

# THE TIDINGS

Shelter Island  Presbyterian Church

February 2019 Newsletter

## From the Pastor's Study

Have you ever noticed that there are some words we have used so often that over time we just take for granted that we all have a shared understanding of what we mean by the word.

"Church," I believe, is just such a word. What is "the church?" What kind of thing is it? What is its nature? If asked we all might come up with different responses.

Some might say it's the building on the corner, you know, the one that's been there forever. Some might say it's the programs, the church sponsors, and some, God forbid, might think it's the priest or pastor that defines what the church is. These are of course just some of the things which makes any church particular. But deep down what is "the church," any church?

The church is its people. But deeper than that, the church is the sum of the relationships between and amongst its people. This relational dynamic is the church. The church then, is the sum of its relationships, for good or for ill. When you think about it, this makes perfect sense.

For the church is a creation of the Triune God, who is, in and of himself, three persons in one; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God then is a communion. He is the relations between those three persons. He is the sum of those relations and creates the church to be an echo, albeit a temporal echo, of the kind of being that He is in eternity. Only from time to time however, are we fallen creatures enabled by the Spirit, to reflect the communion we were created to be and echo.

With this understanding in mind we can see that when someone leaves our church body by death or by choice, or when someone joins us, we are changed. We are, as St. Paul once said, a "new creation." When Betsy Gibbs and Bill Anderson, and most recently Buzzy Clark, joined the communion of saints, we felt their loss. Not only personally but corporately. We were a "new creation" at each loss, and will be again, at each new addition.

When someone new comes and worships with us, the most important impression they are left with is the dynamic of our relationships with each other as a whole. How we are with and to each other is a palpably real thing and can be sensed. This relational dynamic can either attract or repel.

If you think of our church in this way, you will come to see how important each person that makes up our communion is. And the most surprising fact of all is that when you thought all along it was you who chose to become a member, it was in fact, the Holy Spirit, who sought you out. You were chosen to be an integral and meaningful contributor to the relational dynamic that is this church.

And in light of this, perhaps we should consider that it might not have been the good folks from New Jerusalem Church here on the Island who chose to pray and sing and worship each Thursday evening in our Fellowship Hall, but the Spirit of the living God, who chose them to, in time, make us once again, a "new creation."

Who says church is boring?

Blessings,

Pastor Bob



### CONTACT INFORMATION

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## BUILDING & GROUNDS REPORT BY DAN BINDER

Water quality has become an issue. GNS Mermaid Water Systems, a local water treatment company, installed an acid neutralizer in the Church and Manse to eliminate corrosion of pipes in heating and kitchen equipment.

During a routine water test, The Suffolk County Health Department has identified high nitrate levels in the

Church's water, making this the next water issue to tackle. As of this time, two bids regarding water treatment have been received. Two companies have submitted quotes for two different treatment systems. These quotes will be submitted to the Health Department and it is hoped to have a treatment system installed in coming months.

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*Our KIVA Team of 31 members has made 557 loans totaling \$15,975.*

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### IN APPRECIATION

Dear Friends,

Once again, our heartfelt thanks for your generous Christmas gift to us.

We are blessed every day by our worship life, service to the church and you, our church family.

Best wishes for health and happiness in the coming year.

Faithfully yours,

Karin, Karen, Linda and Pastor Bob

### FEATURED STORY ABOUT A LOAN RECIPIENT

Khadijah is a 33-year-old Lebanese wife and mother of four children. Khadijah's husband is the sole income provider in the family. He is a concierge in a building, where he lives in one small room with his wife and children.

The family income is very low and hardly enough to cover their daily life expenses. When Khadijah was a child, she was unable to finish her studies because of the war in her country. She is eager to help her children continue their education in pursuit of a brighter future.

A loan of \$1,075 from Kiva partner, Vitas s.a.l. helped to cover school fees for all four of Khadijah's children.

This loan is part of Vitas' education program, designed to finance school expenses such as tuition, books, stationery, transportation, and fees for students from low income families. Funds can be used for partial or complete payment of school expenses.

By supporting this loan, the Shelter Island Presbyterian Church Kiva Team enabled access to education for students with limited options.



## 275TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

BY JOYCE BOWDITCH BAUSMAN

The last historic presentation related to the 275th Anniversary of the Shelter Island Presbyterian Church was given during the December 30, 2018 Sunday service.

This included a review of Church Christmas activities between the years 1823 to 1953, with several creches and antique toys shown. The narthex was also updated to improve viewing of past ministers' pictures with accomplishments and historical artifacts.

Over the past year of celebration, there were three other activities, including an "old fashion" church picnic, graveyard tour of eight Revolutionary War patriots and other notables, as well as an overview of past Ministers of Faith and Music buried in our oldest cemeteries.

Recognition is also given to the Shelter Island Chapter of the Daughters of American Revolution which is celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> year by doing a five-year project of restoration and repair to many historic gravestones in the church-owned colonial burying grounds.

As the Church enters its 275th year, it continues to be a vital part of the Shelter Island community by preserving Island history as well as offering its facilities and support to many local organizations.

## WHAT IS AMAZONSMILE?

BY JOHN KERR

AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for anyone to support the Shelter Island Presbyterian Church every time they shop, at no cost.

When someone shops at smile.amazon.com, they find the exact same low prices, vast selection, and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible purchases to SIPC. So far we have received \$258.47 in donations.

### **How do I shop at AmazonSmile?**

Simply go to:  
smile.amazon.com  
from the web browser on your computer or mobile device. You may also want to add a bookmark to smile.amazon.com to make it even easier to return and start your shopping.

### **How do I select SIPC to support when shopping on AmazonSmile?**

On your first visit to smile.amazon.com, you need to select a charitable organization to receive donations from eligible purchases before you begin shopping. Amazon will remember your selection, and then every eligible purchase you make at smile.amazon.com will result in a donation.

## MAUREEN'S HAVEN

BY  
MARIANNE BAIRD

On Wednesday, December 12th, a committee of Church members and friends hosted a dinner at Southold Presbyterian Church for 19 clients of Maureen's Haven homeless outreach program.

Before the meal Pastor Bob gave a thanksgiving and blessing. The fare started off with pizza bites, followed by baked ham, macaroni and cheese, steamed vegetables, salad and crusty bread, and assorted cookies and brownies for dessert.

The committee members dined and chatted with our guests while being entertained by a local musician. The clients then spent the night at the church and the next day took a bus back to Riverhead with bag lunches that we had prepared for them the day before.

Our next dinner will be in March. In addition, during the months of January through April, we will prepare 30 lunches on the first Friday and second Wednesday of each month.

We are grateful to all our volunteers and welcome any one else who would like to join us for any of these sessions. The sign-up sheets are on the table in Fellowship Hall.

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION BY HEATHER REYLEK

Christmas seemed to take forever to arrive. It was a bit like being a child again as we waited through the long weeks of Advent, carefully lighting the Advent candles, making our preparations, and then it was the Sunday before Christmas!

On December 23rd the congregation was delighted with a very joyous and fun pageant of the Christmas story presented by our fine young church family.

The morning service was started with a piano solo by Michael Kotula. Later in the service, the Christ story was introduced by Alfie Brigham playing "Silent Night"

on the Baritone Ukulele (with a harmonica back up by Gramma Lulu) and told in readings by Mae Brigham, Lauren Gibbs, Michael Kotula, Lily Brigham and Alfie Brigham.

As the Nativity Pageant introduced the characters, the congregation was invited to participate and come forward as animals, shepherds, angels, Joseph, and the Star of Bethlehem with symbolic props.

Our congregation sang traditional carols corresponding to each reading. It was silly at times and a fun telling of the Christmas Story.



## SUBSCRIBE TO OUR EMAIL LIST TO STAY IN TOUCH

We will be emailing event reminders, Church updates and, of course, our Newsletter.

It's easy to join! Visit the Church's website at [sipchurch.org](http://sipchurch.org) and click the link on the home page to sign up for the List.

Or, you can call or email the Church Office to request being added to the List.

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Also, don't forget to "Like" and "Follow" the Shelter Island Presbyterian Church's page on Facebook!



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*"Wherever you have friends, that's your country, and wherever you receive love, that's your home." ~Dalai Lama, [The Book of Joy](#)*

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## JOIN THE BETTER WORLD BOOK CLUB!

The Mission Committee is launching the Shelter Island Presbyterian Church "Better World Book Club" for the congregation and invited friends. Our first book is [The Book of Joy: Lasting Happiness in a Changing World](#) by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

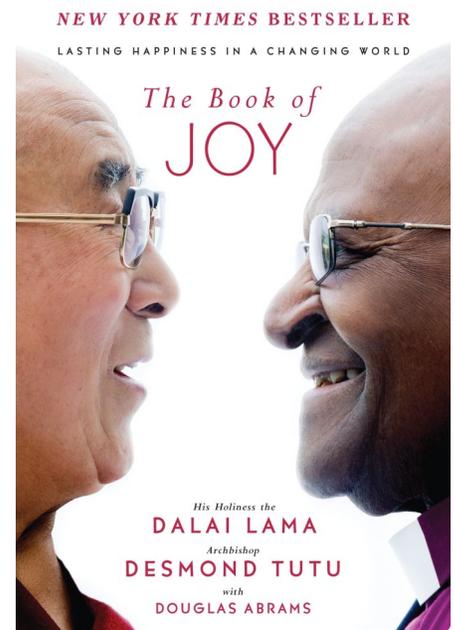
We will convene for discussion at the church on Monday, February 25 at 3:00 pm. Mark your calendars!

The Book Of Joy is the result of a seven-day meeting between the Dalai Lama and Desmond Tutu, two of the world's most influential spiritual leaders, during which they discussed one of

life's most important questions: "How do we find joy despite suffering?"

You can purchase the book on Amazon for Kindle or in hardcover or large print. And it is also available on Audible Streaming. **If you are interested in obtaining a copy through the Shelter Island Public Library, please get in touch with Laura Dickerson as soon as possible.**

We believe that in time mission activities will grow out of our reading choices. We are also discussing possible options for another summer workshop and other outreach endeavors.



Cover Image from Amazon.com

## 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.

## IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

### Annual Meeting

Sunday, February 3, 2019. Immediately following Worship.

### Celebrity Chef Community Dinner with Anthony Rando

Saturday, February 9, 2019

\*Please call Karen in the Office at 631-749-0805 to make a reservation.

### Better World Book Club

Monday, February 25, 2019 @ 3:00 pm

Book: The Book of Joy by Dalai Lama & Desmond Tutu

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