowers." By the end of the poem, Frost recognizes that behind the monotonous leaf-cycle, there's a profound mystery of life and death that involves every single human life.

I don't intentionally mean to be the party-pooper, but frankly death is something each of us will have to face. And in the meantime, it is ever before us. In Romans chapter 8, the apostle Paul quotes from Psalm 44: "For your sake we face death all the day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." And in 2 Corinthians, the concept of death is constantly on Paul's mind. In chapter 4 he writes, "We who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may also be revealed in our mortal body." Here you can see the unflagging hopefulness of Paul, even in the face of trials, persecutions, and death. For Paul, Jesus' death and resurrection changes everything, even our own experience of death. There is a greater mystery at work in the life of the Christian than even that mystery of life and death. For the Christian, Jesus' life and power is revealed in us; the power of God is at work in us, even in our sickness and death. Back to Romans 8, Paul spells out this mystery in a mystical, beautiful way: "If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you."

It is ultimately Good News, and goodness knows we need some Good News in this angry, self-absorbed culture that we're living in. To be clear, the message is not "Death is not the end." All kinds of people believe in life after death, and many religions believe in some sort of reincarnation. No, the message is "Christ has overcome death." And in that victory, we get to share in the spoils. Paul ends the chapter with words that have brought comfort to many: "I am convinced," he says "That neither death, nor life . . . nor things present, nor things to come . . . nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." I hope you are convinced as well.

Jon Ollett

Freedom: More than a Word

This public ministry covered three short years, but never has anyone made so dynamic an impact in so short a time as Jesus. Being on the road the majority of those three years created a whirlwind kind of existence for Jesus and his disciples. Jesus' words recorded in Luke 9:58 (NKJ): *"Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."* gives us a taste of how difficult those years of travel were. Though often pressed, Jesus never appeared rushed. On one occasion his disciples tried to shield him from what they deemed, unnecessary parental pressure. Allow me to share a portion from an earlier *FTH* essay written in November of 2014 that illustrates this point. (See two paragraphs below)

Mark 10:13-16 (NLT) records the account of Jesus' disciples attempting to protect him by preventing parents from taking up his time with trivial blessings. You know, priorities only, the lame the blind needed to be dealt with not kids! How simple, gentle and in keeping with his character was Jesus response? ¹³ *One day some parents brought their children to Jesus so he could touch and bless them. But the disciples scolded the parents for bothering him.* ¹⁴ *When Jesus saw what was happening, he was angry with his disciples. He said to them, "Let the children come to me. Don't stop them! For the Kingdom of God belongs to those who are like these children."* ¹⁵ *I tell you the truth, anyone who doesn't receive the Kingdom of God like a child will never enter it.* ¹⁶ *Then he took the children in his arms and placed his hands on their heads and blessed them.*

Can you form a mental picture of that moment? Jesus picking up those kids, holding them in his arms, gathering some of them in bunches with both arms hugging them close to him. Can you see it; can you hear the giggles? Seeing this, the rest of the children rushed to Jesus, getting close enough to him to put their hands on him, nearly knocking him over as they surrounded him, sensing the love of an adult as only a child can. Can you see him laughing and smiling thoroughly enjoying the moment, to the laughter and delight of the parents? It created a never to be forgotten memory. Isn't that why Mark recorded it? Don't miss the most important instruction that Jesus gave in verse sixteen; unless you regard the kingdom of God with the attitude of a child, you will not be a part of it!

Clearly Jesus was and is concerned for the welfare of society's most innocent members, its children. Jesus also made this statement concerning anyone intending harm to a child. *"There will always be temptations to sin, but what sorrow awaits the person who does the tempting!"* ² *It would be better to be thrown into the sea with a millstone hung around your neck than to cause one of these little ones to fall into sin.* Luke 7:1, 2 (NLT)

On July 4th the movie, *Sound of Freedom* made its way into theaters across the nation. Its release was delayed for nearly five years, due to its firestorm content of human trafficking and in particular, child trafficking. Its content is difficult to watch; uncovered wickedness always is, but it just might be the tool God is using to rescue thousands of children from the darkness that lurks around us. I encourage you to make the effort to see this film before it's gone. Its content and your participation could be life changing, not only for you but for thousands of innocents caught in this heinous crime.

As Christians we're not called to be hearers of God's Word only, but also doers. One way to learn more about this, is to check out *Operation Underground Rail Road*, an organization started by Tim Ballard, former Homeland Security agent and the man behind the story. God has always intended for His people to make a difference, an impact on the lives of those around them. To shine light into a spiritually dark world. What might God be asking you to do, that requires you to step out of your comfort zone?

Serving Him Together,
Pastor John Mercurio

WOMEN'S MINISTRY



It is always a bit difficult writing an article for the next issue of the newsletter when we are still in the present season. Here it is the middle of summer and I am thinking of changing leaves, cooler temperatures and all things autumn.

During the summer months, several of the women took turns bringing a devotion each week. It was wonderful to hear how the Lord has worked in each of their lives and a real encouragement to those of us listening. There were always many Scripture verses to go along with each devotion. It was a really nice way to learn some things about each other that we didn't know before.

We will get back to our normal format in mid-September. This will include our usual prayer time, book study and singing praises to our Lord. The book we will start with is a Women of Faith study entitled Encouraging One Another. Even though we do this on a regular basis, it is always good to be reminded of the different ways we can be there for those who might be struggling. As always, all ladies are welcome to join us at 10:00A.M. on Thursday mornings in the Sanctuary.

On Saturday, Sept. 23, we will have a Ladies Breakfast. It will be at 9:30A.M. in our church Fellowship Hall. As the date approaches, I will be handing out reminders and getting a tentative head count so we will have a special place for all ladies attending. Hope to see many of you there.

We live in an area that experiences all four seasons. Just as the weather changes, our lives are constantly changing as well. Each of us will have really great days and some days that we don't even want to get out of bed. Usually the first thing I do when I awake each morning is to thank God for another day and trust Him for whatever awaits me. Just remember that no matter what we are dealing with, our mighty Lord is with us every moment of every day!

Joyfully serving,
Mary Ann