

the LIFE line

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October/November 2021

So Much LIFE Among Us!

By Pastor Justin Vetrano

Dear People of THE LIFE:

I am writing to you today from down South, as my family walks through my father's illness. We have taken such great comfort in our faith, which reminds us that the promises of Christ transcend all our circumstances: we know we are not alone. We are especially thankful for all your prayers, texts and well wishes. God has surrounded us with grace beyond grace.

THE LIFE has been filled with wonderful ministry and renewed purpose. We celebrated weddings and honored Morty Lemkau with a wonderful memorial service and Oktoberfest luncheon. Our movie nights have continued, along with our Men's and Women's ministry meetings. There is so much LIFE among us!

A true highlight was our joyous RIBFEST, which saw several hundred people joining in for a terrific event. There were lots of laughs, wonderful smiles, beautiful weather, fun games, delicious ice cream, and of course great ribs. What makes RIBFEST

truly wonderful is all of you. Gathering God's people for a fun celebration is what this community is all about. Special thanks to all the people who made RIBFEST possible: the cooks, the helpers, the supporters and all attendants. I can't wait for next year.

It has been wonderful to see our Day School get back to full capacity. Hearing the children in the building every day has been a true joy. We are all really looking forward to TRUNK-OR-TREAT coming up at the end of the month.

So many other programs have returned: our ESL program meeting online, Dcn. Larry's Bible Study, and at the end of November Pr. Schriever will begin meeting on Tuesday mornings for Bible Study. We were excited to see Lisa Dettling return to the piano after her maternity leave, and we look forward to celebrating the baptism of her son in November. Special thank you to Deacon Larry for sharing his musical gifts with the congregation during Lisa's leave. We are blessed with so much talent in our midst.

For the past month and a half our ministry team has been covering the pastoral care and worship services for Calvary Lutheran Church in East Meadow during their pastoral vacancy. Pastor Schoepflin, Vicars Dan and Brian, and Deacon Harry have all stepped up to preach and lead worship. This has been a

great opportunity for our ministry team to spread our wings of ministry and proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ beyond THE LIFE.

We did have a setback regarding Covid when our worship team (mostly my family) came down with breakthrough cases. Now that booster shots are more available, especially for the most vulnerable in the community, we are more confident that we can move forward in a safe and healthy manner. Please continue to be diligent in washing your hands, wearing masks, and staying home if you're feeling sick.

I am truly thankful to our ministry staff who have carried an extra load this past month and a half, while I was in COVID quarantine, and then when I had to leave to attend to my family. I cannot express how comforted I am that we have such a fantastic and supportive team and church community.

Looking ahead, I am truly excited for the fall and winter at THE LIFE. At the end of the month we will Confirm several of our young people. Preparations are beginning for our Advent/Christmas boxes, and planning for our annual Christmas tree lighting is underway for Saturday Dec. 4th.

With so much happening we keep our eyes fixed on the One who is the true light of our community, the One who calls, enlightens and gathers us together in hope. May the Good News of Jesus Christ continue to lead and inspire us.

See you around Church,
Pastor Vetrano

Join us for Worship and more!

Sundays Worship & Communion, 9 & 10:30am*
Mondays Monday Night Bible Study, 7:30pm**
Thursdays Worship & Communion, 7:15pm*

Oct 31 Trunk or Treat, 1-3pm

*Also live-streamed
**Via Zoom

Get to Know ... Lisa, Shane and Teddy Fitzmaurice

By Joni Mazer

Joni: How long have you been worshipping at THE LIFE and what brought you here?

Lisa: I have been going to THE LIFE since 2009, when I started playing the piano there. My family and I were members of Resurrection, and my mother told me about THE LIFE starting up. It was God's perfect timing since I was graduating from college and THE LIFE was looking for a pianist to join the Worship Band.

Shane: I started going to THE LIFE in 2017 when Lisa and I reconnected. We met many years ago when we worked together. One day, years later, she called me and invited me to church, and we had coffee after the service. That was the beginning of our new life together.



The Fitzmaurice Family (from left) Shane, Teddy, and Lisa

Joni: What do you like most about THE LIFE?

Lisa: The people at THE LIFE are like a big family, so warm and welcoming. I also really enjoy the music!

Shane: I like the sense of community and always feel super welcome.

Joni: Are you involved in any activities and/or ministries at THE LIFE?

Lisa: I'm a member of the Worship Band, although I'm on hiatus right now. Before Covid, I led choirs and played the flute for special services. I'm hoping to be able to do that again in the future.

Joni: What do you do outside of church?

Lisa: Right now, we spend a lot of time with our newborn baby boy, Teddy. He's six weeks old and likes to eat, sleep and loves music! I enjoy exercising, especially running races. I currently work as the Senior Children's Librarian at the public library in Rye, New York. I'll be returning from maternity leave the first week of December.

Shane: I work for NYU in Campus Safety and am attending classes there towards my Master's in Social Work. I play rugby and am a member of the Greenwich Rugby Club.

Joni: Do you have a favorite Bible verse?

Shane: Jeremiah 29:11 is one that always brings me peace. "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future." With so many unknowns in the future, it's comforting to know that God is in control and has it all planned.

Joni: How has your faith in God helped you through the last year during Covid?


Lisa: The past year has been so hard on everyone. For us, it was stressful with changed wedding plans, buying a house in Stamford, Connecticut, and welcoming Teddy into our lives.

We were married on May 17, 2020. I played the piano that morning for the live-streamed church service, and our wedding was right after. We had only our parents in attendance on opposite sides of the church, masked, Pastor Vetrano, and the band played a song for us. On November 8, 2020, we were able to have a full wedding ceremony with 45 guests and a reception at the Royalton in Roslyn. It was quite an experience, but we are so glad we were able to get married on our original date and celebrate later with all of our loved ones.

Shane: I've learned to give it up to God and trust in His plan, just like Jeremiah 29:11 says! God turned our challenging year into a joyous one!

Joni: When do you feel closest to God?

Lisa: When I'm in church, and I look out into the congregation seeing everyone singing their hearts out. You don't always see that, and it strengthens my faith.

Shane: Sundays at THE LIFE! 

the LIFE

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& DAY SCHOOL

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A New Sunday School

By Deacon Nancy Rickman, Supt., Sunday School

Since May of this year, we have re-started Sunday school. We now have three classes which are divided into age groups of Pre-K to 1st grade, 2nd to 3rd grade, and 4th to 5th grade.

We also have a mix of new and past teachers who rotate their classroom time from week to week: Tanya Chesterfield, Jennifer Moglia, Christina Crocitto, Colleen Rubino, Melissa Essigman, Deborah Vergara, Joseph Baumgarn, and Paula Oyarce. This group of educators is top of the line when teaching comes into play—and creative! The art projects are superb, whether they are from a religious website or dreamed-up by the teachers themselves.

In the Pre-K to 1st grade class, the children were taught a lesson on the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The teachers explained that these are three persons (or parts) in one. They did a project based on a watermelon having three parts, the seeds, the red part that we eat, and



Using the watermelon as an example of three in one, Pre-K students learn about the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.



A favorite lesson with the 4th-5th grade class is "God Sightings."

the rind or outer covering. The end product was so cute, and it helped explain the concept of three-in-one to our youngest students.

The 2nd to 3rd graders made a prayer jar made from a small glass container to reinforce the point that when we pray, we hold a conversation with God.


These students love the projects they do. Each week we gain new students who have heard about what is going on in our Sunday school and want to be part of it.

A favorite lesson is on God Sightings (little things we see in the details of life to show that God has created everything). The teachers took their students



The 2nd-3rd grade class discuss what will go in their prayer jars.

outdoors with cameras to take pictures of the details in nature, pinpointing the wonders that God created that we often don't notice. At the same time the children are having fun learning the skill of photography.

The teachers enjoy working with the children, and the children, in turn, are having a good time being with us and learning about God. 

Back to School

By Lori Shaw, Day School Director

THE LIFE Day School is off to a wonderful start! The two-year-old, three-year-old and four-year-old programs began on Sept. 13. The children have been making new friends, forming relationships with their teachers, and settling nicely into their new classroom routines and environment. The children have been enjoying the beautiful weather and increased time outdoors, playing, exploring and participating in art and nature activities.

We now offer many opportunities for parents to extend their child's school day in a group setting that provides exploration, discovery, and learning. In addition to our full-day program, children will have the opportunity to participate in after school classes such as Soccer Shots, Seeds of Science, Spanish, Doodlin' DaVinci's and Wild About Animals.

We welcome many new staff members to THE LIFE Day School this year:



Outdoor exploration and fun

Mrs. Gina Siciliano -
Lead Teacher, Toddlers
Mrs. Alex Abbatiello -
Assistant Teacher, Toddlers
Ms. Elaina Citarella -
Lead Teacher, Three-Year-Olds
Mrs. Tina White -
Assistant Teacher, Three-Year-Olds
Ms. Sabrina Cross - Floater

We also welcome back Mrs. Rosalie Rick, Assistant Teacher, Three-Year-Olds. Our new staff members are a tremendous addition to the outstanding staff at THE LIFE.

We look forward to a wonderful school year full of active learning and fun! **L**



Enjoying outdoor play

Devotion: Blessed Halloween

By Pastor Henry Schriever

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." Psalm 116:9

October already! The days and months seem to fly by faster as you age and the longer you sit in the midst of Covid 19. When will it end?

When will we be back to normal? The holidays are coming. Will we be able to celebrate at all as we live so close to death these days?

Don't worry. The world out there will help us with their celebration of death and all its signs--skeletons, witches, broom sticks, ghosts, scary mazes--all to frighten us into laughing at the silliness. But there is that shadow of death beneath

which lurks the reality of hopelessness and despair.

Halloween may be a joke even to those who celebrate it, but Covid (or should we say "Satan") points us to millions of graves and lives filled with tears.

Better we should look at the beginnings of Halloween. It was a time of celebration of new life for the dead and the living.

Centuries ago, communities of Christians came together on the eve of All Saints' Day (November 1) to welcome their beloved "saints" who had preceded them in death. For them it was not about graves and skeletons, etc., but about "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." Psalm 116:9. It was "party time" for all who knew that whether dead or alive they were with the Lord who

deemed them "precious." Some even went so far as to "dress up" to resemble one of their favorite saints and go visiting. That was "Halloween" for them, a kind of preparation for All Saints' Day worship on November 1. ("Hallow" means "Saint"—as in "hallowed be thy name"—and "een" is "evening.")

Our world today really needs to hear, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." We all need to hear it again and again and to celebrate not only on All Saints' Day, but also on Halloween and every other day.

The Lord help us to see how precious we are in the light of His love for us in Christ. May He also enable us to help our families, friends and neighbors to find it too. Blessed Halloween! **L**