

Include
Easter Sunrise flyer
Convocation flyer?

New Web Site?

March 2016 Long Island Council of Churches' newsletter, *The Prelude*

These items do not appear in the printed, snail-mailed edition of this newsletter
1st Baptist Church of Riverhead Receives Grant from the State for Community Life Center
"Rhythms of Grace" Worship for Special Needs

FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: What It Takes To Serve

On March 24, Holy Thursday, many Christian leaders around the world will do something that strikes outsiders as a little bizarre: they will take a basin of water and wash the feet of people they lead. In some denominations, such as the Church of God in Christ, the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, and many Baptist, Brethren, Holiness, and Mennonite congregations, people wash each other's feet every time they celebrate the Lord's Supper.

This odd tradition is a very old one: the Gospel According to John tells us that Jesus did this for the Apostles shortly before his death. In recent years, Pope Francis has offended some traditionalists by washing the feet of women, including a young Muslim, and changing the rules to allow priests to do the same--which many of them have been doing already, particularly in the U.S.

When Jesus stripped off his coat and grabbed a towel, he stepped into a role that was reserved only for wives, children, and Gentile slaves--it was considered so degrading that a Jewish master could not require a Jewish servant to do it.

Christians often call this an act of humility, but I think we can all learn from Francis--both the pontiff and his namesake--that serving others often requires audacity and innovation, not just doing what always has been done or what those we serve may want us to do. Peter, after all, initially refused to let his rabbi wash his feet and relented only when Jesus said he could not remain in his movement unless he embraced this sort of servanthood. "If I, your Lord and Rabbi, have washed your feet," Jesus tells this assembly of free, adult, males, "you ought to wash one another's feet."

Some traditionalists have objected to the Pope washing the feet of women and some to him doing this for women. Perhaps they fear that promiscuous cleanliness will lead to women's ordination. Jesus, like Francis of Assisi, did many things to empower women in leadership, but this wasn't the point of this story: Jesus was telling guys how they should lead: faithfully, fearlessly, without pomp and ceremony, and willing to get our hands dirty to lift the downtrodden.

It may make some Protestants uncomfortable to learn something from the Holy Father, but John 13:1-17 is all about entering into uncomfortable roles. When the Pope shakes people up by

kneeling before a Muslim teenager or a handicapped woman, he is following in the footsteps of our Savior, somebody who often leads us places we would just as soon avoid.

Shalom/Salaam/Shanti/Pax/Jai Jinendra,

Tom

DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Sara C. Weiss, Director of Development

Special thanks go to the Long Island Community Foundation for a \$20,000 grant to support our emergency food programs, to Garden City Community Church for its gifts totaling \$3,500 for emergency food programs and unrestricted support, and to the Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Shelter Rock for gifts totaling \$3,459 for our emergency food and family support programs. We also are grateful, as always, for all the food provided by Long Island Cares and Island Harvest for our emergency food pantries. And heartfelt thanks for gifts the following institutional donors gave since our last issue:

Advent Lutheran Church Mattituck	\$100 Use Where Most Needed
American Legion #958-East Rockaway	\$100 Freeport Emergency Food Program
Bellport United Methodist Church	\$250 Use Where Most Needed
Church World Service	\$1,018 Use Where Most Needed
Congregational Church of Farmingville	\$194 Use Where Most Needed
Congregational Church of Huntington	\$325 Use Where Most Needed
Congregational Church of Manhasset	\$375 Use Where Most Needed
First Presbyterian Church of Freeport	\$661 Will Sing for Food--for Food Program
First Presbyterian Church Northport	\$500 Riverhead Emergency Food Program
First Presbyterian Church of Smithtown	\$1,500 Use Where Most Needed
First Presbyterian Church of Southold	\$100 Riverhead Emergency Food Program
Long Island Cares, Inc.	\$2,000 Freeport Food Pantry
Mt. Sinai Congregational Church	\$175 Use Where Most Needed
New Hyde Park Presbyterian Church	\$225 Use Where Most Needed
New York Annual Conference UMC Walk	\$200 Use Where Most Needed
Orient Congregational Church	\$400 Where Most Needed
PDM Builder Corporation	\$100 Riverhead Emergency Food Program
People's Church of Long Beach	\$200 Use Where Most Needed
Presbyterian Church of New Hyde Park	\$225 Use Where Most Needed
St. John Lutheran Church-Bellmore	\$170 Use Where Most Needed
Sayville Congregational Church	\$300 Use Where Most Needed
Thrivent Financial	\$500 Matching Gift/Bilger
Union United Methodist Church-E. Northport	\$266 Emergency Food Program
United Church of Rockville Centre	\$500 Use Where Most Needed
United Methodist Women-North Babylon	\$200 Use Where Most Needed

We thank the following individuals for their gifts to help us assist our neighbors in need:

Joseph Arcuri, Iliza S. Bartels, Hank & Mary Ann Boerner, Ben Bortin, Donald & Barbara Casler, C. Chancey, W. Robert Christie,]Lance Fredericks, Fran Hawken, Sally Hobson, Patrick

& Silvia Hoey, Marian Hubbard, Dr. William Keller, Janice Kincaid, Jack & Joyce King, Dick MacMillan, Brian Ohst, Diane Perry, Carol Price, Louise Sandberg, James & Lynn Smith, Amit Sur, Lillian Wickman, Dorothy Zondag.

Can You Help?

Our Freeport Emergency Food Center needs \$25 gift cards from Stop & Shop, Compare, Target and other stores to buy food items that we do not stock, paper towels, toilet paper, toiletries, and baby items. We're seeing a surging number of requests from guests simply who do not have the funds to pay for these essential items. With reductions in SNAP benefits (food stamps) many cannot afford to buy things they desperately need.

A typical example is a single Mom – we'll call her Kate – in her 40's. She has two kids, an elementary school child and a "tweenager." She came to us for help when she lost her job as a home health aide. She has applied for public assistance but must wait 60-90 days to receive any benefits. We gave her food, school supplies for her kids, and clothing, but she has no money for toiletries and needs to look presentable for job interviews and wants her children to look presentable when they head to school.

Did you receive any store gift cards over the holidays that you do not need? Would you be willing to share them with the people we serve? Or would you like to buy some for our guests?

LICCDonate.org

We invite you to visit our website at www.LICCDonate.org to make convenient cash contributions so we can buy food for our guests with dietary restrictions and Feed a Family of Four. If you donate through this website, we will do all the work for you, and the ever-increasing number of our guests with special dietary needs will be able to eat.

Memorial/Tribute Gifts

A great way to remember a loved one, whether living or deceased, is to give a memorial or tribute gift in his/her name. In your letter accompanying such a gift, please tell us who the gift is in memory or tribute to, and who is giving the gift. We will send a thank you letter to the contributor and to the family of the loved one in accordance with your instructions. Please send your contribution to the LICC, attention Sara Weiss. If you have any questions, call Sara for further information at 516-565-0290, ext. 207. Naming and Tribute opportunities are also available for our programs. Please call Sara for a list. We also have planned giving opportunities that will sustain these programs in perpetuity.

Does your company do matching gifts? If so, please call your company's matching gift coordinator to set up a matching gift for the LICC.

ECUMENICAL EASTER SUNRISE WORSHIP

Each Easter, the Long Island Council of Churches holds an Easter sunrise worship service, inviting one and all to celebrate together at Jones Beach. This year's preacher will be our Executive Director, the Rev. Thomas W. Goodhue.

All are welcome at this ecumenical service, which begins at 6:30 a.m. on Easter Sunday, March 27, rain or shine, at Jones Beach State Park. Enter Parking Field #6 and head due south

toward the beach, where there will be large LICC banner directing you toward the gathering place. Parking is free at that hour. The service is brief (about half an hour) and informal. Worshippers are encouraged to dress warmly and bring beach chairs or blankets. There will be a story for children, who are encouraged to attend.

Worshippers are encouraged to bring non-perishable food or monetary donations for the LICC's emergency food pantries. Assembled disaster response kits for Church World Service's ecumenical relief work also may be brought to the Easter sunrise service.

SAVE THE DATE: THURSDAY, MAY 5
LICC ANNUAL MEETING at 1st Presbyterian Church in Smithtown

SAVE THIS DATE, TOO: THURSDAY, NOV. 3
"Share the Harvest" at Cresthollow in Woodbury

WORTH QUOTING

Health Care

"How can we as Christians deny health care to anyone when everywhere Jesus went he set up free health clinics?"

--Matthew Quainoo, Ph.D. student at Princeton Seminary,
1st Baptist Church of Riverhead's Martin Luther King breakfast in Hauppauge, Jan. 18

"Of all the injustices we know, injustice in health care is the most shocking."

--LICC board member Mary Dewar,
1st Baptist Church of Riverhead's Martin Luther King breakfast in Hauppauge, Jan. 18

WORTH READING: The Death Camp Magicians

In the October issue of this newsletter I recommended Kathy Kacer & Gillian Newland's children's book *The Magician of Auschwitz*. It tells how the famous magician Herbert Levin (a.k.a., the Great Nivelli) survived the Holocaust by entertaining concentration camp guards with card tricks--and how he taught magic tricks to his young bunkmate Werner Reich, whom we honored at Share the Harvest in October.

Now a fuller account of their story has been written by [William Rauscher](#), a retired Episcopal priest and magic historian, with [Werner Reich](#). *The Death Camp Magicians* is aimed at young adults and adults, allowing the authors to convey both the horrors of the Holocaust and the amazing survival of Levin and Reich. Some facts, delivered as almost-casual asides, convey stark barbarity. The guards at Auschwitz promise Levin that his wife and child will be spared if he continues to perform for them--and then kill them anyway. Werner's mother received the Iron Cross for risking her life as a combat nurse during World War I to save German soldiers--but the Nazis gas her anyway.

Werner Reich tells his tale with grace and humor that is quite remarkable, given his subject. He notes that he grew up in Transylvania, an area associated with Vlad the Impaler, adding "To the best of my knowledge there is no family association." I have known Werner for many years and have heard his wonderful talks to school children about his experiences during the Shoah, but some aspects of his story remained new to me. He survives, in part, due to his ability to cook and to speak German, French, and

Croatian. The Nazis exact no reprisals after an inmate uprising blows up a crematorium. He is liberated from Mauthausen by African American GIs driving tanks. Liberated prisoners received almost no help whatsoever from victorious armies. Performing magic tricks help him to tell his story.

Werner also tells us how the qualities required for survival, such as adopting a servile attitude, did not serve him well after his liberation. He was used to the ruthless and strict discipline of the German army and finds it disconcerting to see how casually American GIs interacted with their officers. This lack of formality and this egalitarian spirit helped them win the war, he realizes. *The Death Camp Magicians* celebrates both illusionists and survivors; it conveys both pathos and truth.

DEALING WITH STUDENT DEBT

The *United Methodist Interpreter* recently offered tips on dealing with educational loans:

*Begin by getting a list of your federal loans at nslds.ed.gov

*To see if you have any private student loans, get a free credit report from annualcreditreport.com

*Clergy who work in charities may qualify for the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program if they do nonreligious work at least 30 hours a week.

*Visit AskHeatherJarvis for more resources.

The LICC offers free workshops on how to manage your money well--and not get ripped off on loans. Each workshop usually runs an hour to 90 minutes, and we tailor it to the needs of your audience. We can do shorter programs, for example, for a college class, or for a youth group and their parents. They could be a great addition to your congregation's stewardship campaign, helping people to think faithfully about how they use their resources. We also do presentations for religious leaders on how to manage a congregation's money, reduce expenses, pay for energy conservation measures, etc.—or how clergy can find a home they can afford.

The LICC will provide speakers and educational materials—all you need to provide is coffee and noshes. Thanks to generous funding for this effort this year from Astoria Bank and Ridgewood Savings Bank, there is no charge for this program. For more information or to request a program, please e-mail tomgoodhue@optonline.net or call 516-565-0290, ext. 206.

DID YOU KNOW?

***First Baptist Church in Riverhead** recently received a \$22,000 grant from New York State for their new Community Life Center. The Riverhead Town Board has scheduled public hearings on the proposed center on Tuesday, March 15, at 7 p.m. For more information, please contact Shirley Coverdale at 631-727-1110.

*We fed more people at our food pantries in the first month of this year than we did in January 2015, even though we were closed more days than the previous year due to winter storms.

Iglesia Presbiteriana Hispana, a congregation that the LICC helped launch many years ago in conjunction with the Presbytery of Long Island, has a new home in Malverne at Community Presbyterian Church, 12-24 Nottingham Rd. Their worship services are on Sunday at 11:30 a.m., led by Pastor Gustavo Sanchez. If it surprises you to find Spanish language services, you might want to take a look at “Worship in Many Languages” in the back of our new directory: 21 pages of services in every tongue from Arabic to Vietnamese. A quick glance demonstrates how

cosmopolitan our region has become—and these are only the churches in Nassau & Suffolk, not the mosques, synagogues, Hindu temples, and Sikh gurdwaras.

Our 2016 directory lists about 1500 churches, Unitarian Universalist fellowships, and synagogues on Long, denominational executives, local ecumenical and interfaith organizations, chaplains, pastoral counselors, spiritual directors, and information about worship services for special needs. We have sent it to our member congregations, the Friends of the LICC, and our major donors. If you have not received your copy, you may need to do the paperwork to officially join or to renew your membership.

We sell the directory for \$50 to not-for-profit organizations and for \$100 to businesses that have a legitimate need to find local clergy, such as funeral homes and hospitals. We can email you the directory as a Word file if this would be helpful, including updates we make throughout the year—such as Iglesia Presbiteriana Hispana’s move from Hempstead to Malverne. You can snail-mail a check made out to the LICC to 40 Washington Street, Hempstead NY 11550 Attention: Sara Weiss or you can charge it to your MasterCard or Visa by calling 516-565-0290 with the relevant information. If you have any questions, please contact Sara Weiss at 516-565-0290, ext. 207 or saraweiss@optonline.net.

NEEDED/OFFERED

Offered:

***WORSHIP SERVICE FOR SPICAL NEEDS CHILDREN**

Zion Episcopal Church in Douglaston offers a special worship service they call "Rhythms of Grace" for children and families with special needs at 5 p.m. on the first Saturday of every month. Combining storytelling, arts & crafts, therapeutic play, and Holy Communion, "Rhythms of Grace" is designed to be a place to dance, draw, wiggle, and rest in God. The church is located at Church & Orient Streets. For more information, email zionchurch11365@aol.com or call 718-225-0466.

NEED A GUEST PREACHER?

The LICC has a roster of folks who are available for guest preaching this fall. Email tomgoodhue@optonline.net or call 516-565-0290, ext. 206 for our list of other pinch-hitters and information about the “going rate” for guest preachers and substitute organists. Here’s an addition to roster:

***The Rev. Ian Rottenberg** would be glad to share what Garden City Community Church has learned in creating a new, flourishing, informal, come-as-you-are alternative worship service on Wednesday evenings at 8 p.m. You can reach him at ian@thegccc.org or 516-746-1700.

ADVERTISING IN *THE PRELUDE*

Each month we mail about 2600 copies of our newsletter *The Prelude* to the clergy leaders and lay leaders of 1450 faith organizations and email it to about 2700 religious leaders. Filled with timely articles, news briefs, updates and notices affecting Long Island’s communities and churches and the wider world, *The Prelude* is a must read for all who would “work together to improve Long Island and promote interfaith understanding and cooperation.” The LICC accepts paid sponsorship ads, display ads and simple listings (classifieds). Advertising in *The Prelude* is

a great way to reach clergy, lay leaders, and volunteers in Long Island's congregations. To receive a "media kit" with advertising rates, copy requirements, and copy deadlines, please call 516-565-0290 or email tomgoodhue@optonline.net. Congregations that join the LICC and groups that join the Friends of the LICC receive a free classified ad in thanks for paying their annual dues.

ADS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Looking for a challenge?

Join us in turning the tide from surviving to thriving in 2016 and beyond. The historic Community Church of E. Williston is a mainline protestant church serving the needs of all persons from all backgrounds. We have a faithful hardworking congregational core and seek a Senior Minister who, through Christian love and action, will help us turn those with occasional attendance into persons with faithful commitment. The position requires an experienced ordained Protestant minister with youthful enthusiasm to reestablish CCEW as the "Light in the Community". The ideal candidate will love preaching with the same intensity as ministry to the suffering and managerial challenges. We offer a competitive salary and a beautiful manse in a great school district. Please e-mail a cover letter and resume to: CCEW@optonline.net

or mail a hard copy to:

CCEW, Minister Search
45 East Williston Avenue
East Williston NY 11596

OFFICE SPACE AVAILABLE IN GARDEN CITY

Garden City Community Church has office space to share. The monthly maintenance cost of \$500 includes heat and electricity use. For more information call Liz Cavolo at 516-746-1700 or email ecavolo@thegccc.org

MORE OFFICE SPACE AVAILABLE IN GARDEN CITY

A non-profit organization on Old Country Road in Garden City has office space to share long-term with another non-profit. Available are two individual offices (230+ sq. ft. each). Ample free parking and a short walk from the Nassau County Seat, Winthrop University Hospital and the Mineola LIRR train station. Also on site and available for occasional use are a conference room for meetings of up to 50 people and a large auditorium for larger events. For additional information, please visit www.ehsli.org or call [516-741-7304](tel:516-741-7304).

CHURCH FOR SALE IN ROCKY POINT

2,000 sq. ft. church located at 89 Hallock Landing Road in Rocky Point, on .92 acres, with two small auxiliary buildings and frontage on three streets. There is a small parking lot, with room to expand. \$475,000. Contact John F. Hoblin, Jr. at Hunt Corporate Services, 516- 937-1000 or jhoblin@huntcorp.com or visit www.huntcorp.com

CHURCH FOR SALE IN AMITYVILLE

The New Apostolic Church has merged its Amityville and Westbury congregations to create a larger, more diverse church that eventually will soon move into a new location in Bethpage. The Amityville location, 890 County Line Road, right off the Southern State Parkway, is already for sale. The one-story building is about 3300 sq. ft., with a sanctuary that seats about 75, and there is an adjacent parking lot. For more information, please contact Stephen Preuss or Denise Prevete at Cushman Wakefield, 718-512-2118/2605.

SANCTUARY SPACE AVAILABLE TO SHARE IN MIDDLE ISLAND

Middle Island Congregational United Church of Christ would be glad to share its sanctuary on Middle County Road with another congregation. The sanctuary seats 80 and is available any time after 12:30 on Sundays. The guest congregation's share of heat, utilities and maintenance is estimated to be \$500 to \$700 a month. For more information, please contact Moderator Sue Pennenga at aiden1322@aol.com or 631-698-6761.