

## ST. ANN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

### WEEKLY CHURCH SERVICES\*

Wednesdays: 11 am (Chapel)  
Saturdays: 5 pm (Church - live streaming on Facebook)  
Sundays: 8 am (Church)  
10 am (Church - live streaming on Facebook)

### WEEKLY CAMPUS SCHEDULE\*

**Grief Group:** Following Wednesday Service  
**Food Pantry:** Mondays & Wednesdays 10-12  
**Thrift Shop:** Wednesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays 10 am-2 pm  
**AA meetings:** Mondays 7 pm  
Thursdays 10 am & 7 pm  
Sundays 7:30 pm  
**Choir Practice** 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday 1 pm  
All other Tuesdays 6:45 pm  
**Men's Group** Tuesdays 8 am Breakfast

### MONTHLY SCHEDULE\*

**Family Service** First Sunday (Oct-June)  
**Senior Lunch** November 18th  
**Vestry Meeting** Second Monday  
**Pizza Supper** Third Saturday

\*check our website for details, changes, and updates [www.saint-anns.org](http://www.saint-anns.org)

### **Saint Ann's Vestry**

#### **Wardens**

Randy Schultz (2027)  
Roma Busch (2026)

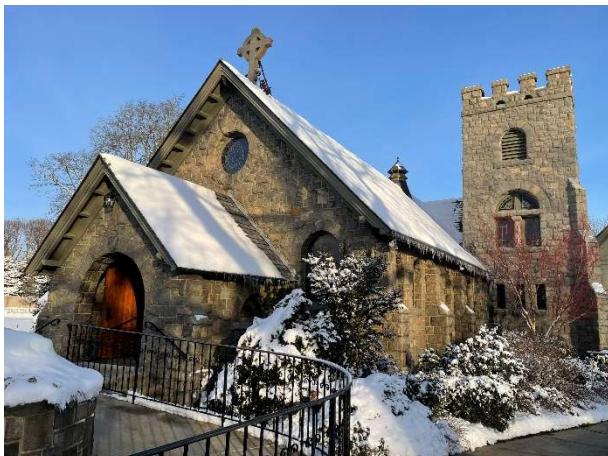
#### **Members**

Ray Busch (2028)  
Joe Castelli (2027)  
Laurin Clemens (2028)  
Kaitlyn Crevoiserat (2026)  
Don Hester (2026)  
Pat Osarchuk (2026)  
Rich Maddox (2027)  
Carol Ann St. Lawrence (2027)  
Laura Sanchez (2026)

Linda Maddox, clerk of the Vestry

# The Correspondent

*Monthly Newsletter / January 2026*



### **St. Ann's Episcopal Church Annual Meeting**

Pursuant to the Canons of the Episcopal Diocese of Long Island and the Religious Corporation Laws of the State of New York, notice is hereby given of the Annual Meeting of Saint Ann's Episcopal Church, Sayville New York at 11:15 AM on

**Sunday, January 18, 2026**

## SAINT ANN'S OFFICE

251 Middle Road  
Sayville NY 11782

Email: [office@saint-anns.org](mailto:office@saint-anns.org)  
Web: [www.saint-anns.org](http://www.saint-anns.org)

Pho: 631-589-6522  
Fax: 631-589-6541

Mon-Wed 9:00 am – 3 pm

**Lynne Robinson**

Parish Administrator

**Marge Rogers**

Office volunteer

## CLERGY

The Reverend Dr. Benjamin Brenkert

**Father Ben**

Priest-In-Charge

[frbenjamin@saint-anns.org](mailto:frbenjamin@saint-anns.org)

929-445-3781

The Reverend Dcn. Susan Ellinghaus

**Deacon Susan**

Pastoral & Youth Ministry

[dcnsusan@saint-anns.org](mailto:dcnsusan@saint-anns.org)

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**Deacon Bob Russo**

Transitional Deacon

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## THE CORRESPONDENT

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Published monthly by  
St Ann's Episcopal Church

Copies available on website,  
in parish hall, the church  
narthex, and USPS  
(request via church office)

**Eileen Moran, Editor**

**Sue Schultz, Roving Reporter**

## FOOD PANTRY

257 Middle Road  
Fr. Jae Chung Parish Hall  
Sayville NY 11782

Interim Pantry Coordinator:  
**Sal Grenci**  
[office@saint-anns.org](mailto:office@saint-anns.org)  
631-589-6522

Open Monday & Wednesday  
10 am - noon

## THRIFT SHOP

268 Middle Road  
Sayville NY 11782

Shop Co-Managers:

**Cindy Reisert**

**Linda Maddox**

[office@saint-anns.org](mailto:office@saint-anns.org)  
631-589-6220

Open Wednesday, Thursday, &  
Saturday 10 am – 2 pm

## CEMETERY

*The Garden of the Unforgotten*

251 Middle Road  
Sayville NY 11782

Cemetery Manager:  
**Tim Laffin**

[cemetery@saint-anns.org](mailto:cemetery@saint-anns.org)  
631-589-6522  
Open 7 am - sundown

## SAINT ANN'S STAFF-MEMBERS\*

Minister of Music  
Parish Administrator  
Cemetery Manager  
Finance & Bookkeeping  
Treasurer  
Assistant Treasurer  
Webmaster  
Facility Manager  
Sexton  
Historian  
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\*use 631-589-6522 or [office@saint-anns.org](mailto:office@saint-anns.org) unless otherwise noted

## Companions-in-Christ: A Word from the Priest in Charge



January 2026. Epiphany, the Merriam-Webster dictionary defines *epiphany* as: 1) a Christian festival held on January 6 in commemoration of the coming of the Magi as the first manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles or in the Eastern Church in commemoration of the baptism of Christ, 2) an appearance or manifestation especially of a divine being, and 3) A.1: a usually sudden manifestation or perception of the essential nature or meaning of something; A.2: an intuitive grasp of reality through something (such as an event) usually simple and striking; A.3: an illuminating discovery, realization, or disclosure, and B.1: a revealing scene or moment.

At Saint Ann's and Fire Island Ministries, 2026 brings to us that perception, that intuitive grasping that God-grafted himself into humanity in the form of his son, Jesus Christ. From our Baptismal promises, we march onward bringing the light of Jesus Christ into our world. Towards the end of last year, some reported about a resurgence of attendance in places of religious worship. While numbers are telling of something tangible, *Magis* (the Jesuit term for more) refers to the philosophy of doing more for Jesus Christ, and therefore doing more for others. Hence the tri-fold question from the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola: What have I done for Christ? What am I doing for Christ? What will I do for Christ?

In 2026, Saint Ann's and Fire Island Ministries are called to *magis*, “not only detachment from created goods but also discernment of God’s will as the *magis*, that which is for the greater glory of God” (cf. Ross Romero, S.J.’s (2024) Ignatian Indifference and Philosophy as a Way of Life in Andrew Barrette’s, et al, *Philosophy as a Spiritual Exercise*.). In other words, we are called to be spiritually and theologically indifferent to created goods in as much as they bring about the *magis*.

The poet Mary Oliver speaks about the *magis* of our being created in God’s image and likeness in terms of a person’s lifetime in her poem, The Summer Day (1992),

Who made the world?  
Who made the swan, and the black bear?  
Who made the grasshopper?  
This grasshopper, I mean--  
the one who has flung herself out of the grass,  
the one who is eating sugar out of my hand,  
who is moving her jaws back and forth instead of up and down--  
who is gazing around with her enormous and complicated eyes.  
Now she lifts her pale forearms and thoroughly washes her face.  
Now she snaps her wings open, and floats away.  
I don't know exactly what a prayer is.  
I do know how to pay attention, how to fall down  
into the grass, how to kneel in the grass,  
how to be idle and blessed, how to stroll through the fields,  
which is what I have been doing all day.  
Tell me, what else should I have done?  
Doesn't everything die at last, and too soon?  
Tell me, what is it you plan to do  
With your one wild and precious life?

In our “one wild and precious life” how do we open our eyes to the light that comes from God? Where can we translate God’s love for us into action? What will never arrive unless we run, not sprint, there by doing good deeds beyond 257 Middle Road?

At our 160<sup>th</sup> Annual Parish Meeting, Saint Ann’s and Fire Island Ministries celebrate nearly 140-years of being better in the communities of Sayville, Bayport, Blue Point, Cherry Grove and The Pines. We can celebrate redirecting significant amount of our stewardship from landscaping to community-facing activities. We can celebrate the reimagining of the Burgess Building, a space created in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century that must meet the increased demand from patrons and guests in 2026. We can celebrate our Vestry, Volunteers, Staff and Clergy’s response to creating the community of the beloved disciple. We can celebrate our renovation of the Historic Bell Tower, and emphasize that all that we do flows from our Baptism in Jesus Christ to *magis* our surrounding communities. We can celebrate the integration of The People’s Arc into the mystery of our parish life. We can celebrate an increase in volunteers from our pews and our nearby neighborhoods. We can celebrate choosing joy, not fear, finding consolation, not desolation. We can celebrate letting mutual love and mutual respect continue. We can celebrate all efforts made to dialogue with all of our neighbors. We can celebrate naming the Parish Hall after Fr. Jae Chung, whose personal humility, generosity and radical Christian hospitality, especially of youth inspires Saint Ann’s and Fire Island Ministries for the common good. We can celebrate the arrival of Deacon Robert “Bob” Russo, a Transitional Deacon who will be formed by us to be a priest and remain with us as an Assistant Priest (a Curate). We can celebrate the life and example of our Permanent Deacon, Susan Ellinghaus. We can celebrate Saint Ann’s and Fire Island Ministries’ history and context, while embracing our present call to action.

In 2026, Saint Ann’s and Fire Island Ministries encourages all: 1) to discern where and how they can volunteer time and talent in one or more of our many vibrant ministries, 2) to invite neighbors, friends and family to attend our Services and programming, 3) to learn what it means to be Episcopalian in 2026, and 4) to epiphany, that is to more fully grasp and understand who and what Saint Ann’s and Fire Island Ministries are unfolding as a community-centric and community-facing church.

Finally, I take a moment to extend a grace of gratitude and to pray for a blessed and happy New Year for and to all; to our families, friends and bi-vocational ministry partners: You are loved and always welcome at Saint Ann’s and Fire Island Ministries. That is the *magis*; all for the greater glory of God. A.M.D.G.

With gratitude, love and in prayer,

Fr. Ben



Many thanks to Sally & the other “flower girls” for the flowers you bring to brighten someone’s day.

Photo by Sally.



## Some thoughts from your Deacon...

"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 hope and a future." Jeremiah 29:11



As I sit writing this, our first snowfall of the season has coated the grounds and the trees with the majestic beauty that only God can create. Children made snowmen and dragged sleds, which hadn't been used for years, out of storage, while adults shoveled and worried about icy road conditions. And isn't that what we do...worry about what's next? And what does that worry get us...usually not much!

As we welcome this new year with joy and perhaps a bit of trepidation, let's focus on Jeremiah's words, "I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord." And He does...He always does. As this new year unfolds, let's take a closer walk with Him. Let's shed the old ways and open up in eager anticipation, not to what 2026 holds in store, but rather what our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ has planned for us!

with love and blessings,  
Deacon Susan

Looking ahead:

- Instruction for First Intention Communion will begin on January 4th after our 10:00 am service during Coffee Hour. In the Episcopal Church, we believe that all baptized individuals may receive communion, but this short course will focus on instructing our children on why we receive and what it means. We'll also be investigating the parts of the church, the prayers, and anything that they may have questions about. February 8th will be banner Sunday and February 15th will be their special day for receiving communion, whether it's their first time or their hundredth time! Please see Kaitlyn or me if you have any questions.
- Blood drive January 7<sup>th</sup> in the Fr. Jae Chung Parish Hall from 1 pm to 7 pm.
- Please save your wine corks! We will be having a craft night in February to begin working on holiday crafts for the 2026 Christmas Fair! Date TBA!
- March 10<sup>th</sup> - service in the Chapel at 11:15 am followed by our Senior Luncheon.
- Please remember that our Food Pantry is always grateful for donations!



### Communion where you live

If you are unable to attend church, regardless of the duration, and would like a Lay Eucharistic visitor to bring communion to you at home or in a facility, please call the church office, Father Ben, Deacon Susan, or Deacon Bob to schedule a visit.

## VESTRY VISIONS

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### Looking Back on a Stellar 2025...

It is so hard to believe that 2025 has passed by as quickly as it has! Looking back, the past year has been notable for the emergence of St. Ann's as a community focused church actively engaging with municipal, civic, and community leaders and our dedicated parishioners to serve the needs of those less fortunate in our community. Together, we have engaged as a Christian community to both upgrade the physical plant and then streamline access to our ministries' vital services-providing for the food insecure, and clothing and essentials for those less fortunate in our midst. Add the vital services starting in April provided by our Littlejohn Ministry Partner, The People's ARC, equipping the less fortunate for the workforce.

Who can forget the energizing experiences we shared at St. Barnabas Day, with the Rorie Kelly Band? Or the Fall Festival, with all of those wonderful vendors- and the Community filling every parking spot and lined up and down Middle Road? Or the joyous Fish Fry, facilitated by Claws – an all you can eat extravaganza that bought over 100 hungry Community eaters to our Parish Hall doors?

Our community activities were a fine balance of traditional ideas and renewed energy of which the Christmas Fair was a fine representation. For the first time in a generation, the Fair opened with a Friday night Wine and Cheese event attended by nearly 40 people, with entertainment by Rick Magnani and his band. On Saturday, the Community experienced traditional jewelry, knit goods, home baked items, toys, and special Christmas gift offerings curated by our Thrift Shop personnel, with a hero/hot dog lunch managed by the Men's Group with a multitude of Raffle items for bidding. And Christmas Tree Sales were a spectacular success, with over 600 trees sold the weekend after Thanksgiving.

Creative Ministries of Oakdale offered "Journey, Cross and Crucifixion" on the grounds of the Parish as a lead-in the night before our Fall Festival, and "Behold, the Moment" in mid-December prior to a 6 PM Evening Prayer service. Throughout the year, young and old were entertained at Movie Nights, and with fellowship at Senior Luncheons, coffee hours, and Lenten Soup Suppers. The Men's Group with over 15 members met every Tuesday, more reliably than mail service these days...

It was a successful year of ministry at Cherry Grove and the Pines! St. Ann's hosted services starting Memorial Day Weekend and ended September 7 with a rousing Farewell Celebration in the pouring rain with residents and nearly 30 parishioners from St. Ann's enjoying a catered luncheon on the Community Center rooftop at Cherry Grove.

Speaking of the Physical Plant, who can remember the Dark Ages when half the church ceiling lights were not working? Or when the sound system was garbled? Our online worship services were beefed up with modern equipment, a team of dedicated parishioners facilitated livestreaming of services at 10 AM Sundays (and now 5 pm Saturdays) and the website was placed under professional management. This Correspondent, as the monthly beacon of St. Ann's is superior to the New York Times in quality and content, thanks to YOUR enthusiastic contributions and the esteemed editorial skills of Eileen Moran...

So that the People's ARC could legally occupy the Littlejohn Building, a one-time expense was incurred to satisfy Town Codes in providing appropriate handicapped access. The Town also required certain upgrades for the Thrift Shop building which were completed for compliance.

In February, the Administrative Offices moved to the former Rectory, requiring specific one-time upgrades to make the place functional as an office. Our Landscaping and irrigation trades were key to making our grounds welcoming, and the electrical/lighting trades provided night-time beauty, safety and security throughout the campus. St. Ann's is now truly a place where people can find a spiritual home and engage in the ministries Christ has called us to provide.

As we look back, we are truly grateful to the many Parish members, ministry leaders, Vestry members, Staff and Clergy who have so sacrificially invested their time, talent, energy, and experiences in love of the Lord to make this a transformative year to remember. Your names and faces have graced the Correspondent throughout the year, (but if not, you are in my heart as well!) Together, may we continue with joy and a grateful heart to do the work Jesus calls us to do! Thank you, thank you, and Thank You!

#### **A Note on Stewardship of our Buildings and Grounds...**

When my wife Sue and I bought our 1928 vintage Blue Point home in 1987, we knew we needed to make a major “catch up” investment in what was a “handyman special”. Over the first 3-4 years, we replaced windows, kitchen appliances, installed insulation, and eventually gutted the house to install modern wiring, plumbing and sheetrock walls to make it “our home”. Over nearly 40 years, we replace the roof (2x), installed solar panels, cedar siding (1990) vinyl siding (2018), a new driveway and new windows (again, in 2025). Not to mention plantings and a veggie garden managed by a landscape architect (Sue).

I am sure all of us can relate to this...maintenance and upkeep of an old house is ongoing and costly... And yet, if it were postponed to the future, small problems become bigger (and more expensive) problems.

So it is with St. Ann's Church. Other than the Garage next to the Administrative Offices, we don't have any commercial and public facing buildings that are less than 100 years old (some are much older). In 2025, it became obvious to our robust, professional Buildings and Grounds Committee that our facilities were suffering from many years of neglect, creating issues of public safety, security, and even threats to health and wellbeing. YES, WE HAVE SPENT A LOT OF MONEY. However, and I emphasize with support of the entire Vestry, the funds appropriated to bring the Littlejohn and Burgess Buildings to Town Code (and to get a Certificate of Occupancy) were **one-time expenses**. The Administrative Offices move to the former Rectory required cleaning, electrical maintenance, and kitchen flooring renewal with basement insulation necessitated by a frozen radiator pipe that had damaged the floor. Fire escapes which have been neglected for 20 years or more in the Offices and at Burgess are being maintained and replaced respectively, so the upper floors can be utilized safely. Three new sump pumps were installed in the downstairs area of the Fr. Jae Chung Parish Hall to address chronic flooding down there. **ALL ONE-TIME EXPENSES!**

Like a neglected residence, some of the “low priority” areas become hotspots for trouble. The Thrift Shop basement was necessarily gutted this fall to reveal 20-30 years accumulation of mold behind the sheetrock. This has been treated, and the space is being evaluated for “next steps” in 2026. As is the service “lift” installed in 2003 for the Thrift Shop convenience in moving items from the sorting area to the basement storage. The lift has not been maintained or serviced in 20 years...As they say, “a Penny Wise is a Pound Foolish”

So, we get the idea. A lot of money has been spent in 2025 on “catch up” and one-time maintenance that should not be replicated for a considerable time. The new budget for 2026 has built in contingencies to accommodate future repair and maintenance expenses, and a new landscape contractor has been contracted

to provide services at a lower rate than previously. We are fortunate that this necessary work can be funded through our corporate “regular giving”, income from our ministry partner, The People’s ARC, gifts from our “legacy” benefactor dedicated to outreach, and from unrestricted endowments and miscellaneous gifts. But... ***we couldn’t do it without you!!!***

A final thought... it is not good stewardship of our physical plant to have space idle and either not providing ministry or not generating revenue. Buildings and Grounds will be finalizing plans to better optimize the second floor of Burgess (and the basement area) for these purposes, plus the area below the lower Fr. Jae Chung Parish Hall in the year ahead...The Vestry Finance and Buildings and Grounds Committees have “forward vision” as their imprimaturs as they continue to pray into place the optimal use of our physical plant, to the Glory of God.

### **A Look to the Future...**

The Title of this column is “Vestry Visions”, not” Vestry Look-Back”...I wish to share with you some thoughts for what may lie ahead in our Walk with the Lord...

We will soon have the opportunity to respond to the launch of our Historic Bell Tower Restoration Capital Campaign, dedicated to the funding of the repair, repointing, sealing and preservation of the Bell Tower. Please know that the current Vestry has committed themselves to contributing over \$25,000 towards the total funding of this project. The rest of us will have that opportunity in January with a 2-year pledge window to complete our offering. At the Annual Meeting, January 18, contractor Kingstone Restorations’ principal Joe Mars will be present to explain the project and answer questions. Work should be completed in the Spring....

In January we will be welcoming the Rev. Robert Russo as a transitional Deacon and Curate to our ministry. Deacon Robert was ordained by Bishop Provenzano with four colleagues to the Diaconate on December 6. He will strengthen our liturgical and ministry offerings. St. Ann’s has a longstanding tradition as a teaching parish, and Deacon Robert will be a welcome addition in that tradition to our staff. (And Deacon Susan isn’t going anywhere!!!!)

Looking ahead, 2026 will be significant at the Diocesan level, with the retirement of Bishop Provenzano and the consecration of his successor September 19, preceded by candidate “meet and greets” in March, the Bishop Electing Convention mid-April, and a planned farewell for Bishop Provenzano in May. Please keep in the loop thru the Diocesan website for current information.

In the year ahead, may we continue to actualize our Baptismal Promises by expanding our Outreach Ministries to better serve the food insecure, provide companionship to the lonely and homebound in the community, and welcome with gratitude those who seek spiritual nourishment through our liturgy and ministries. I emphasize that your Vestry offers transparency, our meetings are open to everyone, and we are available to discuss any questions or concerns you may have.

Together may we grow in our Walk with the Lord!

Randy Schultz,  
Warden

# Welcome Deacon Bob



We would like to welcome the Reverend Robert Russo to our staff here at St. Ann's! For the past three years he has been a seminarian; serving his parish community and studying to finish his Master's degree in Christian Theology and Spirituality. He was recently ordained as a transitional deacon in December and is on track to be ordained to the priesthood in June 2026, God willing and the people consenting. In his role as a transitional deacon, his duties and responsibilities will vary from that of a permanent deacon. A vocational or permanent deacon is an ordained ministry of serving the needs of the parish and the community. A transitional deacon is an ordained ministry focusing on a path of practical experience and formation in preparation for priestly duties, especially sacramental and pastoral care.

Prior to his priestly vocation, Deacon Bob had a long career in the financial service industry. He also spent seven years as a residential Counsellor in a congregate level 2 Group Home for adult men living with mental illness. While a seminarian he was involved in pastoral care, outreach and Christian formation and education at the Cathedral of the Incarnation in Garden City. He is a chaplain intern at North Shore University Hospital where he is in the process of completing a unit of Clinical Pastoral Education. He looks forward with great joy and enthusiasm in joining our parish community of St Ann's!

## The Christmas Tree Sale by Sue Schultz



St. Ann's Annual Christmas Tree Sale was kicked off very early in the morning of Saturday, November 29, 2025, when the truck bearing 717 Douglas Fir and Fraser Fir trees pulled up at dawn! Almost 30 people helped to unload the truck, carry and stack these trees all along the fencing. By 8:00 am, the trees were untied and ready to sell.

As of the very next day, Sunday at 12:00, approximately 600 trees had been sold. This Roving Reporter had a nice chat with second year Tree Sale Chair Christine Cesarino about her very short but BUSY ministry selling Christmas Trees. She took over in 2024 from two parish families who had been chairing for over 15 years, which is a long time of commitment, organization, scheduling, recruiting, and accepting what Sayville's weather decides to send in way of either balmy autumn skies or icy rain! Or, in between kinds of weather.

In August, months before the November sale, Christine reaches out to the tree farm in Pennsylvania (that we've purchased trees from for over 20 years) to go over inventory and wholesale costs. Then she works up her organization plan to review past sales and how much was left to be discounted and/or given away, to fit in with the parish calendar of events, time of sale (which always is the Saturday of Thanksgiving weekend), come up with pricing and to start making signs and advertising the Tree Sale. She also has to arrange for the grounds volunteers to have the snow fencing, lighting, and a shelter (this year a large portable tent) installed well ahead of tree delivery.

During the fall, Christine begins to work up plans of volunteers needed and prepares a schedule of people who promise to come over and help with: shaking trees, standing them for customers, to restack, to trim the ends, run through the baler and help customers get their trees to their vehicles. She says the hard work is carrying or rearranging the 10 to 12-footers as well as tying them to cars, and she always needs strong young people (usually men and teens) for this task. Christine said that it takes over 30 people at a time to run the lot on Saturday, from line greeters to tree sales people and cashiers to the baling station and lastly, to the car loaders.

The best things about her project are the happy spirit of the volunteers who do everything and how much fun her family has! She grew up coming to St. Ann's tree sales, being longtime neighbors & friends of Lisa and Joe Castelli and their daughters, Heather and Elizabeth.

Last year Christine and her crew experimented with adding an extra baling station and having a third unloading/vehicle pick up area on the west side of parish exit driveway. This greatly alleviated the congestion of many vehicles all pulling in to shop vs the vehicles to be loaded and ready to go home.

Much thanks to Christine, her family and all the volunteers and people to participate and support this annual happy St. Ann's Tree Sale!

**Thinking About:****Creation Care and 2026****Happy New Year to All!**

Yes, it's that time of year again where we participate in the annual ritual of making our New Year resolutions. It's that feeling we're not only beginning a new year but also starting with a clean slate. Some of the resolutions we make are new, and some are the resolutions we unfortunately repeat year after year. As I think we can all agree, the repeat resolutions (those that require lifestyle changes) are the ones which are the hardest to keep (hence, the word – “repeat”). For me, the two big ones are procrastination, and getting things done in a more efficient and timely manner. And let me say this now: those two resolutions Will Not be on my list next year! (Finally!)

As we're all aware, this column focuses on Creation Care – our stewardship of the world God created and all it encompasses. So, in keeping with our discussion above about new year resolutions, I'd like to suggest a small addition to our list: That is to be mindful of the everyday choices we make, and think about how these choices affect our environment. This is especially true when we consider a seemingly inconsequential act, that when repeated by many, many others create a very consequential problem. Just two examples, one of which I know you've heard here before (Sorry!). The common practice of spraying our property to rid it of the nuisance insects that ruin the enjoyment of our outdoor spaces, and our desire to obtain the perfect lawn by over fertilizing it. As I believe most of us are aware, these sprayed chemicals not only eliminate the insects we don't like but also have an adverse effect on our very important pollinators. In the second example, the fertilizer run-off creates allergy blooms, which in turn leads to areas of low oxygen or “dead zones”.

Finally, some other areas I'll touch on this year will be highlighting those organizations that support the theme of Creation Care with their actions, education and events.

Stay tuned!

Regards,

Joe Castelli

**Please share your ideas... Joe Castelli at [53jcas@gmail.com](mailto:53jcas@gmail.com) subject: Creation Care**



## In the News

Parish news and a round-up of items announced in emails and at weekend services.

*Send stories and/or photos for The Correspondent to [correspondent@saint-anns.org](mailto:correspondent@saint-anns.org) by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of each month. Please submit announcements to the office by Wednesday each week.*

**Called to the Lord: Scott Warren MacDonell, Madaline Fischer, Carrie Ann Garafola, Barbara Ann Olsen, Judy Hester, Lily J Mayar, and Georgeann O'Connell.** May all those who have passed from this life, find peace in heaven and may their loved ones on earth be comforted by cherished memories.

From Father Ben's weekly email: We remembered and prayed for **Judy Hester** at our Service before the December Senior Luncheon, the morning of the 16th, from the Saint Barnabas Chapel. During that Service many reflected on Judy's warmth, her infectious smile and her trailblazing and glass-ceiling braking history on Long Island and in New York. Please join with me in praying for Don, their children and their family and our community as they and we mourn her passing and celebrate her life.

Our Friends from the Cherry Grove Community Association (CGCAI) wrote about Judy in their December 2025 memoriam titled, "**Remembering Judy Hester**. It is with heavy hearts that we share the passing of Judy Hester. Judy, born to Percy and Grace Hoek of West Sayville, was the cherished middle daughter in a family with strong ties to the bay and the Dutch Reform Church. Fondly recalling her days crabbing on the Great South Bay, Judy's childhood was filled with memories of simpler times. From her early days as Class President to her role as a Boating Counselor at Camp Edey, where she met her husband Don, Judy's life was marked by service and dedication. Her journey took her from nursing training in New York to further studies in Ohio, eventually leading her back to Long Island where she made significant contributions at Brookhaven National Laboratory. A pillar of the community, Judy was involved in various church activities, youth groups, and even broke barriers as the first female warden at Saint Ann's. Her impact extended beyond her local community as she served as a firefighter in Cherry Grove and made history as the first woman elected to a Fire Department Chief's position in New York. With a marriage lasting 64 years, three children, three grandchildren, and over 40 foreign exchange students welcomed into her home, Judy's legacy of love and kindness will forever be remembered by all who knew her. Are thoughts are with Don and the entire family. Our sincerest condolences. CGCAI"

More from Father Ben's email: It takes a village to run a parish like ours at Saint Ann's and Fire Island Ministries. This morning, to help spread joy on and around our campus Randy Schultz, Karen McGorty, Barbara Stahlberg, Phil Linbrunner, Joe Castelli, Christine and Dominick Cesarino volunteered alongside our vendors from the Bayport Flower House, Karl and his son, and Haase Landscaping, James Reilly, to bring the merry to our Christmas' solemn worship, festive song, communal prayer, and supper at the Lord's table. I also want to give thanks to Dani Knight and Stephanie Pierce for their work from our Food Pantry. THANK YOU! All for the greater glory of God. May the blessings of Jesus Christ, peace, joy and unconditional and enduring love fill your hearts with God's presence and with rejoicing this blessed season and in the new year. Be assured of my prayers for you and your family this Christmastime and all the days still to come.

In 2025 Saint Ann's and Fire Island Ministries welcomed nearly 8,400 people to our pews on the mainland and in Cherry Grove and The Pines. All are welcome. We celebrated 21 Baptisms, 1 wedding, 3 Confirmations and 2 Receptions. We mourned and celebrated the lives of 17 members of our community. We opened our Food Pantry two days per week. People are being fed in mind, body and spirit. **THANK YOU TO ALL OUR VOLUNTEERS.** *Tantas Cosas. Go, set the world on fire. Magis!*

**January 6th - Feast of the Epiphany with the Great South Bay Deanery**  
**6:00 PM Potluck dinner, followed by a Service and dessert at Christ Church Bellport. All are welcome!**

**Blood drive - January 7<sup>th</sup>** in the Fr. Jae Chung Parish Hall from 1 pm to 7 pm.

**January 13** is the **Volunteer Gardener and New Landscaper Luncheon** at 3 pm.

Our **Winter Ministry Fair** will take place on **January 25th** from the Fr. Jae Chung Parish Hall.

**Senior Luncheon** will be on **March 10<sup>th</sup>**, preceded by a service in the **Chapel at 11:15 am**. Please bring a contribution to the Food Pantry.

We need individuals and families to sign up for the **Sunday Coffee Hour**. The list is in the Fr. Jae Chung Parish Hall. Thanks!



Birthday blessing of Sue & Cathy

The People's Arc is now helping with our **Food Pantry Ministry**. This has enabled us to open an extra day. We are now open on **Mondays & Wednesdays** from 10 am to noon. Donations placed in the little red wagon in the Fr. Jae Chung Parish Hall are always appreciated.

Our website now has a **calendar of events** to review. Check it out: <https://www.saint-anns.org/>

**Wednesday services**, at 11 am in our Saint Barnabas Chapel, includes **Anointing of the Sick and Eucharist**. It is followed by the **Grief Group**. Through pastoral counseling, many will receive the graces they need to find God in all things, and to begin to find in others a community of love and mutual support.

**The Saint Ann's Tree of Life/Wall of Remembrance**, located outside the Chapel, is a great way to acknowledge a loved one, friend, neighbor or colleague. For more information call us at the Parish Administration Offices.

Saint Ann's seeks members for the **Altar Guild** and a **Counter** to join our volunteers who account for our stewardship, tithing: various offerings and plate giving. Please contact Lynne at the Parish Office if you would like to learn more about how to get involved, her email is [office@saint-anns.org](mailto:office@saint-anns.org).

## Did You Know...

Did you know that I've been a parishioner for about 36 years?

I hope you don't mind, but I thought I'd tell you a little bit about myself this month. I'm your Correspondent Editor, Eileen Moran.

I found St. Ann's about 1988 when I purchased a tiny house on the southwest corner of Cliff Avenue & Tariff Street. Soon after, my then-boyfriend Ed Moran became my fiancé. He proposed on the first day of spring, in his new canoe, somewhere on the upper portion of the Yaphank River.

I grew up Roman Catholic, but since Ed was Episcopalian, I investigated St. Ann's and was very impressed. After joining the choir, I knew which church I wanted to get married at. That occurred in June of 1989.

We moved to a larger house in Bohemia before starting a family. While raising two boys I still managed to make choir rehearsals most Tuesdays. Our choir is very special – think about joining. When my son Dow crossed over to Boy Scouts from Cub Scouts, I had to take a break from choir as the rehearsals conflicted with the Boy Scout meetings. Being a scout leader was a privilege and an honor. We chose a troop that valued women leaders and put a large emphasis on being a scout-led troop. I served as a leader and also the trip planner. I'm proud to report both my sons became Eagle Scouts along with many of the other scouts.

I came back to the choir once my sons were out of Boy Scouts, and I've been a member since.

Ed and I enjoy taking trips to see relatives and vacation travel. One of our trips found us in Long Beach California and staying on The RMS Queen Mary. This historic ship was turned into a floating hotel. It's permanently docked across from downtown Long Beach at the mouth of the Long Angeles River. It is the ultimate cruise to nowhere! Ed suffers sea sickness, even though his maternal grandfather was a sea captain, so this was the perfect cruise experience for us. The RMS Queen Mary sailed on her maiden voyage in May of 1936. Much of the ship's Art Deco décor is original and quite interesting.

You might be able to guess from the picture above, that one of my hobbies is photography. I also enjoy hiking, camping, swimming and bike riding.





# Blood Drive



## Saint Ann's Episcopal Church

257 Middle Rd., Sayville

**Wednesday, Jan. 7<sup>th</sup>**

**1:00pm – 7:00pm**

**Each presenting donor will receive (1) voucher redeemable for two (2) complimentary tickets to a select 2025-26 regular season home game\***

### To make an appointment:

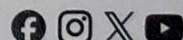
- Scan a QR Code
- Contact Melissa at  
[mgatto@nybc.org](mailto:mgatto@nybc.org) / (917) 566-8537



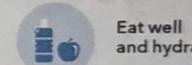
800.933.BLOOD • [nybc.org](http://nybc.org)

**WALK-INS ARE WELCOME!!!**

\*Game exclusions apply



### Prepare to donate



Eat well  
and hydrate



Bring a  
photo ID



Feel good and  
symptom free



Must be 17+ or  
16 with parental  
consent form



Meet minimum  
weight requirements



Written Consent from  
your Doctor if aged 76  
or older.

For full eligibility requirements  
and COVID-19 information, visit  
[nybc.org/eligibility](http://nybc.org/eligibility)

## PLEASE PRAY

**The Saint Ann's and Fire Island Communities pray especially this week for:  
Alex, Ann, Barbara, Beth, Bob, Debi, Ellen, Eileen, Florence, Gary, Hap,  
Harry, Joe, Juan, Judy, Ken, Kyle, Lauren, Linda, Lissy, Madaline, Maria,  
Nancy, Paul, Paula, Ramona, Rev. Robert, Rick, Rosemarie, Scott, Steven,  
Susan, Tina and Vicki.**

Let us also pray for peace in the Ukraine, Somalia, the Middle East, for those affected by addiction and violence involving guns, and for the least and the marginalized, the poor and the scapegoats amongst us.

*Please submit the name(s) of a loved one going forward to the parish office, text PRAYER to 631-212-2320 to receive a link for making prayer requests, or submit the form on the Saint Ann's website - [saint-anns.org](http://saint-anns.org).*

Use this link: <https://form.jotform.com/212086636121146>

### January Anniversaries:

- 15 Janet & Kevin Adam
- 21 Judy & Donald Hester
- 21 Joan & Anthony Palmieri
- 26 Carol Ann & John St. Lawrence

### January Birthdays:



- 5 Aidan Donoghue
- 5 Diane Miller-Magnani
- 8 John Cerillo
- 8 Richard Mugno
- 9 Stephen Vander Borgh
- 13 Carol Ann St. Lawrence
- 14 Robert Sheppard
- 17 Joseph Castelli
- 18 Eugene DeMott
- 20 John St. Lawrence
- 23 Jenny O'Connell
- 24 Christie Clark
- 25 Sean Mattimore
- 26 Ryan MacDonell
- 28 Jennifer Lembeck
- 30 Christie Strecker



Anniversary blessings for Rich & Linda

View from Behind the Pole



The best seats at Christmas are in the choir!  
Look how beautiful our church was on Christmas Eve.  
Please consider joining the choir. We would love to have some new voices!  
Thanks to John Smith for this photo and many of the other photos in this issue.

Choir practice in the church runs September through June. On the first Tuesday of each month, we practice at 1 pm, all other Tuesdays we practice at 6:45 pm.

If you have any questions, you can call Kathy Senese at the church office or email her at  
[music@saint-anns.org](mailto:music@saint-anns.org)

**Find us on Instagram: saint\_anns\_sayville\_new\_york and Facebook:  
St. Ann's Episcopal Church, Sayville, NY**



## Family



## Breakfast





January is a chance for a new beginning. Did you make any New Year's Resolutions? Many people I've talked with gave up New Year's Resolutions. Too much pressure? Too difficult? Or just tired of trying and failing? Maybe we are too hard on ourselves. Maybe we bite off more than we can chew. Perhaps if we just think of one thing we could improve on and work on that until it's second nature. Then we can try another. It doesn't have to start on January 1. As the saying goes "Today is the first day of the rest of your life." Let's make the most of it.

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Have your kids longed to see their photo or story in The Correspondent? Have you? There is a very easy fix: email me at [correspondent@saint-anns.org](mailto:correspondent@saint-anns.org). I am always looking for kids to feature in our Saint Ann's Stars page and people for our "Did You Know" page.

This is OUR newsletter so let's make it the best we can.

Send your birthday & anniversary dates. Share your good news about births, baptisms, graduations, weddings, new jobs, awards or anything else you think the parish would enjoy reading about. Send a photo. Contribute a poem or short essay. Write your reaction to a sermon or a hymn.

Send ideas for "Creation Corner" to ***Joe Castelli at [53jcas@gmail.com](mailto:53jcas@gmail.com)***  
***subject: Creation Care***

Everything else should be emailed to [correspondent@saint-anns.org](mailto:correspondent@saint-anns.org).

Documents should be in **Microsoft Word format or as text in the email**.

Photos can take many formats but be sure to send them as "large files" or originals depending on your equipment. These options will produce the best printed photos.

Please observe the deadline which is always the 15<sup>th</sup> of the previous month. Exceptions may be made for events that happen after the 15th – just ask.

*Eileen Moran*

Deadline for the next issue:  
1/15/26

#### Will you help?

We are in need of volunteers to support our **live stream ministry**, which nourishes the spiritual life of our parishioners who cannot make it to the Church for the service.

Please see Joe Castelli or Father Ben to learn more about this important ministry.

We are also looking for more Ushers, Lectors, Acolytes/Crucifers, Singers, Eucharistic Ministers, Coffee Hour hosts and Altar Guild members. Talk to Fr. Ben or Text the word SERVE to 631-212-2320 to sign up.

Saint Ann's Episcopal Church  
251 Middle Road  
Sayville NY 11782

# The Correspondent

## MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to spread the gospel of Christ in thought, word, and deed to our community and the world.



[www.saint-anns.org](http://www.saint-anns.org)

Saint Ann's is a member of the Sayville Chamber of Commerce