

THE TIDINGS

Shelter Island  Presbyterian Church

April 2021 Newsletter

From the Pastor's Study

As I write this newsletter I am indeed in my office. As I look outside it's obvious we are heading toward spring, and warmer and better days. Vaccinations are beginning to pick up steam and hopefully sooner than later, all of those on the Island who wish one or two, will have that opportunity. And not too soon, we can begin again to worship as one family together, in person. Won't that be something!

It seems not coincidental that we are just finishing our Lenten journey with Jesus and his disciples in tow, and hopefully, we are also coming to an end of our shared Lenten journey. Two Sunday's from now will be Palm Sunday which marks the beginning of Holy Week, His Passion and His journey to the Cross. This is the journey into the very heart of darkness. The darkness which inhabits our hearts and the darkness he has come to save us from. It's the darkness that separates us from his Father and the life we were created to live and live into.

Our natural tendency is to skip this darkness and leapfrog to Easter morning. We want resurrection without a funeral. We want life without the pain of death. We want to reap the benefits without enduring the sacrifice. It's just who we are. We all just want to pass 'GO' and collect \$200.00. We're all just waiting to draw out that 'Get Out of Jail Free' Card. Incidentally it's the only card that's in both the Chance card pile and the Community Chest card pile. I guess the inventor of Monopoly knew us very well.

The Good news is that we don't need that card at all. We have all been given a free pass. All we need do is accept it. Holy Week is a bit of a 'speed bump' on our way toward Easter morning. It forces us to slow down and engage with the story. If we don't, Palm Sunday just becomes another triumphal parade and not a descent into the heart of darkness that it is. We won't stay awake with Jesus as he sweats blood in Gethsemane Garden and won't begin to accept that we, like Judas and Peter, have it within us to betray Jesus as well. We won't enter the Presidium and be with Jesus as the soldiers flog, beat, mock and crown him with thorns. And we won't stand vigil with his mother as she watches him take his last breath and commits his Spirit to the care of his Father in heaven.

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So slow down in the coming days. Let's enter the story and allow the story to enter us. Only then will we arrive at the empty tomb on Easter morning in wonder and abiding astonishment at what God has done in His Son and by the power of His Holy Spirit.

A good way to do that is to join us for the Maundy Thursday Service, April 1, at 7:00 pm in the Sanctuary. If not in person, then virtually. The story will be read and then we will join together as one family, in a communion meal.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Bob

FROM THE PASTORAL NOMINATING COMMITTEE: HEATHER REYLEK, ELLEN GOVE & MARIANNE BAIRD

Does light seem just a glimmer? Does hope seem out of reach during these unusual times? This Lenten season and Easter seem to run together with the past year as we patiently wait for release from COVID. But the glimmer of light grows stronger every day as our church family receives doses of the vaccine. We grow stronger and we look forward to a new spring, filled with light. We are blessed in our community with leaders, first responders, medical professionals, and our churches. We have persevered and although church life has been “different”, we have good reason to rejoice this Easter season, holding onto light and joy.

The Pastoral Nominating Committee is close to announcing the call for our new pastor. Within this next month we hope to be inviting you to a special service and Congregational meeting. It has been a long process, slowed down by the coronavirus. We originally conducted the pastoral search for a half-time pastor shared with FPC Southold. That has changed due to a change in Southold's finances and reflection on what is best for both churches. Now we feel that a ¾ time solo pastor, dedicated to only our church, would serve our congregation best. This development is very exciting. Yes, it will affect our budget, but consider that it wasn't that long ago that we had a full-time solo pastor. We have faith that this will be a positive journey towards growing our church, finances, and ministry.

At this point, the search is still confidential, but the light is getting brighter. Our candidate needs final approval from the Presbytery of L.I. (Committee on Ministry) in addition to other considerations. I wish it would be simpler, but this is a big decision for a candidate and ultimately, our congregation. But the light does grow stronger and with that, the promise of what is to come is close by.

FROM THE DEACONS' DESK BY BRENDA BERGMAN

The Deacons met on Sunday March 7, with all members present. The responsibilities of the group were discussed although many of these duties are not pertinent during the isolation of the congregation during COVID. The Easter flower list was discussed and upgraded. The list consists of 25 recipients of Easter plants and virtual visits. The Deacons thank all donors who help us financially and spiritually.

BUILDING & GROUNDS REPORT BY DAN BINDER

Sanctuary Windows Update: Building & Grounds has been working on replacing the six windows in the Sanctuary. Through the fundraising efforts of Joy Bausman, and Dan Binder working with various contractors, we have come to a point where Session approved to order six custom windows at a cost of \$5,500 each window. Dan is still working on installation costs, which will be finalized shortly. After windows are installed, the next step will be window coverings. We are hopeful that the windows will be installed during the summer months which will work out well for us, as we will have some choices where we will hold worship when they are installed.

Town Water System: The new filtration system to lower the nitrogen levels in the Church's water system is being installed. The underground tank has been installed outside the front of the offices and the control unit is being installed in the basement area. Soon, no more bottled water!

Manse: The manse is in very good shape and ready for our new Pastor and family. Downstairs floors have been lightly re-sanded and a fresh coat of poly has been applied.

Spring Projects: Bell Ringer Alarm System has been serviced and batteries have been replaced. We will be changing A/C filters shortly as well.

MUSIC MINISTRY
BY
LINDA BETJEMAN

BIG NEWS!!

On Easter Sunday we will resume singing congregational hymns and responses.

Adult Choir rehearsals will resume the Thursday after Easter at 5:00 pm.

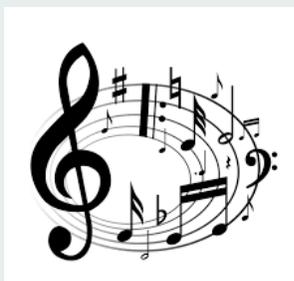
Members must be vaccinated and beyond the two-week post-vaccine period.

We will observe social distancing, masks are required, and we will use personal music folders and hymnals.

The congregation will also continue social distancing and use masks.

The hymn texts will be printed in the Bulletin.

Let there be MUSIC and songs of REJOICING!



EASTER BLESSINGS
& MEMORIES

BY JOANNE SHERMAN

Religious holy days stir up as many feelings as the millions of people who celebrate them. For me, I've noticed that those feelings have changed as I've gotten older. When I was little Easter was about coloring eggs and candy. Especially candy. Chocolate-covered cherries were my favorite. Dark chocolate filled with the gooey syrup that oozes out then down your chin and arm.

As I got older, I learned the significance of this special day. That was thanks to growing up in a large family that joyfully broke out of lent and celebrated Easter with gusto. Now that I am closing in on "four score," I still enjoy the holidays because of my faith, and also because of the decades of stacked memories that come flooding back from the sights and sounds and smells of Easter that makes it hard to sing the Alleluia without a catch in my throat.

In our home Easter meant a new beginning. And there were new clothes in the pinks and blues, yellows and light greens of the season. It meant white shoes -- a dozen of them lined up on newspapers on Saturday night as my dad took on the role of shoe polisher for his wife and five daughters. It meant flowers, too, because each of us girls had an Easter corsage to pin to the lapel of pastel car coats we wore to church, then to Grandma's. Mom's corsage was always the biggest. One year my dad bought us pink carnations. Just one year though, because Mom said they made the inside of the refrigerator smell like a funeral home. After that, we got orchids. Of course, we wore hats and gloves, because that's what we did back in those Wonder Years days.

Nearly every woman wore an Easter hat, and I remember when I was old enough to graduate from one with a streamer down the back to a headband of silk flowers. I loved it and I wore it for a full week after Easter, 24/7, until the pink rosebuds fell off.

This Easter season we see the hint of rebirth on trees that just a few weeks ago looked so permanently dead. After that long winter's nap, flowers are popping up through dark soil and people start to venture out of their homes. For me, it's never January 1st that feels like the beginning of a new year, it's Easter. It's a time of rebirth and for people of hope and faith, a holy day bursting with promise and possibilities, and tearful -- yet joyful -- Alleluias.

For many of us, this is a different kind of Easter. Maybe not a new normal, just a different normal. But whether we celebrate sitting shoulder-to-shoulder or socially distanced in our churches, or outdoors on damp grass at sunrise services or alone in our own homes, we are still connected by our common faith.

For me, one of the blessings of Easter is that faith and also that sweet memory I cherish of waking up on Easter morning and seeing that long line of freshly polished shoes all ready to wear to church. Oh yeah, and gooey chocolate-covered cherries. Happy Easter!

FROM THE CLERK OF SESSION ~ ELLEN GOVE

On our Facebook Page and in this week's Bulletin was the notice to order Easter Flowers! Oh, such a good sign of things to come—Renewal, Rebirth. The days are getting longer, vaccinations are becoming more abundant, there is light in the hopefulness of this Season!

Session has been busy despite COVID. We continue to meet via Zoom. At our January meeting, we discussed that we would go back to worshipping in the sanctuary when the positivity rate was at least 5%. When we met in February, the Suffolk County rate was 4.6%! Session voted to have worship in the Sanctuary on Sunday, February 28th. We also held our Annual Congregational Meeting immediately following worship. We were able to hire Jeremy who live-streamed our Annual Meeting. We had a quorum, and it was quite successful! Thank you all those who helped in making this happen.

Session voted to re-elect Ellen Gove, Clerk of Session, and Peter Vielbig, Treasurer, to serve a one-year term (2021). Additionally, Session and Katherine are looking into digitizing our minutes and other pertinent records of SIP Church.

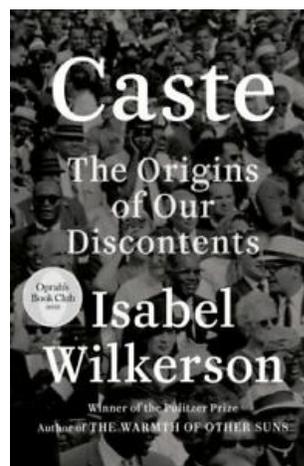
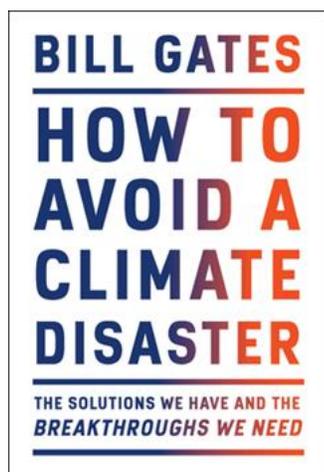
After many bids and discussion on the type of windows that should replace the windows in the Sanctuary, Session has voted to order six new Sanctuary Windows. Thanks to Joy Bausman and Dan Binder who raised money for this capital improvement and worked with Riverhead Building Supply. Since these windows must be custom made, we are hoping this project will be completed in the summer months.

In this issue of *The Tidings* we have listed our schedule for Holy Week. We hope that you will either join in our Sanctuary or online as we gather for Maundy Thursday and Easter Sunday!

MISSION REPORT BY MARILYNN PYSHER

On Monday, March 15, The Better World Book Club met via zoom to discuss our latest book, [Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents](#) by Isabel Wilkerson, Pulitzer Prize winner for [The Warmth of Other Suns](#). [Caste](#) is a very profound book that the group felt needs even further discussion and has set a date to do so in 2 weeks. It, like most of the books we read, expanded our minds, and raised our consciousness to one of the most important issues in this country. We encourage you to read it. We promise you will be moved. Our next book is [How to Avoid a Climate Disaster, the Solutions We Have and the Breakthroughs We Need](#) by Bill Gates. We will be meeting in May to discuss this book and hope you will be part of the growing group that we are becoming—bring along friends as well!

While the Mission Team hasn't been as active as we'd like to be, we have continued to make sandwiches monthly for Maureen's Haven's homeless clients. Due to the impact of the pandemic, the needs are even greater than ever, locally and globally, and we feel as a Church family, we should be doing much more. But we need YOU. Won't you please step up and join us in this critical mission? Your efforts, big or small, will make a big difference and come back to you a thousand-fold.



MISSION STATEMENT

We envision the Shelter Island Presbyterian Church as a spiritual heart of our small island community—a congregation that keeps its doors open to all and offers service and support to friends, neighbors, and visitors from beyond our shores.

We will encourage the spiritual growth of our Church's people in Jesus Christ through worship, service to others, stewardship, study, and fellowship with one another. We will work to increase our spiritual engagement with youth, young families, and our growing senior population.

Inspired by God's Word, we look forward to our future with faith and confidence in God's purpose for us.

AS WE BELIEVE, SO WE DO.

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

Maundy Thursday: April 1, 7:00 pm at Shelter Island Presbyterian Church

Good Friday: April 2, 7:00 pm at First Presbyterian Church of Southold
In-person attendance is by reservation only and reservations can be made by calling the Southold Church at 631-765-2597. The Good Friday Service will be shared on their website the following day. www.fpcsouthold.org

Easter Sunday: April 4, 10:00 am at Shelter Island Presbyterian Church

Our Services can be viewed on our website at www.sipchurch.org

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PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

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