

Deeply Rooted

By Pastor Justin Vetrano

This past Sunday we celebrated the most attended worship service for an ordinary Sunday (no baptism and non-holiday) in the history of THE LIFE. What an incredible blessing! It appears that the expansion of the parking lot has helped create an environment that makes it more comfortable and accessible for people to come to church. Since the new parking lot was installed, we have seen an increase in Sunday worship of almost 30 percent, and last Sunday we were up

almost 50 percent over our average weekly attendance.

Additionally, we couldn't be more thrilled with the work both Vicar Dan and Vicar Brian are doing on Sunday morning in developing the youth ministries and supporting the Sunday School Program and the Nursery. The Children's ministries provide myriad opportunities, and we are working to help generate awareness, increased signage and a warm welcome to new people and their families.

We also began a five-week sermon series designed to focus our meditation on seeing what God has done which enables us to see how DEEPLY ROOTED we are in the Gospel. With such attention on God's work in the past enables us then to dream for the future.

The DEEP ROOTS of the Gospel permeate everything we are, not only at THE LIFE but also for us as baptized children of God. We strive to keep the truth that we are ROOTED IN CHRIST at the core of our proclamation. We

are sent out to SOW SEEDS, we are called to responsibly TEND THE GROVE, and we pass on the faith by CULTIVATING CONVICTIONS.

I am personally excited that the last two Sundays of our series fall on REFORMATION SUNDAY and ALL SAINTS. What great themes of our worship as we focus on our ROOTS and hear about those SAINTS who have gone before us who worked tirelessly to pass the faith on to us and future generations. Join us each week as we look at how THE LIFE is DEEPLY ROOTED and discover ways in which we, the body of Christ, strengthen those roots for the future.

With the weather shifting as well, I can't help but get excited for the Advent and Christmas Seasons here at THE LIFE. We are already making plans for our Tree Lighting event, our Advent themes for worship and our Christmas celebration. In the spirit of Advent, there is so much Joy, Peace, Hope and Love from God for us to meditate on and share with the world.

I pray that you would know the Good News of all that God has done for you in Jesus Christ and may that truth strengthen your ROOTS as you journey each day.

See you around Church,
Pastor Vetrano 

Join us for your time of THE LIFE!

Sundays	Worship with Communion, 10am Children's Sunday School, 9:45am
Mondays	Alpha Bible Study, 7pm (skip 10/14)
Tuesdays	Bible Study, 11am
Thursdays	Worship with Communion, 7pm
Sep 8	Installation Service—Two Vicars, 10am
Sep 15	RibFest, 3pm
Oct 4	MiniOktoberfest, 6:30pm Luther: Rock Opera, 7:30pm
Oct 6	Deeply Rooted Series Begins, 10am
Oct 9	Men's Ministry, 7:30pm
Oct 23	Annual Baby Shower, 7:30pm
Oct 25	LYG Lock-in

Getting to Know ... The Crocitto Family

By Elisa Bruno

Met one of our newest vicars, Brian! He really enjoys meeting and connecting with families at *THE LIFE* and learning their story. He said the best time for that is especially at coffee hour after worship service. I agree! He also told me it feels great to be part of a thriving community that offers ample amounts of ways to get involved. Vicar Brian is married to Christina and they have two beautiful daughters, Lilliana and Madeline.

EB: How long have you been attending services at *THE LIFE*?

BC: I was actually part of the original group of volunteers on the church planting committee that helped Pastor Vetrano get the word out about *THE LIFE*. At the time, I was living in NYC and would travel to Westbury on the LIRR. Four years ago, Christina and I moved to Long Island and started com-



Brian and Christina Crocitto, and their daughters, Lilliana and Madeline.

ing on a more regular basis. It means the world to us as parents that our children can grow up in a Christian faith-based community where they can discover Christ's love in Sunday school, VBS and worship services.

EB: I have heard you are studying to become a pastor....

BC: As for my studying to become a pastor, you have heard right. I am enrolled in Concordia Seminary's Fall 2019 Specific Ministry Pastor Program (SMP). I'll be attending online classes and studying with Pastor Vetrano throughout my Vicarage. It is an exciting time and I feel blessed to have the opportunity!

EB: What can you tell us about your family that we might know you all a little better?

BC: One thing you will learn about me is that I love talking about my family. If at some point we do begin talking about them in person, please forgive me if I

show you several hundred pictures of my two daughters, as each picture is cuter than the next (in my humble opinion). My wife, Christina, is an educator. She teaches literature to 6th, 7th and 8th graders. There is a cute neighborhood beach near us that we go to often with our girls. And if everyone is well behaved on the car ride home, we will stop by Carvel for some ice cream.

EB: Do you have a favorite Bible verse?

BC: Some of my favorite verses are found in 1 John.

Pastor Vetrano held a Bible study on this book, and I really enjoyed the conversations that developed from reading the Scripture together. 1 John 4:16 "God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him." These powerful words really resonate with me. What a great and beautiful gift God has given all of us. I am compelled to reflect on all the joys in my life: my wife, my daughters, my family and my friends. All these people fill my life with love. And when I think about what the Scripture says, "God is love," I am reminded that the presence of God is with us during these moments, when we love and when we feel loved. At the same time, I find these words comforting during days of struggle, of sadness and of sorrow. When a loved one is sick, or when a loved one dies, God is there with us. God's presence comes through our love for one another and it shines through the darkness. **L**

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LUTHERAN CHURCH
& DAY SCHOOL

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RibFest 2019: Food, Fun, and Festivities for All

By Fred Gullo


Summer of 2019 is behind us, and a new season is about to begin. The kids are all back in school, and families are back to their usual routines.

Here at THE LIFE we kick off Fall with our annual Rib Fest BBQ. This big event took place here in the church parking lot on the afternoon of Sunday, Sept. 15 .

Men of Men's Ministry were hard at

work the Saturday before, prepping 50 racks of baby back ribs. After the Sunday Service, we set up the tables and chairs under a large white tent and prepped the grill for the big event. As the festivities began, the men grilled the ribs with a char and BBQ sauce as well as roasted ears of corn. Other members of the church prepared and brought delicious sides and deserts.

In addition to the awesome foods, there were various family games featuring a cornhole tournament as well as a bouncy house for the kids.

During our event Pastor Vetrano blessed our new parking lot that has not only accommodated our needs but has beautified the grounds of our church. It was a beautiful day for a RibFest, and a grand time was had by all! 

Youth Group: Back to Life

By Dan Giardino

LYG – Life Youth Group IS back! I am excited to be a part of what God has going on here at THE LIFE. I have been praying and working with Pastor Vetrano for a few months on what aspects of ministry I could get involved in and the Lord put YOUTH on my heart.

We kicked off this past July with an introductory BBQ and Games afternoon,



With over \$500 donated by members of THE LIFE, LYG shopped for school supplies for LSS in Uniondale.


followed by our first annual School Supply Support shopping spree, held on Sunday, Aug. 11. We have had around 10 LYG members in attendance and look forward to expanding as we head into our school year schedules.

Our mission is simple: To Grow & GO! I want to help our Tweens, Preteens & Teens GROW in their knowledge of GOD and what He has done for them. Give them the confidence so that they can GO out into the world knowing they are a Baptized Child of Christ so they can minister in their own unique ways by which God has called them. We accomplish this by gathering for devotions and discussions during service on Sundays (starting Sept. 15, at 10 am), meet-



Cheese Puff Fight, anyone?

ing up for youth group twice a month as well as service to our church and Christ's community, all while having fun along the way. LYG members are always asked to bring a friend and see what it's all about.

I want to encourage any preteens, tweens or teens to stop on over and give LYG a try. You can email me directly at Dan@thelifeny.org or find me around the church. 

Two's, Two's and More Two's

By Lisa Dannelly, Day School Director




Children in our two-year-olds sessions have fun and also learn to work together on puzzles.

Two's are the new three's. Over the past two years there has been a lot of enrollment and interest in the Day School's two-year-old program.

This year we added an additional afternoon two-year class, and it's full. The parents are so eager to have their children at THE LIFE, they are forgoing an afternoon nap for a two-year-old!

With the addition of the class, there are also a new teacher and an assistant, Denise Pistocchi and Denise Klappert.

The school also welcomes, Peggy Schlatter as a new pre-k teacher. Additionally, Claudia Rath will be the new administrative assistant to help with all aspects of the school. We are very blessed to have these four incredible women joining and sharing in the ministry of the school. 

Devotion: Back To School

By Brian Crocitto

For the first time in 15 years I will be going back to school. In fact, Dan Giardino and I just returned home from orientation at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri. Dan and I have begun our journey to become Pastors through their Specific Ministry Program (SMP). While taking online classes through Concordia, we will work with Pastor Vetrano, who will support us with day-to-day guidance, encouragement and prayer.

Prior to entering the seminary, each new student was asked to take a Harrison Assessment. This is a personality quiz that measures leadership paradoxes, emotional intelligence, motivation, attitudes, and passion for specific jobs, to name a few. We received our results on the first day and went through them with one of our profes-

sors. It was a unique experience. It is not too often that we shed light on our strengths and even less on our weaknesses. You feel a bit exposed, even to your own self.

On the second day of orientation we broke into several groups for a day of service. We were charged with weeding a local community garden that had not been maintained for some time. As I was working, I began thinking about my own Harrison Report. I was making the connection between my own strengths and weaknesses and what I was discovering in the garden. While my strengths could be seen right away, much like the tall sunflowers and ripe tomatoes surrounding me, my weaknesses were not in good shape. They were covered in dirt and a bit crushed.

My moment of self-reflection triggered

some anxiety and fear. But that fear led me back to Scripture. In 2 Corinthians 12:9 we hear the words, "But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

This passage allowed me to center myself in the Good News. It reminded me that I do not need to work for God's grace. It was a gift given to all of us through His son Jesus Christ, the Lamb who died for our sins. No matter what our weaknesses may be, no matter how much guilt or shame we may have for the weeds in our garden, we are all children of God. May we all find comfort in knowing that God's grace will come through our weakness and give us strength. 