

Old Man's News

March 2025



Mt. Sinai

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC

You are welcome here.

PASTORAL PONDERINGS – MARCH 2025

As some of you may know, MSCC recently purchased two AED devices, commonly known as defibrillators. One is located on the wall just outside of the kitchen in Vorhees Hall, and the other is at the Island Heart Food Pantry. Defibrillators are wonderful inventions; they tremendously increase the odds of survival for someone who is in cardiac arrest.

Of course, a defibrillator isn't worth much if you don't know how to use it. Consequently, a number of people from the congregation (including Yours Truly), and several volunteers from the Food Pantry, attended classes taught by Laurel Weresnick, the new Assistant Director at Island Heart. A dozen of us learned the fine arts of giving hands-on CPR and mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, as well as practicing with the AED device.

As I sat in the room, I was so grateful to Laurel for lending us the benefit of her years of experience as an EMT and CPR educator, and grateful also that so many people wanted to learn how to save lives in emergency situations. It made me reflect on all the other ways in which our church saves lives.

Think about how important it is that we host several AA meetings each week. I had to attend an AA meeting as part of a class in Pastoral Care I took when I was in seminary. When you listen to the stories imparted by the people who are at a meeting, it quickly becomes clear that for them, being part of a twelve-step program is literally a matter of life and death – and this is only one of the life-saving ministries that are part of MSCC's long heritage.

Consider, for example, the Food Pantry. We've been running the Pantry for decades now. Currently, we're serving well over one hundred families every week. We all know that life cannot be sustained without food, and we know that there are far too many people in our area who cannot afford to put food on the table. There is nothing more life-saving than the work done by Janice Flaiz, Laurel, and all of the other volunteers who devote themselves to this vital task.

Last – but hardly least – there is the message of salvation that resounds during our worship services. As he said to the Samaritan woman at the well, Jesus is truly the living water. Whether it's our normal Sunday worship, or memorial services for those who have gone before us, or baptisms for people just entering into the body of Christ, MSCC is a font of the living water that so many of us need. Let us be grateful that, after 236 years, our church remains a place where lives are saved, and lives enhanced, by the grace of God and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit!

Pastor Bill

Moderator's Conversation with Sue Hoff

Recently I sat down with Sue Hoff (right) to discuss her leadership of the Board of Worship and Sacraments and her many contributions to MSCC. This series highlights the work of our boards and leads. I hope you find it informative.

Jim Cibulka



Jim: How did you become involved at MSCC?

Sue: We had been active in Port Jefferson's Presbyterian Church in. We heard that Ron Patterson was a good preacher. Also, our two young boys became active in our church school led by Peg Witmer. At her request, my husband Carl trained as a leader in a sexuality workshop for middle and high-school youth. The church school solidified our decision to join as members.

Jim: Over the years you have played other leadership roles, correct?

Sue: I joined the choir and have been the choir director for the past few years. Because of my early choral experience, however, my first love is as a singer. In the 1980s I was active in the Board of Christian Outreach's "Seeds of Peace," which offered "portable" services in the region. Beyond that, I served as administrative assistant to our minister. More recently, I have been moderator twice during interim periods when we were searching for a minister. For the last two years I have been Lead of the Worship Board.

Jim: What are some important activities of the Worship Board last year?

Sue: We are responsible for everything worshipers see, hear, and do at the Sunday service. We handle baptisms and communions. All supplies,

decorations and ushers are our responsibility. I enjoy selecting the hymns. For now, I continue to format the Order of Worship and bulletin. Our board also schedules special services at Lent, Easter, and Christmas. We have arranged for a person to do ASL signing at our services.

I could not do it without a team of coordinators. Each person, including other partners such as Pastor Bill and Kevin Martin, has an explicit role with tight deadlines that we all must meet to achieve our goals.

This year our goal is to initiate a Sunday 5 pm worship service next fall, perhaps once per month. We hope to draw in young people.

Jim: How do you approach your role as Lead?

Sue: I try to listen and go with it. Our meetings are not especially structured, but the free flow develops consensus. I like working in a team.

Jim: How can our congregation support the Worship Board?

Sue: What we can try that is different? I'd like to hear more from members about what they seek personally in our services. As Pastor Bill has asked, can we augment our digital footprint to reach a broader audience? What kind of services would draw in new people? I am reminded of our success in becoming an open and affirming church. Despite those debates, we attracted new members, which is our challenge today.

Jim: Thank you, Sue, for all that you do to sustain and strengthen our church's mission and community.



INTEGRATIVE NUTRITION NIGHTS

DISCUSSION & DEMO!

Join integrative dietitian Iman Marghoob MS, RD

Endocrine Disruptors, How They Affect Us & How to Manage Them

Monday, March 10th 6:30 PM

Supplements-The Secret Ingredients

Monday, April 28th 6:30 PM

www.nyfarmacist.com

CONTACT KEVIN MSCCT1@OPTONLINE.NET
\$20/SESSION ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT
MOUNT SINAI CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
233 N COUNTRY MT SINAI, NY 11766

FOLLOW ME @IMANMARGHOOB

NEWS FROM THE MISSIONS BOARD



Dress for Success Update

Many thanks to all who donated clothing to Missions' *Dress for Success* campaign in the month of February. As you can see in the photo above, we received many beautiful suits and tailored clothing appropriate for an interview, as well as other professional attire. Thank you!

Baby Supplies Drive

For our Lenten exercise this year, Missions is coordinating a Baby Supplies Drive to benefit the Brighter Tomorrows Women's Shelter. Women at the shelter are escaping abusive situations and often arrive with very few necessities for their babies and children. We are collecting new store-bought baby clothes, as well as diapers, wipes, pacifiers and other baby-related items. A box will be placed in Voorhees Hall for your donations. Donations of these items will be accepted from March 9th through March 30th. Thank you in advance for your donations to babies in need!



Mt Sinai Church's
March Madness
Chili
Fundraiser
Sunday,
March 16th @

Our church chefs will prepare their tastiest and healthiest chili and cornbread for you to sample and take home to enjoy while you cheer on your favorite team in the March Madness bracket (or watch Masterpiece on PBS!)

Just \$5 lets you take home a pint of chili and a piece of cornbread or muffin.

From the Worship and Sacraments Ministry Board



March 5th is Ash Wednesday, which marks the beginning of Lent. We will honor Ash Wednesday with a service in our sanctuary at 7:00 p.m., following a soup supper at 6:00. Please bring a soup to share and your own table service, a bowl, spoon, beverage, and bread or crackers.

During this season, many of us will take on a new spiritual discipline or cast off something that seems to be getting in the way of the life God calls us to live. This practice captures our theme for this year's Lenten season.

At 7 p.m. on March 5th, following a soup supper, we will come together to acknowledge our sin, to acknowledge our mortality, to glimpse the Christ who grants forgiveness and everlasting life.

As part of our worship, we will offer the imposition of ashes. Though this practice may not be familiar to everyone, ashes have been used in Christian churches to mark the beginning of Lent since at least the 10th Century, and ashes are mentioned in scripture as a symbol of purification and repentance. Traditionally, people receive the ashes on their foreheads; or, if you prefer, you may opt to mark the back of your hand. At Mt. Sinai Church we offer the imposition of ashes as a physical reminder of our mortality and sin, and as an assurance of God's forgiveness and salvation.



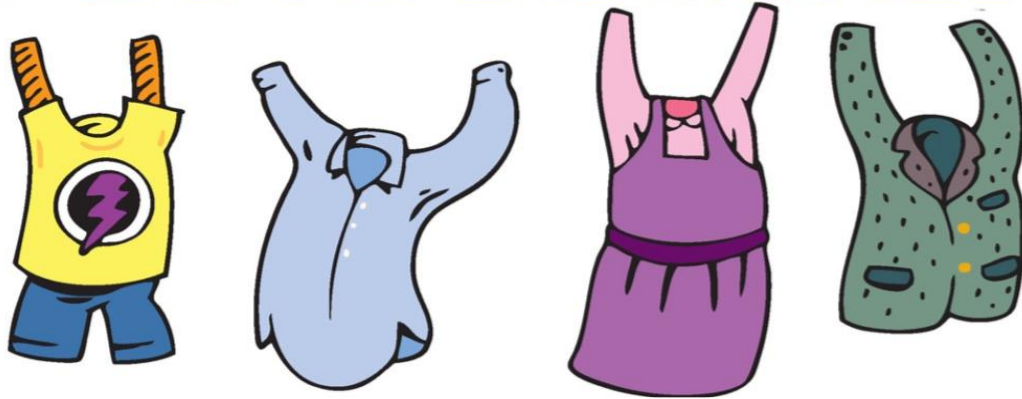
AN INVITATION FROM THE CHOIR

Please think about singing with us on one or more of the Sunday or special services in this Lenten, Holy Week, and Easter Season.

We rehearse one hour before each worship service, including services on Ash Wednesday and Holy Thursday. Not one of us is a professional musician. Some of us don't read music. The most fundamental skill needed to join the choir is the ability to match your voice to a tone played on the piano or sung by the person next to you.

Won't you consider taking on singing in the choir as your Lenten practice this year? All you have to do is show up and sing!

FUNDRAISER



Spring Clothing Drive Fundraiser Is Almost Here!

Please bring all your clothing, shoes, handbags, backpacks, stuffed animals, small single-item plastic toys (NO PUZZLES, BOARD GAMES, LEGOS, OR TOYS WITH PIECES), and linens (including towels, curtains, and table linens; NO BLANKETS OR COMFORTERS) to church on March 30th before 11 a.m. All items should be in large plastic trash bags.

Store your collection at home if you can.

If you need assistance bringing the bags to church, you will not be in church that Sunday, or you need to come during the week, please email us at sallacco@gmail.com not later than Friday, March 28th. We will help!

Remember, the company pays 20 cents per pound up to 10,000 pounds.

Thank you all for your support.

March Madness begins in Sunday School

Children of all ages will gather in the "Big Room" with by Ms. Stacey, Ms. Cheryl and Ms. Caroline to learn, love and live the season of LENT (and yes, we have a TENT)!

Below are the dates, the lessons in response to Bible references, and the topics. We hope we've piqued your interest and that you will share this information with your children.

Time isn't always on our side so **we ask that the children come straight down to Sunday School** with one exception* as noted below.



- March 9 1st Sunday in Lent; Lesson in response to Luke 4:1-13
Theme: "Wilderness Companion"
- March 16 2nd Sunday in Lent; Lesson in response to Luke 13:31-35
Theme: "Strong and Tender"
- March 23 3rd Sunday in Lent; Lesson in response to Luke 13:1-9
Please Note: Children are asked to meet in the sanctuary this morning. "The Crew" will be giving the children's message, *"Almsgiving/Open Invitation for a Food Drive."*
- March 30 4th Sunday in Lent; Lesson in response to Luke 15:1-3 & 11b-32
Theme: "Now what?"
- April 6 5th Sunday in Lent; Lesson in response to Isaiah 43:16-21 & Psalm 126
Theme: "Something New" *Bring in your new food item for our food drive!*

As always, we can't wait to share our program about LENT with the Children of our Church and Thank you all for your continued support.

With love and thanks,

Ms. Stacey, Ms. Cheryl and Ms. Caroline, aka "The Crew."



Photo from Soles4Souls website.

Soles.4.Souls

We will be collecting all kinds of shoes to support the Anita & Bill Thomas Rotary Shoe Drive during the whole month of March. There will be baskets in Voorhees Hall for your donations. California flood victims will be the recipients as well as others in need. We are joining with Rocky Point and Northport Rotary Clubs to accomplish this mission.

Strategic Planning Action Team Has a Plan for YOU!

Order your gift cards for family, friends, and (because, why not?) yourself! For Easter gifts, place your order by March 23. Remember, the church receives a percentage of the cost of the cards. Check the list of stores and complete your order form TODAY! (See below for more information.)

Gift Card Orders

Seasonal Orders	Orders due to SPAC by the dates below.	Gift Cards handed out in church on the dates below.
Spring (Easter)	March 23rd	March 30th
Summer	June 1st	June 8th
Fall (back to school/halloween)	August 3rd	August 10th
Winter (Christmas)	November 23rd	November 30th

SPAC has decided to place an order for every season. The dates above are given for your convenience so that you can plan ahead. Order forms and store lists are in the racks in the Narthex and the hallway by the office.

You are invited

to Celebrate the daily *Iftar* meal
with our friends at the

Turkish Cultural Center

on March 15th at 6:30 p.m. with dinner
served after sunset at 7:00.



Iftar is the evening meal that breaks the daily fasting of Ramadan, and our neighbors at the TCC have graciously offered to share this meal with us in our "home," Voorhees Hall. They will furnish all that's needed for all that attend.

Please join us for this festive communal meal!

Mark Your Calendar!



May
24th