

...from the Heart

Published quarterly by the Patchogue Church of the Nazarene



2023

I have been encouraged and challenged not to write another message when it comes to the newsletter. I welcome such a council. I write so much these days that I thought about not writing this quarter. I confess that is “ground zero” for me every quarter. To compose or not to compose, that is the question.

As I look around the tablet at those who co-author each newsletter, I see individuals who invest their time/lives to welcome others in, to connect, rest and receive. They greet, smile, and provide space to sit and gather. They help to call us all out of ourselves. To realize that we have a greater purpose for our existence and that there is more to life than what we see before us. Likewise, others breathe life into our community of faith whom you do not hear from in our newsletter. They are all contributors!

Like any other church, ours is a community... but this community of faith is different; it is where I have been placed. Therefore, I chose to thank all those who come alongside me to serve and support our community and make it a home. Their love of God and for each other and their weekly sharing of time, gifts, talents, and generosity; that help make it happen!

Jesus sees something in all of us! Jesus sees in us something no one else can, including ourselves, and calls us; He invites us. Follow Me!

Pastor Vin



PEN IT FORWARD



In April, the Pen it Forward ministry teamed up with the Teen ministry for a local outreach project. Together we wrote Easter cards for all the residents of McPeak's Assisted Living in Patchogue. The teens were enthusiastic about writing notes of encouragement to the residents and the residents were enthusiastic to receive them just before the Easter holiday. I hope to team up with the teens again next year, as well as other ministries, to expand the effort to reach numerous assisted living and nursing homes in the Patchogue area.

For those of you who do not know, Pen it Forward meets on the first Friday of every month at 7pm in the church Fellowship Hall. Our mission is a simple one - to spread encouragement through the written word. Taking the time to write a thoughtful note can accomplish more than we might think to bolster someone's spirits, especially in this digital age. It has also proven to be a wonderful time of fellowship. As an added incentive, we provide delicious snacks and any writing materials you may need. Our next meeting is Friday, June 2 and I hope you will join us.

Looking ahead to the Fall, I hope to host a church event alongside Missions to fundraise (and write!) for a cause. And leading up to the Christmas holiday, we will have many more outreach opportunities if you should wish to unite with us in this effort!

If you would like to be notified of upcoming Pen it Forward meetings and events, please contact me in person or at alissa.donato@patchnaz.net and I will add you to the PIF distribution email list.

In Christ,

Alissa



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If you would like to unsubscribe to this
newsletter, please call the number listed above.

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)



Sing a Sermon

**Ps. 33:3 – “Sing to Him a new song;
Play skillfully with a shout of Joy.” – (NKJV)**

Every week Tiffany and I pray and plan out the songs for the coming Sunday service. We then put the chord charts together and scan the songs into a .pdf file to be distributed to the worship band via email. On Friday we all come together for practice and try to iron out the songs so they are presentable to you, the congregation, and of course to the Lord. We take seriously the verse written above.

Just like a sermon, we want the words of the songs to minister to the people. We are basically singing a sermon of our own. Sometimes Pastor Vinnie gives us a heads-up as to what he might be preaching – sometimes he doesn’t. It is amazing how often the songs fit in with the actual preached sermon. Actually, we are not surprised by this, but we still are in awe of how God uses the songs to minister as led by the Holy Spirit. So every week we sing a sermon for the Lord and for the congregation to enter into His presence and sense His Holy Spirit leading.

This is nothing new. Our ancient fathers, like David, Asaph, Solomon, and the sons of Korah had done this for centuries. We have in our Bibles 150 sermon songs called the Psalms. Each Psalm was written as a song to God. They speak to us about issues and circumstances these men faced in their lives. They also always speak of God’s deliverance, guidance, help in times of trouble and direction they needed so desperately. Things haven’t changed all that much over time. We still take our complaints and needs to God, and we also then find His answer to our prayers for every situation. We then put those prayers to music and sing them aloud.

We never think of our songs as a performance or entertainment. Rather the songs are very deliberately selected as a vehicle of worship, and the words are always critical. Songs are selected by the message they convey, the musical ability of the band, and whether the songs will help you draw closer to the Lord and worship Him in Spirit and in Truth.

We have over 1,000 songs to choose from and probably just as many requests from people for new songs. We have to keep our selection criteria in place. We have a goal and a mission in all we do for a service. Sometimes, a song just won’t work for what we are considering for a service. Sometimes a song recommended years before may suddenly seem relevant, and we’ll work on that now. We are constantly seeking God just as we would for preaching a sermon topic.

It is similar to when I preach a message at a service. Sometimes I hit it out of the park, and sometimes I crash and burn – LOL. I pray this gives you a little understanding of what goes on in our music ministry. Hopefully, it will help you to worship in His presence reverently.

Always B \natural (B natural) and never B \flat (B flat).
Worshipping with you,
Pastor Nick

Teen Ministry

But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.” 1 Samuel 16:7

During Teen class on Sundays, we started off the New Year with the topic of VALUE. We studied various verses in the bible that reference how God values each one of us and we created “I am...” statements to reflect how we are going to view ourselves in ways that God sees us.

Then we went through a study of King David’s life from childhood to adulthood. We focused on how David continued to obey God because he valued God’s authority. And because of his obedience, God blessed his life immensely. We study how when David sinned, although there were consequences for his sins, God continued to be present in David’s life.

We are blessed each week that we get to be together. The teens get involved and are a joy to be with. I want to highlight some very talented teens that appeared in their school musicals. We saw Mackenzie La Spisa appear in ***Spamalot***. We saw Paige Inniss appear in ***Shrek the Musical Jr.***, and we saw Kaitlyn McKeever appear in ***Godspell Jr.*** We are so proud of their accomplishments. We look forward to attending other events that our teens are involved in!

Currently, we are in the process of planning some upcoming events like a teen bowling night, annual fire pit, outdoor movie night, and other summer events. Keep an eye out for the dates of these events.



Love in Christ,
Mark and Mary Kate La Spisa

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## Announcing Men’s Breakfast

- Saturday June 3<sup>rd</sup>
- Starting at 8:00am



Come and join us in a farewell to Darrin Smith who is moving to Florida.



Get ready to Blast Off into adventure as we learn to Shine Jesus' Light in the world!! Our VBS Program will run from **Monday, July 10<sup>th</sup> through Friday July 14<sup>th</sup> from 6:00-8:00 pm for kids, and 8:00-9:15 pm for Teens!** Volunteers are needed! Any time you can give – whether it is a day, a few days, or the whole week – would be out of this world 😊. Registration forms for Volunteers, Kids and Teens can all be found by visiting this site: <https://linktr.ee/patchnaz>. Forms will also be available on our website at [www.patchnaz.net](http://www.patchnaz.net). If you have any questions, contact Sue Herrmann at [sue.herrmann@patchnaz.net](mailto:sue.herrmann@patchnaz.net). I can't wait to explore the galaxy this Summer with you!!

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## WOMEN'S MINISTRY

It has been such a privilege to be able to serve the women of our church for so many years through brunches, prayer and Bible studies and even a few Retreat Events. Even though I was so reluctant to take on the task of this ministry, the rewards have been a gift in my life. Some of the formats have changed but not the reason for us to be together.

Every Thursday morning at 10 A.M., a group of ladies gather in the church sanctuary. Sometimes it is a small group and other times a full house but always with the same purpose: sharing our lives with one another and being encouraged through the trials that we all face. We laugh a lot and sometimes shed tears as we pray for the many needs of our families, friends, church family and country. Next, we share our thoughts on the current chapter in the book we are reading through, the Scripture we have read and the questions we have answered. Quite

often we get off track but always seem to get back! We finish up our time together as Janet plays the piano and we sing hymns together. For most of us, this has become a morning in our busy weeks to set aside and not miss. All ladies are welcome to join us even if it cannot be on a regular basis.

No matter what age we are, life gets busy; work, raising children, caring for loved ones and all sorts of appointments. Whether you are traveling this summer or having a "stay-cation" I pray you will make it a priority each day to spend some time with our Lord. Just as we enjoy spending time with our loved ones, Jesus wants to hear from us and be in His presence.

Have a blessed summer and don't forget the sunscreen!

In Christ,  
*Mary Ann*



# Tithing is a Gift of Love

It is important to remember that tithing is an attitude of giving. The amount you give or how it compares to the gifts of others doesn't really matter.

What matters is that when you give, you give of yourself, all your loving concern, your affirmation of devotion to God, your good will to humankind, and your service to Christ. When you give with this spirit, then you are giving the fullest capacity of your spiritual, physical and mental resources.

A true gift is a portion of yourself. When you give in this manner, you become an instrument of God. It is the gift of love.

-Newsletter Newsletter



First, I want to thank everyone for their giving. This makes the church go. Although we need money to function it is not our main focus. The Stewardship of that money is most important. Your generosity in these times where many are facing the hardship of inflation makes a double blessing, and it is more important than ever to spend wisely.

I should mention that Matt Ostrander, our Building and Grounds director, has been instrumental in negotiating with some of our utilities and services to bring our costs down. He also has done much of the maintenance around our three buildings giving of his time and talents saving us hundreds if not thousands of dollars.

Thank you Matt!

God has been faithful in the nearly 10 years that I have served as treasurer that we have always met our needs and the needs of others around us without incurring any deficit. The church board is prayerful about where your money goes. Of course, we need the basics of utilities, modest salaries, insurance and building maintenance. We also support our District & General Church of the Nazarene which is included in our budget. All this makes up more than half our yearly budget. Our best expenditure is used for ministry! Our ministries are moving forward in a good way. Our children's and teen ministry are growing. This is our future. All other ministries are back and meeting in person and are well attended. Praise God! Pray we keep growing and making a difference in the lives of our church families and the surrounding neighborhood. We no longer pass a basket but there is opportunity to give both in person and online. Visit [www.patchnaz.net](http://www.patchnaz.net) and click the PayPal button to donate online.



## This year's special collections:

\$260.50 in coins was given to Alabaster for building of housing, schools and hospitals on the Mission Field.

\$855 was given to the Easter offering for World Evangelism helping to spread the Good News around the World.

In His Service,

*Corinne Franco*



## Summer Renovation



This summer is going to be a renovation summer. I recently bought a house in upstate NY, and my goal is to renovate it. The house was built in 1920, and when I went to look at it with my realtor, the term that he used was “deferred maintenance;” many of the necessary updates that a house needs through the years were never done. When I received the keys to the house after closing, I thought to myself, “What have I done?!” I looked at all the projects that needed to be completed and it all seemed overwhelming. But now I am less overwhelmed; I guess any full-scale renovation project requires work, and even after a few weeks, I am chipping away a little bit at a time.

When it comes to the renovation of the soul, though, the work is different. I mean, we could all use some renovation, myself most of all. Rich Mullins once wrote, “Someday I shall be a great saint like those you see in the windows of magnificent cathedrals . . . But I do not shine so now. I would never be mistaken for a stained-glass saint, though at 7am I might be gray and grotesque as a gargyle.” By simply reminding myself of all the ways I have fallen short, all the things I should have done but didn’t, becomes a reminder of the ways in which my soul needs renovation.

The danger, I’ve come to find out, comes when we think we can undertake a complete tear-out/re-build soul renovation by our own efforts. The culture we live in prides itself on self-improvement; walk into any bookstore and you’ll find in the religion and spirituality section titles such as: Your Best Life Now, The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, and Overcoming Every Problem. It’s an idea that has seeped into the church – if only we’d pray more, and think better, and give generously, then surely God will bless us. The problem, of course, is that it is Pelagian, an ancient heresy that says that it’s up to you to save yourself. Put on your work boots, strap on that tool belt, and get to work. Orthodox Christianity, however, gives us a different message.

“Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain” (Psalm 127:1). God is the one who does the work of renovation, specifically in the work of Jesus Christ. Jesus tore down the temple and rebuilt it in three days – he is in the business of restoration. His sacrificial death was the way in which God chose to redeem and renew His tired, run-down, sinful creation. Jesus’ resurrection from the grave is the promise of what awaits us – that one day we will shine with the glory of the Lord in a renewed creation. Paul warns us that “no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 3:11). If renovation is to come, it comes when we surrender to Jesus, to throw our lives upon his sure foundation. And so, yes, I’m continuing to renovate this house, slowly but surely; but for my soul, I trust in the witness of the Scriptures, I trust in the peace of God that eased my anxiety over buying this “fixer-upper,” and I trust in the extravagant grace which God has shown me in sending His Son to redeem me. Let me end with one more Rich Mullins quote: “Though we may not understand the process, our Rebuilder does. We are his workmanship and the place where He lives. I’m being made by a Master Carpenter. I’m learning a little about building, too.”

Jon Ollett

## *Hospitality Without Walls-* by Sue Cerruto (This is a true story, and I have permission to retell it.)

She was a nondescript, middle-aged, short white woman who had recently asked the Lord to show her to whom she should give snack-shop gift cards; those she met on street corners and elsewhere. He was a tall, robust-looking young black man, shabbily dressed, with soft facial features.



As she exited a strip-mall store early one morning, she saw him walking and they made brief eye contact. As she loaded her car, she glanced at the young man as he continued to slowly walk past the row of stores.

Something tugged on her heart. She drove up alongside him and offered one of the gift cards, which included a witnessing tract. He thanked her and asked how much the card was worth. "Five dollars," she said, "and there is a message with it which I hope will bring you some encouragement." He took the baggie with its contents, but he looked sad at the same time.

As she drove away, she felt another tug. Asking God what He wanted her to do, she felt impelled to go back to the young man. Parking her car, she approached again and asked him if he were hungry. "Yes." "Okay, there's a coffee shop at the other end. I'll meet you there." She drove over to the store, parked, and let her boss know she'd be late to work.

Estimating the cost, she took out a twenty-dollar bill and left her wallet and pocketbook in the car. To her surprise, he ordered a large breakfast sandwich, along with a drink. She ordered something for herself. The total came out to \$19.70. She smiled inwardly. God knew twenty dollars would be enough.

As they waited for their order, and hoping he wouldn't feel intimidated or anxious, she asked about his situation. He was a high-school graduate, twenty-six, and homeless. She spoke to him about Jesus, who understood homelessness, and His love for the young man. She encouraged him to read the tract, go to church, and seek God. He then said he had a 'dragon' spirit, which made him want to protect people. That made her a little nervous, so she redirected his dragon reference to the gifts God gives people, which included the desire to protect others. After a little more conversation, their orders were ready so they parted ways. She watched him from behind as he walked, and, because she'd never done this before, she wondered if she had done the right thing or had done enough. She concluded that she had done what she could at that moment. The young man was fed and would have the gift card for a little extra. She hoped he would find food for his soul in the tract.

God spoke to my own heart as I thought about this encounter. How often I look at our Sunday fellowship time after the service as Godly hospitality! While it is to an extent, it's also controlled and clean and soft and *safe*. It's with people I know, it's easy, and it's predictable. The hospitality that God is looking for is so much more! It's bold, daring, and looks outward. How is God challenging you and me to offer hospitality outside our safety comfort zone to those we meet who need some hope? We can start by asking Him. I have no doubt He'll be faithful to show us. When He does, may we be faithful to act.  
(Scripture references: Proverbs 3:27-28, Matthew 25:31-46)



## GETTING TO KNOW YOU



How many years does it take to know a person – to really know them? If that question strikes you as odd, think about the number of people you think you know well – intimately. Now spin that question around. How many people think they know you well? And of that inner circle, how many of them know the person behind the public image, hidden away from the rest of the world? Getting to know someone as more than just an acquaintance, takes time and trust. Without trust is friendship even possible? Go one step further, is it possible to know God beyond the religious veil? What if knowing Him as a Father and friend, is what God is really interested in?

Sadly, many people go through life with little more than a vague notion of who God is. Even regular church attendees often seem unsure about God's nature. But how does a person really get to know God? From the Bible we learn He is: all knowing – *omniscient*, able to be everywhere at once – *omnipresent*, and all powerful – *omnipotent*. But knowing *about* a person isn't the same as actually knowing them. For example; is God preoccupied with keeping the universe in order or does He listen with great interest to the simple prayer of a five year old?

There are two ways to learn about the personality of God. Reading the Bible, which He calls *His Word* and by personal encounter. Everything in life occurs in stages or stepping stones. Discovering who God is, is no different. The fact that you are reading this article at this moment is case in point evidence. As you read this you are gaining a snippet of additional information about God's nature. Ask yourself the question; Am I reading this because I'm searching for God or because He is searching for me? Scripture reveals that God is pursuing us, leaving a trail of breadcrumbs that will lead us to Him. *Surely your goodness and unfailing love will pursue me all the days of my life ...* (Ps. 23:6 (NLT))

In Luke 4 Jesus spoke about the widow of Zaraphath whom God sent the prophet Elijah to. This desperate nameless woman, in abject poverty, was not nameless or overlooked by God. The prophet showed up just as the woman was preparing to scrape together the last of her provisions for a final meal. Listen to her words: “.... you found me scratching together just enough firewood to make a last meal for my son and me. After we eat it, we'll die.” 1 Kings 17:12 (MSG)

Elijah asked her to make the meal for him first, with the promise that God would personally provide for her needs. She was presented with an opportunity and a choice; take God up on His offer to know Him which required faith and obedience **or** to make the final last meal for her son and herself. Her choice to accept God’s offer transformed a hopeless situation into a whole new life.

What about you? Do realize that God is pursuing you, that He’s been leaving clues to lead you to Him? It’s a matter of realization and choice. Turn confusion into opportunity by discovering and accepting Him. The stepping stone is right in front of you but it will take faith to make the right choice. Make the right choice, say **yes** to Him today, then tell someone about it. *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.* John 3:16 (NKJ)

Serving Him Together,  
Pastor John Mercurio



**P**ayer Warriors Circle needs you!

The Hebrew word *Paga* is translated as intercession, not because it means asking or petitioning it doesn’t - but because intercession is meeting with God. The concept of *paga* is of two or more people coming together, attacking spiritual enemies, building boundaries of protection, etc.

If there was ever a time corporate prayer is needed – it’s now.

- Wednesday evenings
- Starting at 7:00 pm
- Ending 8:00pm