

THE CHANNEL

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MCC
SAINT JOHN THE APOSTLE
METROPOLITAN
COMMUNITY CHURCH

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Change for the Future

The Capital Campaign Committee, which was originally formed in 2012, has been working hard to make money to pay off the church mortgage. When we started, the church owed about \$240,000. We now owe, as the end of December 2015, \$131,687.

The one thing that really stands out is the lowering of the interest we are paying each month. In January 2015, our monthly interest was \$974, as of December's payment, it was only \$733. That means we are paying more and more on the principle, and less in interest.

Time really does fly by. It seems as if we just started the "Change for the Future" monthly collection program. Now, with the collection on March 26th, we have completed one year of this ongoing program. That is two full six month collection periods. On Sunday, April 3rd, we will be holding the drawing to determine the winner of the gift certificate for a meal for two at "The Oasis" restaurant.

Each month, on the fourth Sunday, we collect the Change for the Future cans. When a can is turned in, we give the person a ticket to write their name & telephone number on. That goes in an envelope where it is held until the end of the six month period. If one gives monthly, they get six chances to win the gift certificate. The more often you give, the better your chances of winning the gift certificate.

The Capital Campaign Committee is working hard on coming up with new programs for this year. We think we will have some very interesting things in store for 2016.

As of now, we are looking at having a Casino night, a Bingo evening, and a pasta dinner. More on that in the next issue, so stand by.....

Wayne Green,

Chairperson CCC

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PASTOR'S PEN

SPRING TIME



Tom and I, with our dog Lilly, took a trip back to Pennsylvania. It had been a number of years since we made the trek. There are always spiritual lessons to learn, even when you travel. God is speaking all the time. We just have to learn to listen.

My first lesson was about getting older. On previous trips to Pennsylvania, Tom and I would do it in two days. This time the thought of 12 hours driving a day was not appealing. So we slowed it down and did about 8 hours a day. The spiritual lesson learned is: 1) accept your limitations. Don't expect more of yourself than God does. 2) Slow down and enjoy the trip. There is beauty in the journey. Appreciate it.

The next spiritual lesson of course deals with planning. No matter how good the map you may prepare, there are always unexpected detours. Some of the changes may be to avoid obstacles; others may be because something wonderful appeared along the road. Don't be afraid to modify your plans. Remember when we pray to God for something, the answer can be "yes", "no" or "I have a better idea". Always go with the "better idea". I also learned that there will always be a "sign". On the highway of our life God always gives us a sign. It may not be when we expect it but it is always there.

The final lesson comes from my mother-in-law. When we arrived at her home, we got a tour of the gardens. Now the plants and flowers were still dormant from winter. As we toured, she often said, "Now I have to trim that back. When I trim it always comes up full and beautiful." We too need to trim out the dead wood in our life to allow new growth. We have the image of Jesus as the Good Shepherd but Jesus is also the Good Gardener. Allow yourself to be trimmed.

Pastor Steve Filizzi



FOOD PANTRY

Our Food Pantry is still helping families in our local area. But without the help of the many Church Family Members who give, so others may receive.

We wish to send out a very much "THANK YOU" for all of their donations over the year. All of you know who you are so it would be improper to single out anyone in particular. Please be assured that you are all appreciated. Outside appreciation does go to the Office Pub and Rascals. Both of these establishments have been good supporters of Dean's Food Pantry and we hope to continue working with them in the future.

We hope that we can continue to keep the pantry striving and providing our ministry in the way we have always done. Here's hoping Dean and Ron are looking down on us and smiling.

If you are wondering what food items to donate here is a list:

- Pinto Beans 16 ounce bag
- Macaroni and Cheese 7.25 box
- Jiffy Mix 8.5 ounce box
- Pasta Sauce 24 ounce can
- Spaghetti 16 ounce box
- Vegetables 14.5 ounce can
- Corn Flakes 18 ounce box
- Fruit Cups

Thanks again from the food pantry volunteers.....

Jerry & Richard.....Jerry & Carol



SPRING YARD SALE

On Saturday, April 9, 2016, the church will be holding it's Spring yard sale. It will be from 7:30 A.M. until 2:00 P.M.

In addition to the usual yard sale items, we will be having bake sale items.

We will also have a food cart so you can take care of those hunger pains.



We are still in need of volunteers to help with the pricing of the goods, as well as help with the tear down. If you are able to help, please contact the church office.

Tell all of your friends about this great event and come on down to take advantage of the semiannual event.

This is to benefit the operation of our church, St John the Apostle (SJAMCC)

DEACONS CORNER

MY TIMES ARE IN YOUR HANDS

EN TU MANO ESTAN MISTIEMPOS

Psalm 31:15

When South African pastor Andrew Murray was visiting England in 1895, he began to suffer pain from a previous back injury. While he was recuperating, his hostess told him of a woman who was in great trouble and wanted to know if he had any counsel for her. Murray said, "Give her this paper which I have been writing for my own [encouragement]. It may be that she will find it helpful." This is what Murray wrote:

"In time of trouble say:

First—God brought me here. It is by His will I am in this strait place. In that I will rest.

Next—He will keep me in His love and give me grace in this trial to behave as His child.

Then—He will make the trial a blessing, teaching me lessons He intends me to learn, and working in me the grace He means to bestow.

Last—In His good time He can bring me out again—how and when He knows.

I am here—by God's appointment, in His keeping, under His training, for His time."

We want the instant solution, the quick fix, but some things cannot be disposed of so readily; they can only be accepted. God will keep us by His love. By His grace, we can rest in Him.

Jonathan Hollander Deacon St. John the Apostle



Salmo 31:15

Quando el pastor sudafricano Andrew Murray visitaba Inglaterra en 1895, empezó a sentir dolores de una antigua lesión en la espalda. Mientras se recuperaba, su anfitriona le comentó sobre una mujer que estaba atravesando un gran problema, y quería saber si él podía aconsejarla. Murray respondió: «Entréguele este papel que he estado escribiendo para [alentarme a] mí mismo. Quizá le resulte útil». Esto es lo que escribió:

«En los momentos difíciles, di: »

Primero: Dios me trajo aquí. Es por su voluntad que estoy en este aprieto. Descanso en esto.

»Luego: Él me sostendrá en su amor y me dará gracia para comportarme como su hijo.

»Después: Él convertirá la prueba en una bendición, enseñándome lecciones. Quiere que aprenda y que experimente su gracia. »

Por último: A su tiempo y manera, me sacará de esta situación. »

Estoy aquí: por designación de Dios, bajo su cuidado, su guía y para su tiempo».

Nuestro deseo es la solución instantánea, la reparación inmediata, pero algunas cosas requieren cierto tiempo; solo podemos aceptarlas. Dios nos sostendrá en su amor, y podemos descansar en su gracia.

Jonathan Hollander Diácono de St. John the Apostle

THE TWO MOTHERS

Long, long ago, so I have been told,
Two angels met on the streets paved with gold.

"By the stars in your crown," said one to the other,
I see that on earth, you too were a mother,

And by the blue tinted halo you wear;
You too have known sorrow and deep despair."

"Oh yes," came the answer, "I once had a son.
A sweet little lad full of laughter and fun

But tell of your child." "Oh I know I was blessed
From the moment I first held Him close to my
breast.

And my heart almost burst with joy of that day"
"Ah yes", sighed the other. "I felt the same way."

The former continued, "The first steps He took...
So eager and breathless...the sweet startled look

Which came over His face...He trusted me so."
"Ah yes," sighed the other. "How well do I know."

"But soon He had grown to a tall handsome boy.
So stalwart and kind. and it gave me much joy

To have Him just walk down the street by my
side."

"Ah yes," said the other. "I felt the same pride."

"How often I shielded and spared Him from pain
And when He for others was so cruelly slain,

When they crucified Him and spat in His face,
How gladly would I have hung there in His place!"

A moment of silence, "Oh, then you are she?
The mother of Christ!" And she fell to one knee.

But the blessed one raised her up, drawing her near
And kissed from the face of the woman a tear

"That I may share with you your grief and your
woe,

Tell me the name of the son you loved so."

She lifted her eyes, looking straight at the other,
"He was Judas Iscariot. I am his Mother."

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY

SACRED SPACE ONLINE LEARNING

Did you know that MCC has an online learning website? It is called Sacred Space Online Learning or SSOL. SSOL is dedicated to providing a wide range of Spiritual, religious and faith-based resources through online courses, live webinars, on demand webinars, lectures, online book studies, and virtual retreats, many at little or no cost.

SSOL was formed, is owned and operated by The Office of Formation and Leadership Development (OFLD) of Metropolitan Community Churches.

There is something for just about everyone, clergy, lay ministries, ministry leaders and the curious.

The courses are offered from a variety of sources such as United Church of Christ, Presbyterian Church USA, United Methodist Church, Unitarian Universalist Association, Faith Trust Institute, Metropolitan Community Churches, Dallas Theological Seminary, Loyola University, and Harvard Institute just to name a few. Some pretty impressive sources don't you think?

They offer many categories such as Social Justice, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer, African, African American and Black studies, Asian studies, Latino /Latina and Hispanic studies, Native American First Nation Indigenous Peoples, Meditation and Retreat, Theology and Philosophy, Religious Studies, Scripture, Religion and Society, Art and Dance, Children, youth and young Adult, Fund raising and Stewardship. These are just a few of the categories each with a number of related courses. For example under the category of Scripture there is Buddhism Through It's Scriptures, Hinduism Through It's Scriptures, Christianity Through It's Scriptures, Islam Through It's Scriptures and Judaism Through It's Scriptures. These courses are offered through Harvard University and all are free. There is also Introduction to the New Testament, Introduction to the Old Testament Offered through Yale University, Introducing the Gospels from Church Next, Homosexuality and the Bible from

Metropolitan Community Churches. These are just a few courses under one category. There are hundreds of courses to choose from and there is a tool on every page that translates everything into almost any language.

There is SSOL-POP The Intersection Between Religion and Popular Culture. These materials are from television shows, movies, and songs. Religious and spiritual themes in films including Interstellar, Selma, Gandhi and more. SSOL-POP also has " The Gospel According to..." Series which include The Gospel According to Oprah, The Gospel According to Bruce Springsteen, The Gospel According to Sherlock Holmes, The Gospel According to Star Wars, and even The Gospel According to Dr. Seuss. There are many more in the Series but I think you get the jest of it.

There is an SSOL Blog where they highlight some of the online classes, live webinars, on-demand webinars, book studies online retreats, also highlighting what is offered on SSOL-POP. This where they also highlight various educational events, ideas, and resources online or offline.

I find SSOL to be a very interesting and educational website. There truly is some thing for everyone no matter your age, sexual identity gay, straight, bisexual, or transgender, nationality or religion. Whether you have a Seminary degree, Doctorate degree, Masters Degree, or no degree, whether you are looking for educational purposes, information purposes or just for fun there is something for you, so take the time to look it up and browse around I think you just might find something that will capture your interest.

Glenda Enterline

Alternate Lay Delegate

FOOD FOR THOUGHT



I collect Pysanky, intricately decorated Easter eggs of Ukrainian origin that symbolize rebirth or resurrection. The

eggs are usually hand-blown, and designs are traced on the eggs using beeswax. The eggs are dipped in dyes from light to dark, creating works of art. Several years ago, I tried my hand at making these eggs and I had produced about two dozen. It took steady hands and much patience. Unfortunately, a fall from a shelf resulted in all of the eggs shattered or damaged, ending my egg-decorating career. The work was too painstaking for me to start over. Instead, I began collecting pysanky and have amassed a nice collection of beautiful eggs. Today, you don't even have to buy expensive decorated eggs. You can buy "sleeves" that are put over hard-boiled eggs, and then dipped into hot water. The sleeves contract, molding to the shape of the hard-boiled egg. You can't save these eggs, but they do look nice on an Easter table. You can find the sleeves on Polish Art Center website at www.poleartcenter.com.



My recipe for this issue of the Channel is based on a blintz, which is usually served in the form of a crepe. I served this dish at the 2nd Sunday Brunch in March. It was a big hit so I thought I would share it. I got the idea after seeing it prepared by Ina Garten on her television show. I had to re-

think it for 60 people. I found an easy recipe using Bisquick that could be prepared the night before and baked the next day on a Betty Crocker website. Because I found the batter thin, I increased the amount of Bisquick from 1 cup to 1 and 1/3rd cups. The blueberry sauce is Ina's recipe except that, again, I had to make a minor change. For 60 people the cost of fresh blueberries was prohibitive so I ended up using a mix of fresh and frozen blueberries. From the satisfied comments I received at brunch, I will make this dish again for brunch guests at home. It would be a wonderful dish to serve at an Easter brunch, with slices of baked ham on the side.

Overnight Baked Blintzes with Fresh Blueberry Sauce

Filling

- 1 container (15 oz) ricotta cheese
- 1 container (8 oz) pineapple cream cheese spread
- 2 Tablespoons sugar

- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 eggs

Batter

- 1 1/3 cups Original Bisquick™ mix
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup butter or margarine, softened
- 1/2 cup pineapple juice
- 6 eggs

Fresh Blueberry Sauce

- 3/4 cup orange juice (Fresh is best—3 oranges, juiced)
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 4 half-pints fresh blueberries (Frozen can be substituted—4 cups)
- 1 teaspoon grated lemon zest
- 1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice

Directions

Spray 13x9-inch (3-quart) glass baking dish with cooking spray.

In medium bowl, stir all filling ingredients until well blended; set aside.

In medium bowl, stir all batter ingredients with wire whisk or fork until well blended. Pour batter into baking dish. Pour filling evenly over batter. Cover; refrigerate at least 8 hours or overnight.

Heat oven to 325 °F. Uncover baking dish; bake 55 to 60 minutes or until golden brown and center is set.

Let stand 10 minutes before serving. Top servings with fresh blueberry sauce.

Fresh Blueberry Sauce

Combine the orange juice, sugar, and cornstarch in a medium saucepan and bring to a boil, stirring occasionally. When the mixture is translucent and thickened, stir in the blueberries and simmer for 4 to 5 minutes, just until a few berries have burst but most are still whole. Stir in the lemon zest and lemon juice and cool. Yield: Makes 2 cups.

In love and service...Adam



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Wait, What?

Easter was last week;
Red Sox already played the Twins
at the Final 2016 Spring Training match?

Has Spring sprung ahead of you too? It seems like just yesterday I was being told, “hang on, get ready, it’s going to be a busy season...” and in fact it was a busy season, and still is! Although, just yesterday, we began to discuss here at home that it appears traffic has begun to slim down, the requests for property showings have not, nor have the phone calls from Sellers, ready to list their properties.

If it feels that Spring has Sprung ahead of you, it’s OK; Spring can actually be a great time to list your property for sale. Often, we find that families wait until near the end of the school year to make their final decision on their new home purchases, so they can close and move as soon as the kids are out of school. This year, Lee County School District’s last day of school is June 10, 2016. That date, coupled with the new TRID federal guidelines for home mortgage financing, makes this an IDEAL time to list property for sale. With FHA and VA loan closings taking about 45-60 days, and conventional financed loans taking 30-45 days, we are in the sweet spot timeframe for a new family to view and offer on your property.

Please AccessJack for additional information on Listing your Home for sale!

AccessJack at (239) 839-5927

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