



ST. JOHN'S WINDOW

A VIEW OF OUR LIFE

FENIMORE ROAD AT CORTLANDT AVENUE, MAMARONECK, NY 10543

What's Happening

Council Meeting

Thursday, January 26th

Congregational Meeting

Sunday, February 12th

Ash Wednesday

Wednesday, March 1st

And more inside



A New Year and New Beginnings

2017! How did it happen that we are now beginning a year that is 17 years into this century? Some of us like to be cynical when it comes to the beginning of a new year. I have had people tell me they don't make resolutions anymore as they would only break them. As Mark Twain once said: "New Year's Day... Now is the accepted time to make your annual good resolutions. Next week you can begin paving hell with them as usual."

I stubbornly refuse to be cynical about the new year, even though there are a lot of indications on the national and international horizon that warrant pessimism. For example, I personally thought that Secretary of State, John Kerry's recent speech and the U.S. abstention from the UN vote on Israel's occupation of the West Bank was finally speaking the truth to the world that we all need to hear. This may be erased by the new administration, but the truth of Kerry's speech and the US decision stand regardless.

Put differently, despite whatever I will have to face in the new year, I am going to enter the new year with an attitude steeped in faith and hope even though I am a realist and know that life is not a bed of roses and making resolutions does not mean you are going to keep them. In fact, for many years there used to be a poster hanging in my office with several hippopotamuses with their mouths open

and the caption: "After all is said and done, there is always more said than done." I know that's true as one who has failed to always enact his best intentions.

There are a few of us striving to repair our life as we carve out a future for ourselves and perhaps others. I am struck by the memory of different people coming to me to apologize for something they had said or done that could have offended me. In almost all cases, they were alcoholics who, during the course of their 12-step program, had to apologize to the people they hurt.

In almost every case where these people did apologize to me, I was surprised that I couldn't remember what they had done to offend or hurt me. I did, however, have enough sense to recognize that their apology was extremely important to them. *I am sorry* has a way of cleaning the slate, especially when you receive absolution from the person you hurt.

Perhaps that is the important lesson that I take into the new year as I transition to a blank blackboard where I want to list my hopes, goals, resolutions, and dreams for 2017. I guess as much as I go kicking and screaming into apologies, it needs to be the first step I must take to break free of the chains that hold me back from entering into the new year in freedom.

Marvin E. Henk
Pastor

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Evangelism

Marc Schlueter
Social Ministry

Marvin E. Henk
Pastor

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Christiane Janssen
Secretary

Matthew Thomas
Organist & Music Director

Anna Piselli
Sexton

Choir Directors

Matthew Thomas
Adult Choir

Austin Kehrlé
Handbell Choir

To me, confession and forgiveness are key. How can you change and grow and even blossom if you can't admit your flaws, your failures and your sins? Once you do that some of the cynicism you might harbor, and even pessimism, can dissipate as you gather energy for a new year.

Recently I have been focussing on a quote by Eleanor Roosevelt: "The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams." I find it rather inspiring because it asks each of us to look higher, to think new thoughts, to move out of our comfort zone, and to bring our dreams and hopes into reality. In the end, this is the message of the Christian faith - We are not alone in the universe, love will defeat hate, and we must work for peace and justice in this world. Actually, the prophet Micah says it better:

“What does the Lord require of thee?
To act justly
and to love mercy
and to walk humbly with your God.” (6:8)

MEH

Keep in Your Prayers

Margit Bier, Marge Campabadal, William Solano (Myra Hahn's father), Peggy Jacobson, Nate Lipsen, Sandy Herrmann, Gisela Haugenes, Cherine Bellamy, Peter Gisondi, Ava Pagnotte, Ana Colón, Anne Marie Gorman (Peter Roggemann's sister), Eileen & Teddy DeAngelo, Brian Kennedy (Stacy Gallagher's brother), Janet Baker, James McCullough, Nancy Farrell, Jen Brown, Elizabeth Lancheros Salazar.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

FUNERAL

Roland deLewinski, December 21

Phillip Gerhardt, December 22

IN SYMPATHY

Our deepest sympathy goes to Mary Gerhardt and children Samantha and Phillip Gerhardt over the death of Phillip Gerhardt (Sr.).

We would also like to extend our deepest sympathy Valerie Rusciano and family over the death of her father, Roland deLewinski.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SPECIAL GIFTS IN DECEMBER

Renovation

Dorothea Ferri & Kevin

McCoskey

Lisa & Austin Kehrlé

Véronique & Serge Banzet

Lynn & John Hillman

Vincent Graziano

Suzanne & Robert Kraft

Kathy & Pastor Henk

Myra & Eric Hahn

Carolynn & Robert Dilworth

Stacy & Shane Gallagher

MaryAnn & Jim MacLellan

Discretionary Fund

Bill Podszus

Endowment Fund

Manuela Petzold

EVENTS



Sunday, February 12 after 10.30 am service

Please join us to review the past year and look towards 2017. We welcome your ideas, concerns and suggestions to further our ministry in the coming year. Refreshments will be served.

The 2016 Annual Report will be in church on February 5.

Ask yourself when you have time to discuss ideas and to share insights with others. When can you gather around a book that will be challenging and helpful in shaping your life? The ability to have that kind of time is always a luxury.



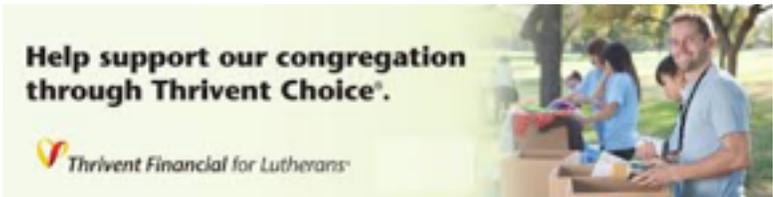
Tucked in between Sunday School and worship is ADULT FORUM. An hour in which books are discussed, ideas are shared and sometimes even argued, and coffee is provided. It's a sweet moment for reflection and, if you are fortunate enough, for personal growth.

Currently we are discussing "The Road to Character", bestseller by David Brooks. This book is filled with wisdom, humor, and sharp insights that can illumine your daily life. It offers you a resume of virtues that can help enliven your life and lifestyle. We all come to learn, oftentimes from each other. Another person coming would be enriching - join us, you won't regret it!

Are you a member of Thrivent Financial and eligible to direct Choice Dollars?

By directing Choice Dollars, eligible Thrivent members recommend where they feel Thrivent should distribute a portion of its charitable grant funds. By directing your Choice Dollars to St. John's, you can help support our ministry here at St. John's. Directing Choice Dollars is easy. Simply go to Thrivent.com/thriventchoice to learn more and find program terms and conditions, or call Thrivent at 800-847-4836.

*Choice Dollars designated to eligible benefit members in 2016 must be directed by **March 31, 2017.***



TIME TO RENEW ST. JOHN'S WINDOW SUBSCRIPTION FOR 2017

Can't wait to get your monthly newsletter? You can receive it first class! Please don't forget to renew for \$35 for the new year - or subscribe for the very first time. Thanks to your support, we will continue to be able to publish our newsletter without cost to the church budget. Please note that, upon several patron requests, we have added the option to forgo first class mailing despite your payment to give us the full benefit of your donation.

St. John's Window Subscription 2017

I would like to support St. John's Print Ministry. Enclosed is my \$35 check.



Name: _____

I would like to further support your ministry and continue receiving the newsletter by bulk mail.

NEW MEMBERS



Megan & James Aquilina

Sebastian and Eloise
11 Marsdon Rd
Larchmont, NY 10538
999.0028

Megan.aquilina@gmail.com

Marie Berninger & Ari Flores

Bruce and Aron
10 Grandview Ave
White Plains, NY 10605
973.796.8988

marieberninger@gmail.com

Rita and Jason Gross

1421 Mamaroneck Ave, #4H
Mamaroneck, NY 10543
203.550.1380

NYC.ritapotthoff@gmail.com

Christine & Matt Hardigree

Bette
374 Columbus Ave
Tuckahoe, NY 10707
281.770.2080 or 281.777.5249

hardigree@gmail.com

STEWARDSHIP

Thank you to everyone who has already pledged for 2017. It's not too late if you haven't.

We are grateful for those who have pledged and made a commitment to St. John's. This year, we have 12 new pledges and 22 who have increased over last year.

This is a great way to begin the New Year, but if you haven't pledged, now is the time to make 2017 a real commitment to making things happen by presenting yourself with a giving plan and helping us budget for the coming year. **THIS IS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO PUT SOME TEETH INTO YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS.**

Please return your pledge card today if you have not done so yet.

You can find pledge cards in church or ask the office for one if you cannot find yours.

Thank you to the following members who have already submitted their pledge cards:

Megan & James Aquilina
Cheryl Bailey & Michael Paccione
Lois Baldwin
Veronique & Serge Banzet
Melissa & Justin Boisseau
Millie & Ed Brandon
Trudi Bunke
Karen Clark
Sarah & Kurt Coble
Keri & Chris Degroote
Carolynn & Robert Dilworth
Karen & Tim Farrell
Dorothea Ferri
Marie & Ari Flores
Stacy & Shane Gallagher
Erika Gard
Peter Gifford
Rebecca & Nelson Gómez

Karen Haghenbeck-Nunnink & Bill Nunnink
Myra & Eric Hahn
Christine & Matt Hardigree
Kathy & Marvin Henk
Fred Herlitz
Howard Heyel
Lynn & John Hillman
Carla & Brian Hofland
Anne Huber
Detlef Joerss
Yourha Kang
Wendy & Heath Kihn
Sandy & Jim Kilts
Suzanne & Robert Kraft
Maria Martins
Corly & Frank McCullough
Sue & Steve Michaelson
Silvia Misina

Cheryl & Ed Murray
Judy & Joe Musumeci
Manuela Petzold
Gloria Phinsee & Leroy Webber
Peter Plaue
John Quinley & Suomi Sakai
Heike & Boris Rauls
Renee & Chris Ravanello
Niels Ringstad & Jeanhee Chung
Barbara & Peter Roggemann
Kim & Jeff Schiro
Peggy & Eric Stockmar
Barbara & Robert Tipping
Bobby Tipping
Tina & Kate Tobiasen-Franceschini
Lori Uhle
Jill Valentino
Barbara Wilson
Walter Zullig

THE STORY OF THE GERMAN TRADITION OF THE CHRISTMAS PICKLE

by Pastor Henk



We have been hiding the pickle for many years now. I am not sure why. I did work in a pickle factory for 7 or 8 summers in Hayward, California, and did visit hundreds of food plants with my father who worked for Continental Can. However, don't try to analyze me – many have tried and failed.

Nevertheless, there has been controversy over this extraordinary custom from Germany. It is a wonderful concept of hiding the pickle, and the child who finds it will get an extra Christmas present. It is so wonderful—but all of the Germans in our church have no idea that this delightful German custom even exists. They claim they have never heard of it. At first I thought “O my goodness, that must be another examples of fake news”... or, perhaps, they are not truly German—and we should demand to look at their papers.

So, I decided to investigate this conspiracy theory – and another example of false news about Germans and the origin of this custom. After getting some pushback at our last Church Council meeting I flew immediately to Germany to investigate. So, one week in December I went to the “Gherkin Institute” located in Gherkinstadt in southern Bavaria on my day off. I took the red eye and was back in a day. And there I talked to Rolf Halfsour and Martin Dill, the presidents of the Pickle Institute for Further Studies, another foundation for the advancement of pickles.



It was there that I learned that this custom was not totally German. I was totally taken by surprise. Seymour Gherkin, the mayor of Gherkinstadt, took me out for a beer in a little German Ratskeller and there he broke the news to me. The tradition goes back to the Vikings in the 8th century. It appears that these great men of the sea were trying to find the New World. They were part of the Leif Eriksen entourage had gone off course in their search for the New World. They were blown off course when their compass broke and the sky was filled with clouds and smog. They were separated from the other ships in their Viking armada and lost their way. The weather was severe and at times they feared for their lives and it looked as though they would all perish and die.

But after days of being lost they ended up in Berlin, blown completely off course. There, trying to find their way back, they were immediately met by some very attractive German and Slovak gypsies, who welcomed them and took them into their humble homes and fed them. Since it was December and Christmas was close, they helped the gypsies decorate their tree -- but when it came to putting ornaments on the tree, they noticed that the Vikings wanted to put avocados and beer bottles on. This led to a conflict with the gypsies, who were really feminist which made them not afraid of the Vikings and able to stand up to them. Finally, after much discussion, threats, and passionate arguments, the Viking acquiesced to using pickles. This turned out to be a good idea because pickles were plentiful, affordable, “beautiful”, and they matched the color of the tree. They all seemed to relish this idea. Eventually the Vikings and gypsies intermarried, but because the Vikings were persecuted in Berlin for their Viking beliefs, they moved to the area in southern Bavaria near what is now Gherkinstadt where they kept this tradition alive.

So, in this small area of Germany pickles have been held in the highest of esteem for a long time. People are honored to wear them in their hats or from their necks as jewelry. Everyone wants to be a part of this wonderful tradition. However the town has a small number of atheists who refuse to put it on the tree but instead hang a pickle on their rearview mirror. Unfortunately, this tradition failed to catch on all over Germany, which is why many Germans have never heard of it, but when you go to Gherkinstadt for the annual pickle festival, you will notice it is almost sacred there.

As I was taken deep into the archives of the Gherkin Institute I discovered that several famous people honored this tradition and even went further in their love for pickles. Martin Luther, for example, once said, “A pickle a day will keep the bubonic plague away.” Then, of course, there is the ancient pickle saying, “A pickle doesn't fall far from the tree.” There is also the little-known fact that when Elvis wrote and sang “Blue Christmas” it was because his mother failed to put a pickle on the tree that Christmas.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

... People Parade... People Parade...

Hi everyone!

What a busy but wonderful December we had celebrating Advent, preparing for the Christmas Pageant, gathering toys for the Mamaroneck Service Center project, decorating the Sunday school Christmas Tree in fellowship hall plus carrying on with our regular classroom happenings as we learned all about the birth of Jesus.

The Pageant "The Backward Christmas Pageant" was so much fun for us to do and from the comments I received from members of the congregation it was fun for them as well. A very big thank you to Lisa and Austin, our Pageant Directors, Becky and Matt for leading the children in song, our children for their talent, and to everyone who assisted with the pageant preparations, without all of you this event could never take place. After the pageant we all enjoyed a fabulous pageant brunch hosted by the Sunday school families, thanks to all for the goodies, it was very much enjoyed.

January Events:

January 8th – Sunday school classes resume
 January 29th – Our Bible Store will be opened for children to redeem their Bible bucks.

Reminder: we will continue to collect non-perishable food items on the 1st Sunday of each month to help the local food pantry take care of the many people who would otherwise go hungry so please donate what you can each month.

The Sunday school staff and teachers wish you all a very Happy New Year,

Dorothea Ferri
 Chairperson for Christian Education



Sean Grubert 1/28

A big thank you **Julio Andrade** for making our website look so good... ➤ Congratulations to **Frankie Huber**, who is engaged to be married... ➤ Once again we had a towering Christmas tree in or sanctuary, which totally captures the season - a gift from **Frank and Corky McCullough**. Trimming the church and decorating the tree can sometimes be a challenging task, but this year them men and women turned out to make it all possible. We certainly appreciated the time given by everyone as we gazed upon our beautiful church at Christmas-time... ➤ The third Sunday of Advent saw our traditional Christmas pageant at the 10.30 am service, this year entitled "The Backwards Christmas Pageant". A big thank you has to go to **Lisa ad Austin Kehrle, Dorothea Ferri and Becky Alfano** for all their hard work and inspired work with the children. Once again, everyone outdid themselves and we were treated to a heart-warming performance... ➤ The pageant was followed in the afternoon by our equally traditional caroling, and this year's caroling turned out to be another fine experience for everyone who participated. Nearly 30 people sang to many thankful people at the Mamaroneck Towers where our own **Margit Bier** lives. We also visited **Peggy Jacobson** at the Osborne and sang to those on the second floor of the Pavillon. We continued on to **Eleanore McCaffery, Mary and Kurt Jachner, and Myra Hahn's** father, **William Solona**, in New Rochelle. The festive party at the Hillmans' was wonderful, as usu-

al, with lots of delicious food and cheer. Everyone wanted to know Julio Andrade's recipe for his Christmas cookies. The caroling, however, extended another week, with a group of us going to the **Bellamy's home** to carol **Cherine** the following Saturday. Cherine wrote to Pastor the next day: "The caroling was wonderful, I thoroughly enjoyed it. Thanks to you and the group." A big thank you to everyone who came and sang in the cold and to **Lynn and John Hillman** for hosting us yet another year for the after party... ➤ It's been said that *he who sings prays twice*. That certainly was the case with Lessons & Carols this year. Under the leadership of our music director and organist **Matthew Thomas** we were treated to an "augmented" choir, who sang their hearts out. We were also pleased to see **Kurt Coble** at the violin and Matt at the piano playing "Away in a Manger". **Yourha Kang and Rebecca Gómez** played J.S. Bach's Meditation on their flutes beautifully, accompanied by Matt on the piano and **Jimmy Coble** on the violin. We also enjoyed **Rita Gross and Manuela Petzold** singing "Maria durch ein Dornwald ging" as well as **Joe Colón** accompanying the choir on the drums. We can't forget the special lighting of the Christmas tree, in which **Steve Michaelson**, our Church Council president, once again pressed the button that turned on the lights and brought the smiles and the singing of "O Tannenbaum"... ➤ **Lisa Zullig**, daughter of **Walter and Suzanne** and director of nutrition services at *God's Love We*

People Parade...

Deliver says she is excited to participate in innovative new nutrition program at NYU Langone's Perlmutter Cancer Center in New York. She was featured in an article in the Wall Street Journal about the program. Congratulations, Lisa!... ➤ Congratulations are also in order for **Karen Clark**, who was selected the winner of the Judith A. Martens Secretarial Award of Excellence, awarded by the New York State Athletic Administrators Association. Karen will be honored at the AAA meeting in January. You go, Karen!... ♦

Offering Envelopes



The 2017 church envelopes are in the narthex. Please don't forget to pick them up or contact the office if you need them sent.

THANK YOU SUNDAY SCHOOL



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Marc Rozansky
Martina Stoeckert
Anne Stone
Robbin Weston

Founders and Past Presidents

Carol Cauley
Cindy Goldstein
Melinda Lehman
Reverend William Shillady
Julie Sibley,
in memoriam

December 19, 2016

St Johns Lutheran Church Sunday School
122 Fenimore Road
Mamaroneck, NY 10543

Dear Students:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your fantastic food drive to help support for the Larchmont/Mamaroneck food pantry. You did such a great job decorating all of the bags and filling it with delicious treats! It came just in time to distribute for Thanksgiving and into the holiday season. As you may know, each distribution we give our families large shopping bags filled with staples such as cereal, canned vegetables, soups, canned fruit, beans and more. Your contributions made each bag more special.

This holiday season we have been extremely busy. On our pre-Thanksgiving distribution we gave out 562 bags to over 480 households. These families included more than 1000 adults, 500 children and 100 seniors. All of the families we serve are residents of Larchmont and Mamaroneck who are either living below the federal poverty guidelines or are homebound due to age or illness.

On behalf of the families we serve, thank you for your participation in caring for the hungry people who live in our communities. Your support makes an important difference in our program.

Sincerely,
Sondra Levy
Sondra Levy
Food Drive Coordinator

Thank you to Marc Schlueter for the Pageant rehearsal photos!



JANUARY 2017

St. John's Lutheran Church

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Web: stjohnsny.org

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Thank you to our patrons who have taken out a 2017 subscription in support of St. John's Window

Kathy & Pastor Marvin Henk
Sandy & Jim Kilts
Karen & Mark Stuart
Suzanne & Walter Zullig

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