



ST. JOHN'S MESSENGER

February 2014

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Worship Services

9:30 AM

Sunday School Classes (K-Grade 6)

9:30 AM

Confirmation Classes (7-8 Grades)

Wednesdays 7:00 PM



Calendar of Events for February 2014 ~

Sunday, February 9	Worship, 9:30 AM Sunday School 9:30 AM
Tuesday, February 11	Council Meeting 7:30 PM
Wednesday, February 12	Confirmation Class 7:00 PM
Thursday, February 13	Bible Study 10:30 AM New Member Class 7:00:PM Choir Rehearsal 7:30 PM
Friday, February 14	Cadets/Brownie Girl Scout Meeting 3:00 PM
Sunday, February 16	Worship 9:30 AM Sunday School goes to Church
Tuesday, February 18	WELCA Meeting 7:30 PM
Wednesday, February 19	Confirmation Class 7:30 PM
Thursday, February 20	Bible Study 10:30 AM First Communion Class 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal 7:30 PM
Sunday, February 23	Worship 9:30 AM Sunday School 9:30 AM
Tuesday, February 25	Evangelism Meeting 7:30 PM
Wednesday, February 26	Confirmation Class 7:00 PM
Thursday, February 27	Bible Study 10:30 AM No First Communion Class Choir Rehearsal 7:30 P

Looking forward to March...

Sunday, March 2	Worship 9:30 AM Fastnachts Sunday Coffee and Fastnachts after worship
Tuesday, March 4	Music and Worship Meeting 7:30 PM
Wednesday, March 5	ASH WEDNESDAY 12:00 NOON & 7:30 PM Confirmation Class goes to Ash Wednesday service

SERVERS FOR FEBRUARY 2014

DATE	ACOLYTES		ASSISTING MINISTERS		LECTORS	
2/16	9:30 AM	Katie Lenz	9:30 AM	Roger Vargas	9:30 AM	Roger Vargas
2/23	9:30 AM	Erin Milano	9:30 AM	Bill Lindman	9:30 AM	Bill Benson

If you cannot serve on a day you are scheduled, please find a replacement and notify the church office and the appropriate coordinator:

Bob Koehler: Assisting Ministers 678-6623

Bill Benson: Acolytes, Crucifixion, Torch bearers and Gospel bearers 508-8806

† A Message from Pastor Alex ~

When you hear the word “February”, what’s the first thing that comes to mind? Snow? Freezing temperatures? Your birthday or a wedding anniversary? Leap years? The Super Bowl? Any of these answers are reasonable and valid. However, my guess is that for most of you, hearing the month “February” immediately brings one particular day to mind. No, I’m not referring to Groundhog’s Day (*I know that I’m not in PA anymore* ☺). I’m talking about Valentine’s Day.

Ahh Valentine’s Day... a day that couples enjoy and single people despise. I say that, but I’ve actually always enjoyed this holiday. As a kid, I loved going out and getting those Valentine cards with my favorite super heroes and cartoon characters on them that I’d give to my classmates. And how could I forget that feeling of looking through my bag of Valentine cards at the end of the school day, hoping that I got one from the prettiest girl in class!? Now even though I’ve gotten older and have since come to recognize how annoyingly commercialized this holiday is, I still appreciate the idea of taking a day each year to honor the person in your life who you love. A day that celebrates love should be cherished not ignored.

But what is love exactly? As Christians, we know that it’s more than just roses, chocolates, greeting cards, or jewelry. True love is sacrifice and service. It’s thinking of others before yourself. True love requires patience, trust, and even some vulnerability. How do we know this? Because we believe that the definition of love is Jesus Christ: the living embodiment of a gracious and merciful God who willingly offered his very life for the sake of the whole world. Jesus’ entire ministry was grounded in a selfless love that sought to serve those in need and in doing this, he provided us with a model for faithful discipleship. When asked by his disciples about which commandment was the greatest, Jesus said, “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’”

I’ve been thinking a lot about this passage in light of the discussion that we had at our annual congregational meeting a few weeks back. For those of you who were unable to attend that meeting, we had a lengthy conversation about visitors who join us for worship, specifically individuals who come in off the street in need of food and/or counseling. We wrestled with the importance of having a safe worship space while at the same time remaining faithful to our call as disciples of Christ. It was a difficult conversation but an important one, and I want to thank everyone who shared their opinion, regardless of where you stood on the issue.

Now the first thing I want to express is that when it comes to our time together on Sunday mornings, there is nothing more important than our safety and well-being. That goes not just for those of us are worshiping in the sanctuary, but also for our Sunday School kids and teachers as well. Our discussion at the congregational meeting raised some potential security issues with our church building, and I’ve already begun to look into some preventative safety procedures that we can easily implement here at St. John’s. This will range from consulting with our local police to instructing our ushers about some proper protocols that they can follow.

Back in our September edition of the Messenger, I encouraged us to remember the importance of being a welcoming congregation, to be accepting and hospitable to everyone who walks through our doors on a Sunday morning. Well you have certainly responded to that challenge in the past few months and I want to commend you for the love and courage that you have shown in doing so. Discipleship is not easy. It requires a love that will leave us feeling vulnerable at times, taking us outside our comfort zone. But we cannot let that anxiety become a barrier that separates us from the outside world.

The Greek word for hospitality in the New Testament is *philoxenia*, a word that literally means “love for outsiders.” So with that, I will leave you with a verse from Matthew 25 that I’ve been reflecting on over the past few weeks. Jesus says, “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, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.” May these words guide and strengthen our ministry here at St. John’s as we continue to participate in the mission of God’s work in the world.

Peace,

Alex

News from St. John's Council

NEW YEAR, NEW COUNCIL

First, I want to thank Dennis Ferenz', Dot Criscuolo, Kevin Hansen and Joan Pirrone for their service to our Church Council. Second, I want to welcome Susan Masciello, Kim Carlstrom, Bill Lindman and for volunteering and accepting their nomination to serve.

There are many exciting things that happen during the church year. I want you to bring ideas, suggestions, complaints, whatever you can think of to me or any council member's attention so we, as your elected council members, can do all we can for the congregation and our community. Council meetings are not "closed" and if you would like to sit in and listen and understand what we do, please let me or Pastor know if you would like to attend.

I want to call everyone to search your hearts and think of a way to serve your church in any capacity. Be it Communion Assistant, Lector, Altar Guild, Acolyte, Usher, Sunday School teacher, property, evangelism, stewardship, worship & music, choir or any other function. We need all the help we can get to promote OUR church. I want to thank all who make our church function and look appealing to all who come in or pass by.

I look forward to serving as your Congregational President this year. I hope we can all make a difference and grow and reach out in our community.

I can be reached at mrsp061601@optonline.net or by phone at 516-239-7623 or 516-581-1221.

Sincerely,

Janet Pescatore

INTRODUCING THE 2014 CHURCH COUNCIL

President	Janet Pescatore
Vice-President	Daniel Gonzalez
Secretary	Kim Carlstrom
Treasurer	Bruce Feltkamp
Council Members	Charlene Comastri
	Pauline Feltkamp
	Daniel Lenz
	Bill Lindman
	Ursula Lipitz
	Susan Masciello
	Jill Pace
	Cora Sarver

Joseph Richetti will continue as our Financial Secretary
Joan Pirrone will continue as our Financial Rec. Secretary

Thank you for your service!



FROM The INN [The Interfaith Nutrition Network]

On behalf of the individuals whom we feed and shelter at The INN, I wish to extend my gratitude to you for your contribution of \$200.00.

The INN continues to serve families and individuals on Long Island who are homeless and hungry. We provide meals everyday in 14 soup kitchens in Nassau and Suffolk served by volunteers. We also provide housing in our emergency shelters and long-term affordable housing, with support services to families.

Your generous give comes at a time when there is much that needs to be done to assist the growing number of Long Islanders who are faced with hunger and homelessness.

May your days be filled with joy and warmth with the knowledge that you have enabled The INN and its volunteers to continue to care for all those who come to us for assistance.

Your generous support gives us hope. Thanks so much for once again inspiring us with your thoughtfulness!

Sincerely,
Jean Kelly
Executive Director

YOUTH GROUP NEWS

Youth Group Bowling.....

Lets get together for a fun night of bowling at Woodmere Lanes
Friday, February 28th 9:00pm

Cost will be \$13.00 per person for 90 minutes of bowling, pizza and soda

A Sign up sheet will be in the church narthex or E-mail me that you can make it ,
fourjps@optonline.net or call me 516-599-8896.

Hope to see you there.

WILL PACE

ST JOHN'S NEWS

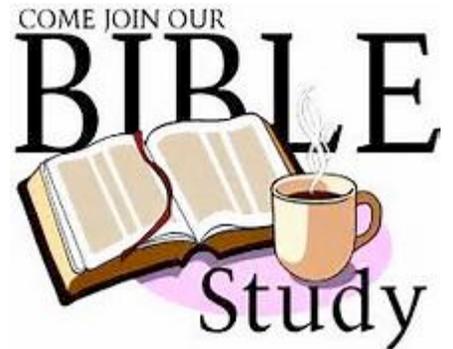
WELCA would like to thank the Church Council for their generous gift of \$300.00 for the Barbara Semmig Scholarship Fund.

Congratulations to Stephanie Carlstrom for receiving her Bachelor of Arts from John Jay College. Stephanie completed her undergrad studies in just 3 ½ years, majoring in Forensic Psychology. She will be pursuing a Masters degree in the Fall!

If you are interested in becoming a member of St. John's, please contact Pastor Alex at the church office or email him at rev.alexkennedy@gmail.com.

If anyone has palms from last year and would like to donate them to us to use for this year's ashes, please bring them to church and place them in the box in the narthex.
Thank you

Acolytes and Crucifers are needed at St. John's. It is a wonderful way to serve during service. It is small commitment of 1-2 Sundays every three months. Anyone who has made their First Communion is eligible. If you are interested



Thursdays at 10:30 AM
in the Church
room!

First Communion classes will begin **February 20th**. If you or someone you know is interested in receiving communion for the first time, please contact Pastor Alex at the church office or email him.