



Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Flushing, NY
Permit No. 182

Rev. Blaine D. Crawford, Minister email: office@churchonthehill.org www.churchonthehill.org

Address Service Requested

Volume LXXXIII, Issue 7 **Published Monthly except July & August** **March 2018**

From The Pastor's Desk



One of my favorite authors is Marilynne Robinson. A Pulitzer Prize winner, well-known for her works of fiction (including *Housekeeping* and *Gilead*), Robinson is an equally astute and adept essayist. In an essay entitled, "Imagination and Community," Robinson defines community in a thought-provoking way: "I would say that community, at least community larger than the immediate family, consists very largely of imaginative love for people we do not know or whom we know very slightly." What a profound way of defining community! We often think of community as love for those we know well (such as the context of the immediate family); that is a love for members of the community/family/organization. Robinson flips that over here and instead suggests that a community is found in its love for those not yet part of the community (and maybe those who will never become part of the community). By directing the focus of the community in this direction, a community is defined in the openness of its boundaries—both its ability to love those outside of the community and the ability to welcome newcomers into the community.

For Robinson, in order for the community's love to be directed outward, nothing less than imagination is needed. Imagination opens our world to include those outside our community. Imagination places us in their shoes to empathically feel and experience what they do. Imagination lifts us up enough to perceive our own community from outside.

It's not hard to see how this definition of community is shaped by Christianity (Robinson is a Christian and serves as deacon in her church). You might even use this definition to describe the entire ministry of Jesus. If Robinson is right, if community consists of imaginative love for people we do not know or whom we know very slightly, the measure of our life as a community of faith is measured not in terms of customer satisfaction; nor is it measured by the number of deep friendships we have with other church members. It's not even measured by a 'warm feeling' we get when we're all together. Instead, the measure of the state of our community is how loved and welcomed people outside of our immediate church feel.

GRACE AND PEACE, BLAINE

Holy Week






Worship Schedule

PALM SUNDAY
MARCH 25, 2018
SUNDAY SCHOOL—9:30AM
ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL—9:45 AM
WORSHIP SERVICE—11:00 AM
DISTRIBUTION OF PALMS
JUNIOR CHOIR

MAUNDY THURSDAY
MARCH 29, 2018
POTLUCK SUPPER, GESSNER HALL—6:30 PM
COMMUNION—7:15PM

IF YOU CANNOT ATTEND THE SUPPER, COME AT 7:15PM
 TO SHARE IN THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION.

GOOD FRIDAY
MARCH 30, 2018
THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF CHRIST
ON THE CROSS—8:00 PM
BY THÉODORE DUBOIS
 (SEE PAGE 3)

EASTER SUNDAY
APRIL 1, 2018
SUNRISE SERVICE
BOWNE PARK, BY THE POND—7:00AM
(NO SUNDAY SCHOOL)
WORSHIP SERVICE—11:00AM
CELEBRATION OF THE RESURRECTION



Music Notes

As we approach Holy Week, I am eagerly awaiting the wonderful liturgies we have planned at Church on the Hill. On Holy Thursday, the very talented Patrick Mahowald will be singing and playing guitar in Gessner Hall. He will be leading us in hymns as well as performing solo music.

Returning on Good Friday will be the “Seven Last Words of Christ” by Theodore Dubois. We will be joined by excellent instrumentalists on cello, clarinet, harp, and percussion. In addition, we will have some very talented singers joining us. I am looking forward to continuing the tradition of this masterpiece in our Good Friday service. On Easter Sunday we will be joined by a brass quartet as well as additional singers. These will be tremendous times to worship at Church on the Hill, and I hope you can join us!

A special thanks to the choir who has been working tremendously hard during both rehearsals and services. Their talent and commitment continues to amaze me every week!

Please consider joining the choir at Church on the Hill. It is a wonderfully supportive group of individuals who will be welcoming to anybody who would like to sing with us.

Communications and Music Intern



Patrick Mahowald has been hired as a communications and music intern. In this part-time role, Patrick will assume leadership of the church's social media and communications, working in collaboration with Rev. Crawford and Barbara Hoe. As music intern, Patrick will also work with Sean Cotty in different aspects of the music ministry.

Hearing Loop Installed

A hearing loop has been installed on the north side of the sanctuary. A hear loop, also called an audio induction loop, allows individuals with hearing aids to connect with the sound system. In order to use the hearing loop system, you will need to sit on the north side of the sanctuary (the right-hand side if facing the front of the sanctuary) and set your hearing aid to the ‘T’ (telecoil) setting. Please contact Rev. Crawford if you have trouble connecting to the new system.

Bequest

The Church on the Hill received a bequest from the **Estate of Barbara Schamel**, who died on November 13, 2017. Following her wishes, the donation will be used to purchase new hymnals for the congregation. We thank God for the life of Bobbi Schamel and the legacy that she has bequeathed to us.

Church Register

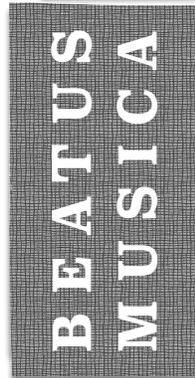
Baptism



Luke Ernest Mendler, son of Angela and Christian Mendler, was baptized on January 21, 2018. Luke was born on August 8, 2017, at North Shore University Hospital in Manhasset. We congratulate his parents and grandparents, Gerry and Jean Mendler.

New Members

On Sunday, February 11, the Church on the Hill welcomed the following individuals into the membership of the church.



Music in Sacred Space Church on the Hill

Benefit Concert

Saturday, March 17, 2018 at 7:30 pm
167-07 35th Avenue, Flushing, NY 11358

Free concert featuring Beatus Musica
Performing arias by Leoncavallo, Donizetti, Bizet, and Rossini and songs by Bernstein, Rodgers, and Weill, and other selections.

All proceeds go to
St. Mary's Kids



COTH CONSISTORY: MINISTER AND PRESIDENT, REV. BLAINE D. CRAWFORD

ELDERS: NANCY GESSNER • PAMELA LOPEZ • GERRY MENDLER • JEANNE SARRAN • SARAH WHITE

DEACONS: ROSA BRAMBLE • EMERSON CHEN • GINA LOMBARDO • YOON RYO • IRMA SCHUBERT

Let's Go Climbing!

The April 3, 2017, edition of the Yorkshire Post tells the incredible story of Leslie Binns and his attempt to summit Mount Everest in 2016. Each year hundreds of the best climbers in the world experience the opportunity to fulfill their life-long dream of climbing the 29,000 feet to the top, or "summitting" Everest. Over 300 people have died attempting to make that climb.

It was during the end of the second day of climbing that Leslie was within 50 meters of reaching his lifelong dream of reaching the summit of Mount Everest. All of that changed in an instant as the body of an unconscious climber ahead of him rocketed toward him in a high-speed free-fall slide across the ice. Without a second thought Leslie threw himself onto this unknown climber and stopped her skid toward certain death. The name of the climber he saved was Sunita Hazra. They had never met before but their lives are now forever intertwined.

He tells his story about he took one last look at the summit of Everest and thinking only of the injured and frostbitten woman in his arms he turned from his dreams and began the grueling nine hour climb back down the mountain to the nearest base camp. Although it cost Leslie his dream, his effort to save Sunita was a success. He has yet to summit Everest.

In Matthew 25, Jesus describes a time when all of the nations will be gathered before him and some will be commended for their works and others will be brought to shame. Verses 34-36 state:

Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.'

In each of these instances of heroic deeds there was a price that was paid. The money that it took to provide food, water and clothing could have been used to purchase other things. The

time that it cost to spend with a stranger or one who was imprisoned was time spent that couldn't be recaptured. The effort and compassion it took to care for a sick person could have been spent on personal renewal and relaxation.

What's your dream? Is it just a mountain? Is it health and prosperity? Is it an idyllic trouble free life surrounded by friends and loved ones? Is it a long and healthy life? There's nothing wrong with any of those dreams just as it wasn't wrong for Leslie to want to summit Everest. Often, however, God has something else in mind and in a moment we find ourselves with an opportunity to make the difference in the life of another—just like Sunita. If we are willing to look away from our dreams long enough, I think we'll see those who need to be clothed and fed, visited and comforted.

The Yorkshire post may never tell our stories of compassion and generosity...but I promise you it is noticed...and it will be proclaimed!

CARLOS RIVERA, SEMINARY INTERN

Women's Communion Breakfast



Sunday, March 18, 2018

9:30 AM - Breakfast

11:00 AM Worship Service

Our guest speaker is Rev. Dr. Jill Ver Steeg, Director of Transformational Engagement for the RCA.

Cost: Adults - \$8.00

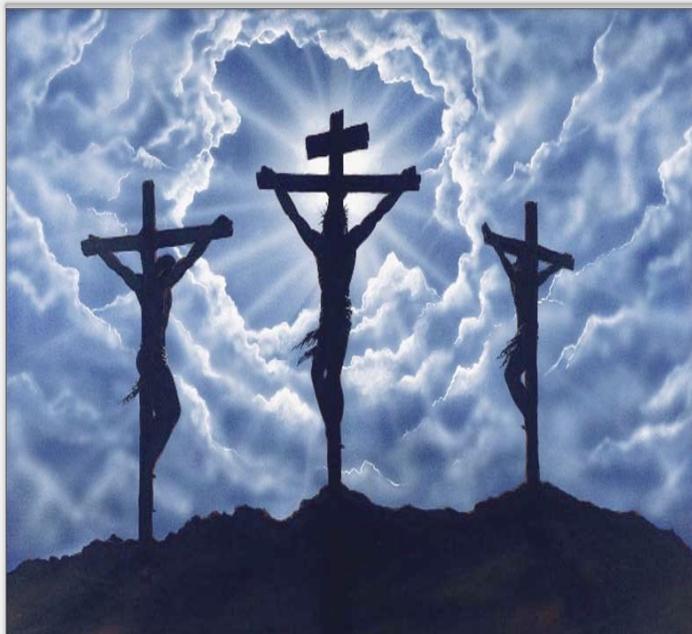
Sunday School staff & students—no charge

For reservations, call the church office (718) 358-3671

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sundays, 9:45-10:30 am - Library

"Ripped from the Headlines: Integrating Your Faith with Current Events!" Led by seminary intern Carlos Rivera



GOOD FRIDAY

MARCH 29, 2018, AT 8 PM

THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF CHRIST ON THE CROSS

BY THÉODORE DUBOIS

GOOD FRIDAY IS ONE OF THE MOST SACRED DAYS OF OUR CHURCH YEAR, AND THIS SERVICE OF DARKNESS IS THE MOST MOVING SERVICE OF OUR YEAR.

THE CHOIR AND SOLOISTS WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY ORGAN, HARP, CLARINETS, CELLO AND TIMPANI.

PLEASE JOIN US FOR THIS MOVING EVENT.

Lenten Mission 2018

Last year during Lent, a number of women from Church on the Hill, in partnership with other churches in the area, sewed dresses for Little Dresses in Africa. The previous year, we collected women's professional clothing for Housing+ Solutions and hosted a breakfast/shopping day in Gessner Hall. Historically, three spiritual practices are associated with the season of Lent. The most well-known is fasting; the other two are prayer and almsgiving. New Testament scholar Joel Green defines almsgiving as "benevolent activity on behalf of the needy as an expression of genuine social solidarity—that is, of caring for and embracing those in need as if they were members of one's own kin group." Knowingly or unknowingly, the last two Lenten missions were examples of almsgiving.

This year, as we continue what's becoming an annual tradition during Lent, Church on the Hill will 'adopt' a refugee family that will be resettling in New Jersey in 2018. In partnership with Interfaith Rise, a refugee and immigrant services and empowerment organization located in Highland Park, NJ, COTH will adopt one refugee family of 4-6 people (adults and children). The family, having undergone the U.S.'s vetting process, will more than likely be coming from the Congo, Afghanistan, or Iraq. COTH will seek to make the transition as smooth as possible for the family by providing for their new home and welcoming them warmly to the U.S.

The Lenten Mission will be comprised of several parts:

1) Almsgiving: Church on the Hill will collect home goods that will be provided to the family for their new home (which will be secured through Interfaith Rise).

2) Education: Church on the Hill will seek to learn from the wells of the Scripture our calling as Christians toward refugees. A Lenten reading guide will be provided. In addition, our spring intern, Carlos Rivera, will be teaching an adult education class on Sunday mornings at 9:45 a.m. that will explore this topic more in-depth.

3) Prayer: Church on the Hill will pray for the family as well as all refugees around the world who are fleeing their homes because of famine, natural disaster, or war.

4) Hospitality: Church on the Hill will send a small group to welcome the family into their new home.

Mission Partnerships

At their Benevolence meeting in January, the deacons decided to pledge ¼ Partner-in-Mission (PIM) shares to Jennifer Lucking and Rev. Bob Abel. This financial pledge is for three years. Both Jennifer and Bob were guest preachers at Church on the Hill last fall. Jennifer is the Executive Director of Restorations Second Stage Homes, which exists to provide specialized, long-term care for the victims and survivors of commercial sexual exploitation in Ontario, Canada. Bob serves as director of staff care for Remember Nhu, an organization that works to end child sex slavery in 13 countries.

Church on the Hill now provides financial support to three missionaries, the third being Rev. Justin Meyers, our previous minister, who serves at the Al Amana Centre in Muscat, Oman.

Easter Sunday Easter Egg Hunt

April 1, 2018, 12:00 PM

After the worship service on the church lawn.

For children, ages 8 and under

Hosted by the 2018 Confirmation Class



White Christmas Recap

For White Christmas Sunday, more than 265 gifts were provided to following organizations.

- PS 116: 98 gifts
- La Jordana: 147 gifts
- Border of Hope: 20 gifts
- Otilie SCO group home: a group gift by an anonymous donor and a White Christmas gift.

With gift sale during a coffee hour, 68 of the gifts and a group-home White Christmas gift were provided. There were many who helped, from Jeanne and Steve Sarran and Buck Kellaway who helped organize and did most of shopping and delivery for the White Christmas to Paula Ryo and her children who made tags and others. Many thanks go to those who gave their time.

Most of all, we thank the congregation for the generous gifts of their time and resources. The generosity of our congregation in their need and abundance has made many children's Christmas brighter.

YOON RYO, COMMITTEE FOR COMMUNITY,
OUTREACH, AND MISSION

Gessner Hall Renovation Update

On February 1, Rev. Crawford and two members of the Buildings & Grounds Committee met with architect Kevin Wolfe to discuss some initial sketches for the renovation of Gessner Hall. Feedback was offered but the group was very pleased with the initial sketches and visions for the space. After this feedback is incorporated into the plans, the Buildings & Grounds Committee will meet again with the architect to review the plans. If they are satisfied, they will then begin receiving bids from General Contractors for the job.

We hope for the construction to take place in July and August, which will render the kitchen and Gessner Hall off-limits. If you or your ministry currently uses any of the kitchen, Gessner Hall, or storage areas adjoining Gessner Hall, you will need to find temporary storage elsewhere in the church facility no later than June 30. Please work with Irving Maye and Rev. Crawford to find a suitable place of storage.

The construction project will include the renovation of Gessner Hall, including the creation of additional storage closets; new kitchen cabinets; renovated, ADA compliant restrooms in Gessner Hall and the Nursery School; a new ADA compliant restroom where the sacristy is currently located; and the installation of a small kitchenette in the Music Room.

Thank you all for your donations and pledges to the project. If you'd still like to make a contribution, please note "Capital Campaign" on either your check or envelope.