

Sayville Congregational United Church of Christ
December 12, 2021

Remembering Don Gray



To think of Don moving on to the resurrection that awaits us all is joyful; to look around and know he will not sit with us again in this sanctuary he loved – well, quite sad. As it will be, the time ahead flows with joy and sadness and much in between. Please keep Alice and all the family in your prayers

Visiting Hours – Today, Sunday December 12th

2:00 – 4:30 PM and 7:00 – 9:30 PM

Raynor & D'Andrea Funeral Home

245 Main Street, West Sayville, NY 11796

631-589-2345

Celebration of Life for Don Gray

Monday, December 13th at 11:00 AM

Sayville Congregational United Church of Christ

131 Middle Road, Sayville, NY 11782

Alice invites you to join the family following Monday's

Celebration for a Luncheon at

The Meadows, West Sayville Golf Club

200 Main Street, West Sayville, NY 11796

Announcements



The Victorian Tea Inspires!
And, we are not done quite yet!

Christmas Eve:

Readers are invited for the early/family service at 5:30 PM and for the evening service at 7:30 P.M. Please contact Sue Lanchantin if you or family members would like to share as readers for either Christmas Eve service.

Purple for Pantry

Thank you to all who have donated to this year's Advent & Christmas collection for the Sayville Food Pantry. There is still time to join in the sharing. Pick up a Purple bag up front or just bring in your food donations. And, thank you, again.

Some of those we ask you to remember in your prayers:

- Continued prayers to Lorraine and George Severin's family on the loss of her brother-in-law Bob.
- Prayers for Barbara, a friend of Joseph and Barb Dorio, as she struggles greatly with ALS.
- Prayers for Shane Hoffman, Ken Lewis, Craig Williams.
- Prayers for Rev. Martha Moler in Utah.
- Continued prayers for Beatrice Buxton's three-month old grandnephew, Will Croce, as he continues to improve.
- Continued prayers for Peter Leis.
- Prayers for Manfred Misnchke, Paul Elsener, Robert Pierce, Ted Heyse - as they recover from back surgery.
- Prayers for Jerry Ryan as he continues his rehabilitation.
- Prayers for Kris Minschke's daughter-in-law's close friend (Tiffany).
- Prayers for Ron Bergmann, as he continues to recover from a medical issue.
- Robert Pierce asks for prayers for Martha.
- Prayers for Bess, Hilda's daughter-in-law's mom.
- Continuing prayers for Susan Guacci and her family.
- Continued prayers for Roger Jayne, Mike's brother.
- As Ron Bergmann would remind us, we pray for a good health and well-being of our troops serving in southwest Asia, may they be able to return to families and loved ones in the near future.
- those unspoken names in your hearts...

Taken from this week's eChimes prayer list, published on Wednesday, December 8, 2021 www.echimes.org

Annual Meeting of the Congregation

The stated Annual Congregational Meeting of Sayville Congregational United Church of Christ will take place on Sunday, December 19th at 11:00 AM (following worship). Please plan to join us.

Sharing Our Gifts with Families in Foster Care

Sandy Davidson, our friend and Deputy Chief Commissioner of Suffolk County Department of Social Services is once again inviting us to participate in their holiday gift program, getting presents to youth in situations where our help is most needed. To send a gift, please use the list at Amazon that Sandy and her staff has assembled. All donations are anonymous, in order to comply with County regulations. We are also accepting gift cards of \$25 for Target, which we will forward to Sandra on December 17th, one week from this Friday. Visit our website at www.sayvilleucc.org or check eChimes for the links and more information.

Congregational Life

Please be sure to read our weekly newsletter *eChimes*, which is delivered mid-week to your inbox. Along with our website, this is the best way to stay abreast of the latest information about our shared life together. Sign up for eChimes by sending an email to Heather at churchadmin@sayvilleucc.org. eChimes Archives can be found at www.echimes.org

Calendar Items

Tues., 12/14 Bible Jam
10:30 AM (Vestry) & 7:00 PM (Zoom)

Thurs., 12/16 10:00 AM Prayer Shawl

Thurs., 12/16 6:30 PM Choir Practice

Sat., 12/18 10:00 AM Deacon Elders & Deacon Trustees

Sat., 12/18 7:30 – 8:30 PM
Mariann Meringolo Christmas Concert

Sun., 12/19 10:00 AM Fourth Sunday of Advent

Sun., 12/19 11:00 AM
Annual Meeting of the Congregation

Tues., 12/21 Bible Jam – Final Class of the Semester
10:30 AM (Vestry) & 7:00 PM (Zoom)

Friday, 12/24 Christmas Eve 5:30 PM and 7:30 PM

Sunday, 12/26 Worship at 10:00 AM

A Pastoral Letter from Ray Bagnuolo
Published in eChimes, December 8, 2021

Dear Friends,

It's not the same as it was...we've never been here before. We have never been in the Advent of Christmas after our "normal" lives came screeching to a halt twenty-two months ago. It is as though we are recovering from major surgery on a scale like nothing in our lifetimes, and the healing is not happening fast enough. I will not belabor the statistics of this virus. They are impossible to grasp - but that doesn't mean we have not been impacted deeply by it all. There has been no escape, even as we emerge from its unfolding. Each step forward brings with it equal parts hope and concern. Hope that we are coming to an end of the never-ending variations of viruses, and concerns that we are still at risk. So we are careful and smart and cautious and increasingly vaccinated. And as we go, in many ways, we have forgotten how to be with each other. As we begin to gather, we do so with a degree of trepidation. We have been in a "defensive" mode in many ways. Twenty-two months and counting is a long time "*away from*"; long enough to forget what we have forgotten and not realize what has crept in, even as we gratefully move in the direction of one another and congregational life. No, there has never been a time quite like this - on top of everything else. On top of our daily lives. And we *need* to remember...

As from the very beginning of the pandemic, my number one concern is for the safety of everyone in the congregation; the second is to imagine, create, and learn ways in which we can meaningfully stay connected. From hosting daily drop-in calls on Zoom March through August 2019; learning technologies many of us never knew existed; to making sure those who needed food or medicine or to get to doctors got what they needed; we cared for one another in all the ways we could - and we still do. We have been through a lot. And yet, here we remain. And many are not as fortunate as we.

I know you know this; I just want you to know that I know this "time" has been hard on each of you. This has been a doozy of a time, And I want to take this moment as we renew "in-person congregational life": celebrating the lives of **Karl** and **Don**; planning for the return of our public ministries like the Victorian Tea; opening our doors to the community in calling out the Joy of this season with the return of our Christmas Concert; and doing our Emmanuel-best! to renew the deepest meaning of Advent and Christmas, while limited still in many ways...I want to thank you all for your forbearance, commitment and courage during this time.

It's not easy, I know. None of this is easy, and it is not our fault or our mistakes that have brought us to his place. It's just where we are and ours to do what needs to be done. And it can be tricky...simple conversations come out wrong; sensitivity and defensive meters can get a bit high; feeling tired now and then is not totally under our control considering the daily near-assault of media and misinformation and how it can wear us out: another high school shooting, court decisions, women' rights challenges, immigration, vaccine equity, cowardly political behaviors - and none of this is as important as the person next to you. Then we go from there. You, all of you and your families, are the persons next to me. That's where I start and then I go from there - with you. And, I always need your help.

Which is why I trust in God, our love for one another, and you. And, that gives me Joy to say.

We have been gradually and ever so-slowly working our way back in person. Since August 30th of 2020, we have held in-person worship, while continuing online worship (which began in 2018). We are not yet breaking bread as we wish, not moving around, greeting, singing, or meeting in the Vestry after worship - but we will - and we are heading there. And, thank you for being with us, however you are able. And thank you for your honest feedback, even when it is hard to hear. It's ok. Easy, too often, is overrated, anyway. :)

Yes, God is doing something new - and I don't know what it is. I just know that our being together in the middle of Advent 2021 is something none of us were sure would happen a year ago - after it had always happened before. And for that, for you, for your patience and love - we are all blessed together.

This is our time...what we do with it is ours to say. What we do together will always be stronger and more helpful for a world that needs us now more than ever, even as we figure out what that means.

How far is it to Bethlehem? Not sure, but I think it is inching closer, as long as we stay close.

Perhaps there is something here you wish to share with someone you might be thinking of calling. If not, just saying "Hi" is enough. Especially now...

With love. hope, joy and peace,
Ray

The Sayville Congregational
United Church of Christ
proudly presents



Marieann Meringolo

in the spirit

Singing classic and Holiday favorites "Hark the
Herald Angels Sing", "Silver Bells", "Baby It's
Cold Outside" and more!

Directed by Will Nunziata
Musical Director Doyle Newmyer

Saturday, December 18th - LIVE

Tickets \$20 + \$2.85 Handling Charge

Online at www.sayvilleucc.org

For more information call or text 631-827-8611

Sayville Congregational
United Church of Christ
131 Middle Road, Sayville, NY

To buy or reserve tickets today – please see Ray after worship!
Please join us for this special celebration!