



ST. JOHN'S WINDOW

| A VIEW OF OUR LIFE |

FENIMORE ROAD AT CORTLANDT AVENUE, MAMARONECK, NY 10543



One True Sentence

In her 1989 book "The Writing Life" Annie Dillard reminds us of something that is both obvious and shocking. It is a single sentence I have used in sermons and we had on our 2023 Lenten magnet: "How we spend our days is, of course, how we spend our lives."

Hemingway once wrote, when struggling with writer's block, that he was told to just write one true sentence. The sentence above is a very true sentence for me. I cannot speak for you, but I find this straightforward truth disconcerting because I seem to spend a lot of my days, hours, minutes doing things that don't seem to count. As I look back at them, I begin to see that I procrastinate, that I waste a lot of time, that I live days looking for tomorrow rather than living in the moment.

Lent comes to us as one true sentence. "Remember, from dust you came and to dust you shall return". The more I look at the truth it tells me, the more it brings out many emotions, such as fear, helplessness, regret, inadequacy.

The truth is that as you continue to grow older, there is no avoiding the inevitable - that life is indeed fragile. It reveals to us that we are all mortal individuals.

I know that we live this side of the resurrection, and, as the hymn goes, I hope to be in that number. Yet it has been my understanding for many years of living each day that we need to understand

and reflect on our mortality and on the fact that we will return to dust.

Lent helps us take the whimsical Pollyanna and naïveté out of the living of our days. For me it means that time is slipping away when there are a lot of things I still want to do. If I look back, it's only to help me move forward and complete the things I need to do to find wholeness and a complete life.

Lent helps us arrive at a new beginning once you realize that you are dust and will return to dust. It kind of tells you that today is the first day of the rest of your life. It echoes what pop psychology tells us which is *to live every day like it is our last*. You don't get it back.

The famous writer G.K. Chesterton captures a bit of what I am talking about when he says:

*Here dies another day
during which I have had eyes, ears, hands,
the great world around me;
and with tomorrow begins another.
Why am I allowed two?*

Some may think that when I smear a cross on their forehead and say, *From dust you came, to dust you shall return*, it is a downer. However, it is not Christianity going negative, but it is facing the reality of life. We don't live forever, but we do need to live with truth. We need to live with finitude. We need to know our boundaries.

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Sign up at
StJohnsNY.org for
Our Weekly Emails

8.15 am Early Worship
9 am Adult Forum
10 am Worship & Sunday
School

Annual Meeting
February 4

Ash Wednesday
February 14

Book Club
February 20

Chamber Music Concert
February 25

Midnight Run
March 22



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Katarzyna Kluczy-
kowska-Moeckel
Adult Choir &
Children's Choir

Austin Kehrle
Handbell Choir

In an interview, the actor Sean Penn reflected on acting as knowing your boundaries: "When you know your boundaries and limitations, you discover who you are and where you need to go with your life." Lent has a way of telling us that we are human and not infinite, that we are creatures and not the creator. Once we face this truth, we can face our life. Jesus once said, "The truth will make you free." It does.

MEH

Keep in Your Prayers

Brian Bentley, Tricia Berwick, Brian Caldwell, Dante Connetti, Wenche Delfino, Sophia English Edwards, Paulo Mark Flores, Diane Hagedorn, Bill Hahn, Eric Hahn, William Halpern, Mary Jachner, Eleanore McCaffery, Jim McCullough, Bill Nunnink, Bruce Quinn, Alexander Rauls, Leo Russ, Jeanette Schneider, Joyce Schumacher, Patricia Torpie, Jill & Anthony Valentino, Jim Wills

Sympathy

We are very sad to announce that Norman Block, a long-time member of St. John's, died. He was predeceased by his wife Anna, also a member of St. John's. We extend our deepest sympathy to his two daughters Kimberly Block and Lisa Blackwell, Lisa's husband Robert and children Kai and Cory, as well as his brother Ralph and wife Catherine. Please keep the Block family in your prayers.

HELPING THE PEOPLE OF GAZA - OUR LENTEN MISSION PROJECT

Our Church Council has chosen to help the devastated people of Gaza through Lutheran World Relief which has a long history of reaching our neighbors in Gaza and Israel and caring for innocent civilians caught in the crossfire. We chose LWR twice before for their relief efforts in Ukraine and in Turkey after the earthquake. LWR has a charity score of 93%.

Since October 7 almost 27,000 have been killed in Gaza - among them at least 10,000 children - and over 65,000 wounded. According to the BBC, more than half of Gaza's buildings have been damaged or destroyed. Houses, farmland, universities, hospitals, schools, mosques, historic sites are in ruin.

About 1.7 million people - more than 80% of Gaza's population - are displaced. Half of Gaza's population is now facing starvation, and Gaza is at risk of complete medical shut down. Less than 20% of Gaza's land - roughly 60 square kilometers - is now refuge to over 1.5 million people. These people are living in desperate circumstances in the south of the Gaza Strip where the dramatic escalation of the fighting threatens their survival.

LWR has been sending aid to war-ravaged Gaza with essential supplies like diapers, feminine hygiene products, laundry powder and more. Every item was provided by generous people like you. Your gift will deliver critically needed resources like medical care, food, water and essential supplies where they are needed most. Make your check out to St. John's and don't forget to specify LWR: Gaza on the memo line. Thank you for your support and generosity.

HELP FOR THE PEOPLE OF GAZA

I would like to support your Lenten Mission Project and would like my donation to go to Lutheran World Relief for their work in Gaza to help relieve the suffering. My check is attached, made out to St. John's and LWR: Gaza in the memo line.

Name: _____ Amount: _____

Upcoming Events & Announcements



February 4

after the 10 am service

We ask everyone to attend the meeting as this is an important event in our church life and has an impact on what we will accomplish in 2024. Everyone's input is needed!

BOOK CLUB

Tuesday, February 20 @7.30 pm

We will read **FOSTER by Claire Keegan**. FOSTER is a short book, 90 pages in paperback, 128 in hardcover. It is one of The Times "Top 50 novels published in the 21st Century" and rates 4.5 of 5 stars on Amazon. If you saw the terrific film THE QUIET GIRL last year, it's based on this book.

Everyone is welcome to join us on February 20!



MUSIC

AT

ST. JOHN'S

CHAMBER

MUSIC

CONCERT

February 25, 4 pm

St. John's will be presenting the Studio Seven Trio in an all Dvořák program to include the Sonatina for violin and piano, the Piano Trio #4 in e minor "Dumky" Op. 90, and Humoresque. Joining our very own Kurt Coble will be cellist Annette Perry and pianist Vytas Baksys.

The Studio Seven Trio has performed many times at St. John's; the last time was for the 9/11 Memorial Concert in 2021. Vytas will be on loan from the Boston Symphony, and Annette keeps busy on Long Island teaching and freelancing.

Please invite your family and friends to this afternoon of beautiful chamber music in our wonderful sanctuary. The concert is free and open to the public.



February 14

- 8 am Reception of Ashes
- 12 pm Brief Eucharist & Reception of Ashes
- 6 pm Soup & Salad Supper
- 7.30 pm Worship Service

JOIN US FOR THE POTLUCK SUPPER!

We need people to bring in soups and salads, side dishes, desserts and sodas and/or help with set up or clean up. Please email Rebecca Gómez at lapluma99@gmail.com to let her know what you will bring and how you can help.



**Every Sunday
at 9.15 am**

All are welcome!

Adult Forum is designed for those who would like to learn more about their faith and share their opinions, beliefs, and doubts with an open mind, to be enriched by the thoughts of others. For 45-60 minutes you have the luxury of discussing ideas along with a cup of coffee. Join us and feed your mind.

**HELP
THE
HOMELESS**

**Midnight Run
Friday, March 22**

Please Bring In Clothes
& Help

Let's get an early start for the Midnight Run in March. Please bring in the following:

- shirts, pants, T-shirts, sweat shirts, coats, jackets, mostly for men and all in good condition only. No suits and no formal shirts and no children's clothing, please!
- new: white tube socks, men's underwear

Please put the date on your calendar and plan to help/go on the Run. Thank you for your support!

Remembering Two Lives

We lost two long-time members early this year, Millie Brandon and Norman Block.

Millie was a bright shining star who couldn't help but inspire all who met her. Millie was a moving figure of determination, energy, and conviction. When she came to St. John's, she never hid in the pew. She got busy doing things to help us in our ministry and mission. At St. John's we were fortunate recipients of her energy, kindness, and commitment to her faith. Millie didn't stand on the sidelines; she jumped in with both feet, and her presence did make a difference here as well as in my life.

When Millie joined, she volunteered to teach Sunday School, a commitment she took very seriously as she shaped the lives of so many children here at St. John's. Her involvement in church life included many other things besides the Sunday School and her regular attendance at worship. Her commitment to St. John's brought her to church every single Sunday, and towards the end, when it was difficult for her to walk, she still tried to come as much as possible.

Millie was a very powerful wife and mother. She never shrank from helping and supporting each one of her children and grandchildren. Millie loved her family and extended family and looked after them as well, helping wherever she could. Her care and concern extended to her work as a teacher and her involvement with the teachers' union. She always had a desire to do good wherever God placed her in this world.

Norman loved St. John's. His history with our church goes back to his mother Erna Emilia, who was our sexton in the 1940s. She died when both Norman, his twin brother Ralph, and sister Dolores were very young. St. John's helped place them in the Wartburg Orphan Farm School. They lived there for more than eight years, but during that time, Norman wrote in our history book, St. John's never forgot them.

When I first came to St. John's, two of the first people I met were Anna and Norman Block. It was the beginning of a lifelong friendship that lasted over forty years. Norman and Anna were both hard workers. Norman worked at Strauch Jeweler's here in Mamaroneck and Talner's Jewelry in New Rochelle, repairing watches. He fixed many of my watches. Anna, who was a beautician, cut my hair in her kitchen in the early days. She later worked at Mercurio's Italian deli in Mamaroneck. I would often go in the back and get a kitchen cutlet from her. Norman, who had become part owner of Mercurio's, would prepare cold cuts and food for the Henk annual Christmas party. Later on, Norman sold appliances at Home Depot in Rye, where I would often stop in for a chat.

When you think of Norman, you think of his surviving identical twin brother Ralph. I would, at times, have difficulty telling them apart. The brothers didn't just play with each other or see each other; they had a deep and abiding love for each other from early on. Sailing on the Sound, riding motor cycles, skiing in the mountains, hosting family gatherings, or fixing watches and clocks - they were inseparable. They were great examples of love and respect.

Norman was always sweet, always helpful, and always kind. When he dealt with you, you would be the only person in the world at that time. He knew how to listen and understand, as well as how to care for you. He was a great father, a great friend, and a beloved member of St. John's.



Thank you to our adult choir and choir director Kasia Kluczykowska-Moeckel for bringing us the joy of their voices every Sunday!

Annual Meeting

At our annual meeting for 2023 on February 4 we were able to see that our church is coming back from Covid, that our finances were good enough to meet our budget, and that we, as a small church, exhibited a large ministry. In addition to our work with the food pantry and the Mid-night Run we helped resettle another Afghani refugee family, helped build a container home for a family in Turkey made homeless by the devastating earthquake last year, and gave money to a Lutheran Church that burned down in Cambridge, Mass.

Our meeting was marked by the anniversary of one year of working with the Rye YMCA nursery school, which seems to be successfully growing. 2023 brought changes to our worship schedule and Sunday School, which now run simultaneously at 10 am. This appears to have worked out and helped improve our attendance. Our Sunday School remains a stable and important part of our ministry, showing great potential to grow in 2024.

We need to thank Serge Banzet and Yourha Kang, who have both served out two three-year terms. We are grateful for their contributions to our congregational life. We elected three new Council members: Cheryl Cipro, Carla Hofland, and Wendy Kihn.



Sunday School

Hi everyone!

Just a short report this month:

All is well with our Sunday school program. We have been teaching the Gospel stories from the New Testament and the children are learning how to be kind and good disciples following all the teachings of Jesus. They are like sponges soaking up all that we can teach them.

With the season of Lent fast approaching, we will begin to teach them about their faith journey throughout the 40 days during this season leading up to the sadness of Good Friday and the promise of Easter Sunday.

I am looking for someone to lead the Jr. Choir children for about 15 minutes three Sundays a month then sing

with them on the first Sunday of each month. Let me know if you are interested and can join our committee.

A little humor:

The Sunday school teacher pointed to the stick figure leaning out of the cockpit of the plane and asked the children, "Who is this person?"

"Oh," Joey responded, "That's Pontius the Pilot!"

Out of the mouths of babes.

Hope you are enjoying these winter days,

Dorothea

Christian Education Chairperson



Peter Riguardi 2/23
Harriet Ringstad 2/26

St. John's Lutheran Church

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CHAMBER MUSIC CONCERT

FEBRUARY 25

Thank You to all Who Have Already Subscribed for 2024

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 Melissa & Justin Boisseau
 Karen & Ken Christopher
 Tamara Eberlein & Bill Garvey
 Dorothea Ferri
 Bill Ganley
 Gove family
 Kathy & Pastor Henk
 Detlef Joerss
 Sandy & Jim Kilts
 Hans P. Kirchgassner
 H. Sandy Kolb
 Mara Lakis
 Linda Lyon
 Robert L. Maier
 Robin Geberth Maliscewski
 Maria A. Martins
 Corky & Frank McCullough
 Cheryl & Ed Murray
 Mr. & Mrs. Mike Newgaard
 Maggie O'Connor
 Pat Ouwerkerk & Jon Richards

Heike & Boris Rauls
 Diane & Mark Rocconi
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