

## Good News: Always in Time

By Pastor Justin Vetrano

Last week I watched an incredible documentary called GENERAL MAGIC. The film chronicles a small, clandestine company in the mid-1990s. The staff of this Silicon Valley tech company were young rock stars in the world of design and computer software development. They had a dream and a vision in 1994—years before the internet was developed—to create a device that would change our lives. People weren't ready for it. Without spoiling the film all I can say is that these young minds envisioned the future, yet they were about 15 years too early.

The film was very inspiring, because these underdogs of the time pushed passed the constant litany of why things cannot be done, in order to carry out their intended mission. And what was even more enlightening was that what seemed to have failed ended up becoming a true global game changer.

In the church world, I must admit, we face similar experiences. Pressure to be the church of the past, present, and future, reflecting the everlasting, never-changing nature of God. Proclaiming a timeless message of love, grace, mercy, and peace to a world of people that is spinning and changing faster than we can say the Benediction.

Churches reach out to us here at THE LIFE often, asking us about our methods, practices and culture. The questions asked pertain mostly to the things we do or don't do: What music we sing, what we wear, what signs we print, and even about our beloved parking lot. However, there is a question that is *not* being asked of us here at THE LIFE.

Recently, at dinner with some church members, they mentioned how thankful they are to THE LIFE because they didn't realize how much they could love church and desire to be present and involved. They mentioned a recent experience at a funeral where the service they attended lacked something that they have grown to crave since coming to THE LIFE: Good News.

Another couple at a recent event shared with me how they have been telling all their friends about THE LIFE. With a giddy smile they told me how they tell their friends, "You gotta come and hear Good News. It's all about Good News. Jesus is Good News!" They even went on to say, "I

tell them, even when things are bad, Jesus has Good News."

If you were to tell people in the church to focus on the Good News of Jesus Christ, some will give you responses not dissimilar to those who didn't want a smart phone. "Why tell people Good News of grace and forgiveness? Then they will just go on misbehaving." Or "We cannot cheapen the grace of God by proclaiming Good News to people; we must afflict the comfortable and comfort the afflicted."

Perhaps the vision of the church today and tomorrow is difficult to imagine; difficult because the church struggles to see her own existence in the years to come. Perhaps the vision is difficult to grasp because it challenges the way in which we perceive the church's influence in the world.

Imagine this vision: Communities of people who recognize the church as the place where they receive Good News and strengthen faith that transcends the world in which they live. This grows into a hunger and thirst in people, that hearing the Word of God and receiving the Sacrament becomes such a staple in their life that they come to receive it with a priority as if they were getting their morning coffee.

This vision is not built on words and ways. It's not because of how it is packaged. This vision is built on the simple and very profound belief that Jesus Christ is always Good News! He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

Glory be to God for such Good News!

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
- Tuesdays   Bible Study, 11am
- Thursdays   Dinner, 6:15pm  
              Worship with Communion, 7pm
- Feb 5        Men's Ministry, 7:30pm
- Feb 10       Women's Ministry, 7:30pm
- Feb 26       Ash Wednesday, 7pm  
              Ashes available, 8am—5pm
- Feb 28       Compline, 6:45pm (M, T, W, F, Sa)

# Getting to Know...Doug McQuillan and Carol Plisky

By Tanya Chesterfield

**D**oug McQuillan and his partner, Carol Plisky met with me recently to talk about their connection to *THE LIFE*.

TC: Thank YOU both for meeting with me. What brought you to THE LIFE church?

DM: After many years at my old church in Westbury I was not happy with the direction they were going in; I was looking for a new church family. Carol and I had met Pastor Vetrano a couple years before we started coming here. He was officiating a funeral for a neighbor of ours, and I was very impressed with his speaking.

CP: We kept saying, "We have to go!"

DM: We did in November of 2018. After worship Carol and I looked at each other and said, 'Wow' and we kept coming back. I became a formal member in March of last year. I told Pastor that I firmly believe God guided me to THE LIFE so that I can



Doug McQuillan and Carol Plisky

continue with my spiritual journey with refreshed energy.

TC: You mentioned before we started the interview that you were a news anchor, Doug.

DM: I was a radio broadcaster for 40 years. My last gig was at the Wall Street Journal Radio Network. I was one of their morning business news anchors. I was with them for over 21 years; prior to that I worked Long Island radio, specifically WHLI and WKJY. I was with them for a little over 11 years. Prior to that I worked in various radio stations in Boston, where I started my career in the 70s.

TC: What about you, Carol?

CP: I worked in insurance for years and now I work for a nonprofit that provides education services at schools. I work for them at Cherry Lane Elementary School in their before-and after-school programs, and it's so much fun. I love it.

TC: Tell us about some of your activities at church. You have some photography skills, Doug.

DM: I've always done that. At my old church I was the audio engineer and videographer.

CP: Doug told Pastor if you need him for anything ...

DM: And then, Boom. You run with it. I like the way people contribute here.

CP: We volunteered for VBS, helping a lot with the preparations. And we enjoyed it. The thing with Pastor Vetrano, he welcomes everybody. He doesn't care what you wear or who you are. It's so wonderful.

TC: What are some things you like to do outside of church?


DM: We love antiques. We also like Arts and Crafts festivals. We go into NYC to museums and parks. Bryant Park is one we love, especially around the holidays.

CP: We're also Mets fans so we go to a lot of games, and we walk A LOT. Weather permitting we're always out walking.

DM: It's good exercise. And I have my freelance photography. I do that for charity walks for the American Cancer Society, Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, Autism Speaks and a gazillion other organizations. That helps keep out of trouble.

CP: And I volunteer for Golden Paw Society, a cat rescue organization. They have a center in Huntington and also cats at Petco in Carle Place that I take care of.

TC: Any milestones you would like to share?

DM: I've received my share of awards from media organizations, and I'm proud of the work that I've done in the past, but a "milestone" I believe is more important than [any of that] is that my father was a Tuskegee Airman during World War II. He was a bomber pilot! I am very, very proud of that milestone and proud to be a part of that history through my father ... Lieutenant Douglass McQuillan. 

the **LIFE**

LUTHERAN CHURCH  
& DAY SCHOOL

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# Youth Step Out to Serve

By Vicar Dan Giardino; Photos by Doug McQuillan

**D**on't miss out on something that could be amazing just because it could also be difficult." - Toby Mac. With the support of Pastor Vetrano, fellow ministry staff and parents, THE LIFE Youth Group (LYG) has stepped out of their comfort zone to serve THE LIFE congregation. LYG has embraced serving the church on the last Sunday of each month.

The teens like being a part of the Divine Service and the responsibilities they take on. Each month the teens review the tasks as a group and volunteer to fill them while taking turns. These tasks range from Acolyte, Greeting, Reading, Offering & Communion. Stepping out in service has been very rewarding for the youth as they are blessed each time they serve.



Vicar Dan Giardino (back row) with THE LIFE Youth Group who helped with a recent Service Sunday.

Service Sunday is a chance for me to give back to my community and church. When I get to choose my own role, it helps me learn responsibility, and it also is a chance for me to learn new things. ~ McKenna Mirador

I enjoy Service Sunday because I try new things each time. ~ Valeria M.

Our daughter has been attending church with us at THE LIFE since she was very little. She's known the other kids that are here for just as long. This year she became old enough to join the new youth group and is now feeling more bonded with the other kids. She feels that youth group has given her a sense of belonging. ~ Elisa Bruno

I enjoy it because I like being with my friends. ~ Abby B.

I like contributing to Service Sunday because it teaches me what the church does every Sunday. Being able to help them and be part of the community makes me feel special. I also get to talk to new people and wear a cool shirt! What excites me every week is



Reading the Bible lesson for the day.

that if I mess up, no one really minds because they know that I am trying my best.

On the last Service Sunday, I was an acolyte. From carrying the cross, to helping out with Pastor, I got to experience what a lot of people don't get to do. I never feel nervous because there are so many people that have my back. They teach me and encourage me to do my best every Service Sunday.

So, every Service Sunday, I am never really scared because there is a whole community

cheering for me to do my greatest. If I fail, they know that I can succeed. It is always heartwarming to have such a great Church family. ~ Olivia Mirador

I like that I get to spend time with my friends and serve at church at the same time. ~ Rachael




One area of service is collecting the offering.

I enjoy Service Sunday because I'm with my friends and I meet friends. It is also fun because I like to help out and it makes me feel special. ~ Christy G.

We love watching the kids build confidence in themselves while also learning how to take on responsibilities in a safe and supportive way. Plus, it's been fun to watch their church friendships grow and become a special part of our LIFE community.

~ The Miradors

I enjoy Service Sunday because we are active and help out. ~ Joselyn 



Youth assist with Communion.

It has been amazing to help teach and form these youth in their faith and understanding of the church. The teens are very service-oriented and look for ways to serve God as often as they can. The congregation of THE LIFE has been so welcoming and supportive. It doesn't matter if everything is done perfectly but rather that it is done with a joyful heart. The church is showing the youth and one other that there are opportunities for us all to serve if we step out in faith together.

## Students and Parents Respond:

I like talking to my friends. I like learning new stuff and participating in activities. ~ Jerri

# Six More Weeks of Winter?

By Lisa Denny, Day School Director

Shadow, no shadow? Usually everyone's wanting on the Groundhog to predict if winter will end sooner. This year the Groundhog did not get his normal attention. The weather has been so mild this winter, the groundhog's prediction seemed moot.

The children at THE LIFE have enjoyed the benefits of the warmer weather. They go on the playground almost every day. The teachers are checking the weather app to see if the "real feel" is 32 degrees or above; if it is, they are outside!

This gives the students the opportunity to get out their wiggles, run, ride a bicycle, play tag and enjoy the fresh air and sunshine.

Fingers crossed, we will continue to go outside all the way to June without any interruption of that "white" stuff and trusting the Groundhog is right with his prediction. **L**



The children at THE LIFE Day School enjoy a beautiful February day.

## Devotion: We Are Loved at THE LIFE

By Tanya Chesterfield

You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God." Leviticus 19:34

When I first started attending service at THE LIFE it was on Thursday evenings at 7 p.m. There were not many people at that time, but there was no shortage of joy, faith, and hope. Pastor Vetrano gave his sermons, which are loved to this day for their blend of storytelling, humor and purpose, and the band played an assortment of contemporary hymns.

In growing the church and branching off into Sunday morning services, something truly remarkable and inspiring has happened: The prayers and the sermons and the music have continued, but we now see hundreds of people coming for worship. And they continue to come from all over



Many countries are represented by those who worship regularly at THE LIFE.

the globe! To worship at our church! How glorious! Romans 15:7 says, "Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God."

Sometimes change and even growth for that matter make some people uncomfortable, but if we stop for a few seconds and look around or read the names of new

members as I did recently, we can see this is God at work! His love for us is uniting all of us for a singular purpose: To know and worship Him! During Reformation Sunday, passages are read by members of the congregation in their native languages, and there is never a shortage of international dishes to try during events like the Agape dinner or even breakfast prepared by the men's and women's ministries. How blessed are we to have such feasts?!

So, whether you have made a long journey to be here and you've sought a place to worship, or you have come locally through an invitation from a friend, or you have been here for as long as you can remember, you are all welcome at THE LIFE. "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." Hebrews 13:2 **L**