



# ...from the Heart

*Published quarterly by the Patchogue Church of the Nazarene Fall 2017*

## Embracing Change

Change is usually considered in the negative sense. But it doesn't have to be. Change can be good. In fact, change must happen for good to take place. This goes for our personal lives as well as our church life. Sometimes, we feel the only things that are stable in our lives are those things that do not change, but this is not the case. The Bible is filled with times of change and individuals whose lives are changed.

The only thing unchangeable is God. **1 Sam. 15:29 - He who is the Glory of Israel does not lie or change his mind; for he is not a human being, that he should change his mind.**

God never changes. The same promises He made to you and me are still in effect today.

We have been thrust into the throes of change in our church. We had been discussing Operation Facelift changes for at least two years. Every change has been met with some resistance and some support. Any time we introduce change, there are mixed feelings. One of the more difficult decisions to make was to replace our pews with chairs and wall-to-wall carpeting. This was considered heavily by the board and the Facelift committee, and they decided, finally, to go with the chairs.

(In the midst of all this discussion and emotion our pastor retired. Talk about change. You can't get any bigger change than that.)

So how do the other changes stack up in relation?

The Sanctuary walls were painted, new railings were installed in the foyer, and new carpet has been installed in the sanctuary. The pews have been removed, and they are on their way to an anxiously waiting church in Jamaica. The chairs are installed, and we have a whole new look.

Are we now embracing the change? I hope so. I see this as a new breakthrough for our church. We need to rally together and look to the Lord for His direction. What is He doing among us? What plans does He have for us as the Patchogue Church of the Nazarene?



Are we ready and willing to follow His lead? This could revolutionize our church. We have outreaches doing some progressive things to reach the lost. We are advancing the Kingdom of God. Do you realize this? Maybe we need a change of heart or attitude or motivation. The church building is God's, not ours. We need to pray and listen to what He is saying to us today. We can't, and shouldn't, hang onto the past. We are in the NOW as the body of Christ.

I have spent time with Pastor Larry Mancini of the Bay Shore church. He is in awe of the things God is doing in the missionary work in Haiti. A couple of folks in our congregation are making their third trip there in September.

He was telling me of the signs, wonders, and miracles taking place in that village and in the hearts of the Americans going to help. We look at these things as WOW moments that we have never seen before here, but the people of the church there are taking things in stride. They have prayed for 5 years for these things to happen, and now they are happening. Their reaction is, "Hallelujah, Praise the Lord for answering our prayers." Really! Why don't we have that same expectancy and awe regarding our faithful God? I don't know.

**Deut. 10:16 - *Therefore, change your hearts and stop being stubborn.***

I pray that none of us would be stubborn regarding the move of God in our midst. It's not about the furniture; it's not about the music; it's not about the pastor; it's not about us. God has a plan for our church and all of you who attend. He will use you as you allow Him to. You may not think you have a gift or talent to offer, but if you offer yourself to God, He will use you right where you are and for who you are – I am living proof.

So, embrace change rather than resist it. Change can be your friend if you allow it. Remember

**...Jas. 1:17 - *Whatever is good and perfect is a gift coming down to us from God our Father, who created all the lights in the heavens. He never changes or casts a shifting shadow.***

God is still in control. He has not and will never change. *He is the same yesterday, today and forever.* Heb. 13:5

This is the perfect season to consider change. God has caused the leaves to change color, the trees to drop their leaves, the birds to build shelters, the squirrels to stock up on food. They all know the changes that are coming, and they are preparing for it. They embrace change as a part of life. (Maybe we should take lessons from nature. After all, God created nature for us).

Let's embrace change together.

And That's ...

*From my heart!  
Pastor Nick ☺*



# Weekly Schedule

Subject to Change



## Sunday

10am - Service - Nursery available  
10:45am - Children's Sunday School - Fellowship Hall  
10:45am - Teen Bible Study - HPYC Building  
First Sunday of the Month - Holy Communion

## Monday

7pm - First & Third Monday of the month - September through April - M.E.N.  
(Men's Encouragement Network) - Fellowship Hall

## Tuesday

7pm - Every Tuesday. Ladies - In - Touch at Mary Ann Malcolm's Home

## Wednesday

7:30pm - Every Wednesday - Bible Study & Fellowship - HPYC Building  
7:30pm - First & Third Wednesday each month - Kairos - Young Adult Bible Study - Fellowship Hall

## Thursday

10am-12noon - Every Thursday - Ladies Prayer & Bible Study Group - HPYC Building  
7pm - Second Thursday each month - September through June - Sewing Circle - HPYC Building

## Saturday

8am - First Saturday of each month - September through April - M.E.N.'s Breakfast - Fellowship Hall  
7pm - First Saturday of each month - September through June - Good News Bowlers at Bowl Long Island, Patchogue

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**Sunday Service at 10am**  
**Pastor: Nick Franco**

Check out our website at [www.patchnaz.net](http://www.patchnaz.net) for Sermons,  
Church activities and other events for the Fall.



## ***Welcome to the World!***

Congratulations to Bryan & Jenelle Callaghan on the birth of their daughter, Natalie Rose born on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, weighing in at 8 lbs 3 oz. Her big sister is 5 year old, Myla Bethany.



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## ***Children Dedicated***

On August 6, 2017, Hellen Martin dedicated her two boys to the Lord. Four year old Jayden Martin- Lebenns and Two year old Jacob Martin-Lebenns.



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## **Kairos - Young Adult Bible Study**

Ages 18 - 40 ish

At Kairos we have been continuing to go through the book "Challenging Lifestyle" by Alpha course creator Nicky Gumbel. It is a walk-through on the Sermon on the Mount found in Matthew 5-7.

Many consider it the greatest sermon ever told! Attendance over the summer months has been slight but steady, and we had to cancel two sessions due to VBS and the arrival of the new sanctuary seating. Kairos meets on the first and third Wednesday of every month at 7:30pm in the fellowship hall.

- Frank Donato



# TEEN MINISTRY



Prayers are being answered and the Teen Ministry keeps on growing. Eight teens consistently attend and our group is growing so close together. It's a blessing to watch. Please consider joining us on Sunday Mornings.

We are hoping to start up the Youth Group again in October on Friday nights from 6pm-8pm. Details are still being worked out. If you are in 7th thru 12th grade, please put it on your schedule to attend.

One of our teens Haley Stone is off to the Coast Guard in September. It will be sad to see her go but we are so proud of her persistence and courage.

We are looking for some good Christian concerts and rallies to attend.

We are also working on a six book series about growing in Christ. Each book will take about a month and a half to study.

Mike and I are so blessed to be working together in this Ministry for the Youth.

The Lord is good.

Blessings,  
Michael & Nicholle Messina



# GOOD NEWS BOWLERS

Calling all bowlers – young and old! A new bowling season begins September 2. Good New Bowlers meets the first Saturday of the month from September to June at Bowl Long Island in Patchogue (7pm). This is a fun 4 person team mixed league. Anyone interested in bowling with us should email me at [corinnefchurch@verizon.net](mailto:corinnefchurch@verizon.net) for more info. Can't make it in September – no problem you can start in October – just let me know. Cost first night \$30 per person, \$20 a night thereafter. End of year prizes and luncheon included. Must be 18 to join. – Corinne Franco





## September

Sept 4 - Labor Day - Church Office Closed  
Sept 9 - 9am - Ladies Brunch - Fellowship Hall  
Sept 9-16 - Missionary trip to Haiti  
Sept 17-24 - Missionary trip to Haiti  
Sept 25-Oct 1 - Missionary Trip to Haiti  
Sept 28 - Oct 1 - Ladies Retreat

## October

October 29 - Pastor Larry Mancini of the Bay Shore Church of the Nazarene will be preaching and will also give us a recap of the three Missionary Trips to Haiti.

## November

Nov 4 - Turn clocks back before bed  
Nov 21 - 7pm - Thanksgiving Service  
Nov 23 - Thanksgiving Day



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## FOOD PANTRY OUTREACH

Thank you once again for helping us to help others throughout the year. Your donations make this possible. If you know of anyone needing help with food tell them about our food pantry. Perhaps use the opportunity to invite them to our church. We have Sunday school, bible studies, worship service and the *GOOD NEWS* of Salvation through Jesus Christ.

We have a lot more than food to offer. Let's reachout.

In His Service,

*MaryAnn Mavridis*

*"... for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me..." Matthew 25: 35 (esv)*





## WOMEN'S MINISTRY

As I sit and write this article, it isn't a hot, hazy summer day but a cool, rainy one which really puts me in a "fall-ish" frame of mind. I know that we are in for plenty more summer weather but it is easier to think ahead a bit to those colorful, autumn days.

On September 9<sup>th</sup> at 9A.M, we will have a Ladies Brunch in our Fellowship Hall.

This is a time for women of all ages to gather for food, fellowship and a devotion. It is also an opportunity to visit with old friends and make new ones.

I will hand out a flyer as we get closer but mark your calendars and plan to be there!

Our two ladies groups have continued to meet throughout the summer months. With vacation schedules and other summer activities, our attendance has been lower than usual, which is to be expected. It isn't so important how many ladies are present but I believe it is important to continue to gather together in fellowship all year long. After all, Satan doesn't take a vacation and we need to be there to encourage and hold each other up whenever we can. We don't do a formal study during these months but share a devotion during our meeting times.

We finished our study on the Beatitudes and I think we all learned so much more about what it means to be a true disciple of our Lord Jesus. Sometime in September we will be starting a new study which has yet to be determined. I hope to see many new faces on Tuesday evenings or Thursday mornings!

Our two groups are putting money into a fund to purchase gifts thru Samaritan's Purse at Christmas.

We are hoping to have enough to buy a large animal to help feed and support a family in need.

Since March we have been collecting items for Operation Christmas Child. This will be our 20<sup>th</sup> year being a part of this wonderful ministry. I recently found out that they have changed some of the items to put in the shoeboxes. They still would like toothbrushes but NOT toothpaste. Also, they no longer want candy or gum. So, instead of donating candy in October like we usually do, we will use that month to fill-in those items that we are lacking at that point. I will hand out a list of those items as the time draws near.

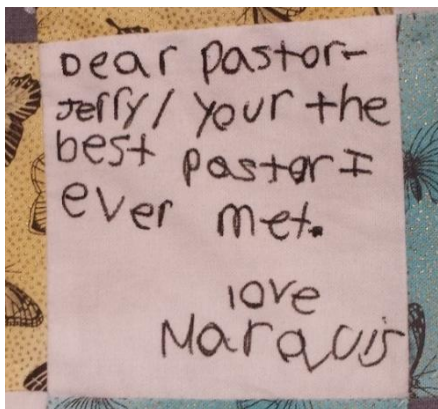
In a recent devotion I read, a woman shared how she missed 4 weeks of church services as she tended to sick children. During this time, she questioned how some people claimed they didn't "need" church because they can worship by themselves. She made a mental list of all she missed and this is what was on it: warm smiles, hugs and handshakes; the spiritual lift from singing hymns and songs; the heartfelt prayers shared by others and communing with her church family during the Lord's Supper.

As our church goes through this transitional time, I think it is important for us to bind together as we seek a new pastor. This is a bittersweet time for all of us but we need to continue to stay together in fellowship and prayer as we await God's provision for our new shepherd. It is exciting to anticipate what He has planned for the Patchogue Church of the Nazarene and I am so blessed to be a part of this family!

Love in Christ,  
*Mary Ann*

# The Forever Family Quilt

I just recently finished up a quilt project for PJ and Ann. I was unable to complete it before they left but Joe & Sue graciously offered to deliver it for me on their visit down south. During their farewell luncheon families signed a little white square with their sentiment. Over the next several weeks they were carefully arranged and stitched together into a quilt top. As I hand quilted the



top I read and reread all the prayers and heartfelt wishes that were written.

One of my favorites was from 9 year old Marquis Johnson – “*Dear Pastor Jerry, your the best pastor I ever met. Love Marquis.*” Not exactly sure how many pastors he has gotten to know in his life but PJ has left his presence with all of us. I hope as they read each sentiment they know the impact they had

on the lives of those they touched, young and old through their years serving at the Patchogue church. We will miss PJ and Ann but God surely has something good in store for them and us as a church moving forward.

Loving stitches, Corinne Franco

The Ladies Sewing Circle meets the second Thursday of every month at the Youth Center from 7-9pm.







*People disagree. But sometimes a disagreement turns into a chasm.*

Two believers were good friends for several years. They had much in common and enjoyed many hours of conversation. But one topic, politics, caused a rift between them. One, liberal, and the other, conservative, knew this was a problem area so they usually avoided it but, after a series of heated conversations over faith and politics, this rift became a relationship-destroying chasm. One of them said that communication would be closed for the foreseeable future because of the voting choice of the other. And so, two believers, formerly friends, parted ways.

Because this is a true story, names have been removed. Also removed is the ability to figure out which friend shut the door of communication on the other. While we'd like to think, "I'd never do that," in fact we are *all* capable of turning our backs on each other. I believe we do this for two reasons:

We have opinions and expectations. James refers to these as our passions (see Jas 4:1-3) and they can be wrong, even deadly, when not filtered through the Holy Spirit, the Word, and the love of Christ.

Our opinions are very dear to us. We hold them close and are reluctant to change them in any way. Based on our opinions, we set expectations as to how those opinions should be validated and fulfilled, *my way- of course!*

We can be quite self-righteously inflexible! The next time you speak your mind (opinion) to someone who disagrees with you notice what your first reaction is. Next, your expectation is that they should come around to your way of thinking. When all attempts to change their mind fails you may find yourself getting angry because your opinion has been rejected and your expectation has not been fulfilled.

As a family of faith, we must not allow our differences to become our undoing. Below is a quote from John Wesley. Corinne had the first part of it in one of her emails. The whole quote is this:

"Though we cannot think alike, may we not love alike?

May we not be of one heart, though we are not of one opinion?

Without all doubt, we may.

Herein all the children of God may unite, notwithstanding these smaller differences."

Amen! Can we lay aside our differing opinions and expectations for the greater, common good: unity in the family and the advancement of the Kingdom of God? With willing hearts, hard work, and the Lord leading the way then yes, we can! May it be so.

Sue Cerruto



## VBS

### DISCOVERING THE GOD OF THE UNIVERSE

As our church has entered into this new transition period, we embarked on uncharted territory. So much, that the winds of change have affected the Children's Ministry, especially, VBS. Nereida, who had filled the role of directing Children's Ministries, stepped down to recover from her surgery. The torch had been passed to Kelley Carpenter to take the lead with the assistance of Sue Herrmann. As Kelley said, "Nereida set us up to win!" and we did. They worked tirelessly to ensure that this year would truly be a unique and wonderful experience. The rest of us offered ourselves to His service and came along side Kelley and Sue which made for another successful year. Different faces, modified program, but the same heart of love to show the children what an awesome God we serve.



Allowing ourselves to accept these changes opened up a great addition to our program: Missions. Frank Donato taught the children about loving our God and sharing His story with others. They viewed two video series, which followed two completely different families, the Rigneys and Mandrells. The Rigneys' lived in London and shared Christ with as many as possible. They said that London was filled with people who either worshipped many gods, had to earn their way into His kingdom, or those who did not believe or know Christ. The Rigneys' used the gifts God gave them to reach out to everyone they encountered. Our second family, The Mandrells', trusted Gods leading and relocated to Denver, Colorado to establish a church. It came as a surprise to me that there is little in the way of churches in Denver. The kids learned from each family's journey as they stayed united and banded together with like-minded believers to make an impact in the communities they served.

Getting to know the kids and their families so that we can effectively share the gospel is the driving point of VBS. Adding Missions will now become a crucial component to our program. As we teach them about Jesus, they can go further than we can and share Christ with those in their own community. As the years pass and I see familiar children or new faces, they are beginning to perceive God as relational and not some strange, magical (God can make me fly!!) unknowable force. They are experiencing His love through us while learning who He is.

What I love about VBS is that it opens a dialogue with the parents and their children I work with at my Daycare. Some parents never heard of VBS, but appreciated the invite. However, my co-worker, Jackie Kraemer, had successfully reached out to parents and they have been bringing their kids for several years now. The preschoolers in my room heard about VBS through one of the boys who attends and I was able to show them the songs and dances. As the week progressed and with the little exposure they were given, they learned and sang "Praising the Father, the Son, the Spirit, the universe Maker!" Already I was seeing my small efforts impact the workplace and my little community. Imagine what God would multiply from our kids own experience and share it with those they love.

To everyone who actively participated and those who prayed, let us praise our Father, the Son, the Spirit, the universe Maker for accomplishing His will and a job well done!

Liz Duffy

## OPERATION FACE LIFT OR LIFTED SPIRITS?



On Sunday, the thirteenth day of August, Patchogue Nazarene congregants and guests entered a revitalized church lobby and sanctuary. The changes included: fresh paint, wall to wall carpeting, cushioned individualized seats, banister railings and pleasing *new* aroma. What a difference a week makes. Faded, stained carpet runners were gone. Still sturdy but weathered pews had been shipped to Spanish Town Jamaica, on their way to a new church home. The transformation that seemed to happen overnight really didn't; it was the result of twelve months of intense planning, contacts, brainstorming, investigation, reviews and prayer.

An old expression says, "Talk to two people get three opinions." The OFL Committee consisting of: Corinne Franco, Sue Cerruto, Ken Kraemer, Frank Donato and myself asked a lot of questions and received a wide variety of answers. Responses from congregants ranged from, *No need to make any changes*, to, *Let's do a complete overhaul*. Over the course of many months our church experienced excitement, confusion, direction, exhilaration, heartache and irritation. The waters seemed to get even muddier when our senior pastor of 31 years announced he was retiring in the middle of this transformation. It wasn't the years, or mileage that had brought him to such a decision, it was leading of the Holy Spirit. His explanation lessened the blow of his departure. Most of us reasoned that if God is faithful to direct Pastor Jerry's steps, at this crucial juncture, He will faithfully direct ours too. And He has.

"Be strong. Take courage. Don't be intimidated. ... because GOD, your God, is striding ahead of you. He's right there with you. He won't let you down; he won't leave you." *Deuteronomy 31:6 (MSG)*

Through it all we've seen the hand of God at work, directing and redirecting our path, causing us to move by His leading not ours. It became clear that not only was God involved, He was taking control. One example of this was the involvement of an international organization called Food for the Poor. Our connection to this group was more than just chance, more than a lucky Google search, it was divine providence. After multiple attempts to restore or recondition pews failed. We faced a dilemma: What do we do with sixty year old pews that people have formed an emotional attachment to? The Holy Spirit provided the answer. Miguel Vazquez, Food for the Poor coordinator, explained how donating our pews would be an answer to prayer for a church in a developing country without any seating. Miguel explained how FFTP would pay to ship our pews to a church in Jamaica. A truck would be sent to our church. However, because FFTP is not a trucking company we would be responsible to get them loaded. This presented several new challenges. For starters, loading twenty pews, weighing 210 pounds each, would be a difficult and dangerous proposition. Where would we

get the necessary man power to do that kind of work at 10 am on a Monday morning with a two hour loading window? We saw God provide the answer. One of our committee members discovered a moving company called College Hunks, (you read that right). They loaded the pews quickly and safely and at no cost to the church. The cost of \$800.00 was anonymously donated and paid the entire bill.

We've come a long way together this past year but we still have a ways to go. Operation Face Lift still needs a new lobby floor, shades on sanctuary windows, refinished pulpit furniture and more. Compared to where we've come from, that sounds like a small order. But I wonder ... has God been using the challenges of this past year to bolster our faith in Spiritual matters? I refer to the ongoing search for our next pastor. The individual or individuals that God wants to install here may not yet be aware of His plan for them. That's where you come in.

Dr. David Jeremiah writes: *While we should use every legitimate tool at our disposal, we must pursue God's work in God's way. We can't win the victory in worldly dress any more than David could confront Goliath in Saul's armor. God's way is: Prayer; preaching of the Word of God, rightly divided; and the power of the Holy Spirit filling the one who is committed to Christ. That's the only way to build a biblical work.*

Have you committed to daily prayer over this matter? If not, what are you waiting for? God has coordinated the restoration of this building with the departure of a long standing pastor. These events are tied into the selection of a new pastoral leader. Did you notice that Dr Jeremiah's description of *God's Way* begins with prayer? We'll get nowhere without it. Conversely, we'll arrive at the right time and the right place if we apply it in generous portions. God is poised to do wonderful things here at Patchogue but we must open the flood gates by committing ourselves to prayer.

Serving Him together,

John Mercurio



