



# The SPIRE

May 2023





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Cover photo credit: Ana Granados

# FROM OUR ASSOCIATE PASTOR'S DESK

*Surely, we do not need...letters of recommendation to you or from you, do we? You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by all, and you show that you are a letter of Christ, prepared by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets that are human hearts.*

2 Corinthians 3:1-3 (NRSV)

As I write this Pastor's note, three new, bonded leather Bibles sit conspicuously in a stack upon my desk. In two weeks' time, I'll have the joy of presenting these Bibles to the three young women who make up this year's Jesse Lee Church confirmation class. Whether any one of them choose to be confirmed or not—for it is their decision, and theirs alone—every one of them will be offered a Bible as a gift. Each Bible will have a confirmand's name engraved upon the front cover, so there'll be no mistaking whose is whose.

What's in a name? Certainly, more than the jumble of vowels and consonants it takes to spell one. In our names, we discover our distinctiveness. We speak our names and claim them, because whatever else they are, they are ours. Yet our names also turn us outward. They remind of the people who, in varied tones of voice and for still more varied reasons, have called us by name over the years. From them, we've learned that our names aren't always pleasant to hear, but we've also learned that they can be, and that when somebody who loves us calls us by name, it is a source of profound joy. To be named in love is to be claimed in the sense that we all long to be claimed: claimed as in spoken for, bothered about, accepted, and embraced.

We engrave our confirmands' names upon their Bibles because we believe that they—and we, with them—are each one of God's beloved. We carry God's mark, a Maker's mark, engraved, as the Apostle Paul writes, upon our hearts. No two marks are the same, but they all confer the same gift: the call of the One who, in ways that go far beyond birth certificates and monogrammed towels, names us in love again and again. A Bible with one's own name engraved upon it is a reminder that there are no preconditions to being named, claimed, and called: no recommendation letters, no entrance exams, no secret passwords. There is only grace, freely offered, which we are free to do with what we will.

For the past several months, our confirmands have been considering what they would like to do with it. This consideration isn't confined to confirmation class, of course, because to live as one who bears Christ's name is to always be about the business of confirmation: looking to the teachings of Scripture, the framework of the Christian faith as it has come to us, the hard-won wisdom of the old and the audacious observations of the young, the advice of our own senses and sensibilities, and most of all, the God who looks to make God's self known in all of that, and asking ourselves how we, in this moment, are being called to name in love the One who first bothered about each of us.

What's in a name? Jack, Jill, Paul, Silas, Abba, Father, Jesus, Christ. Perhaps it's not so much in the name as in the naming.

Blessings and peace to you in Christ's name.

Pastor Thomas

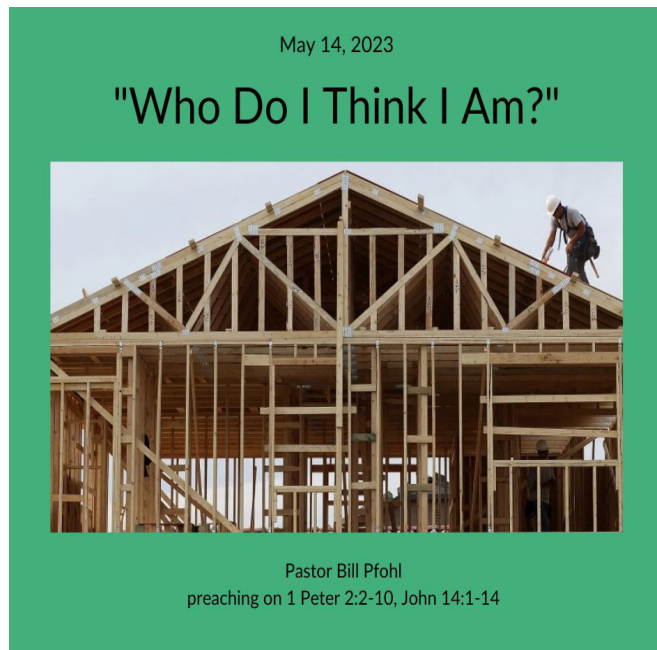
# WORSHIP

May 7

Confirmation Sunday



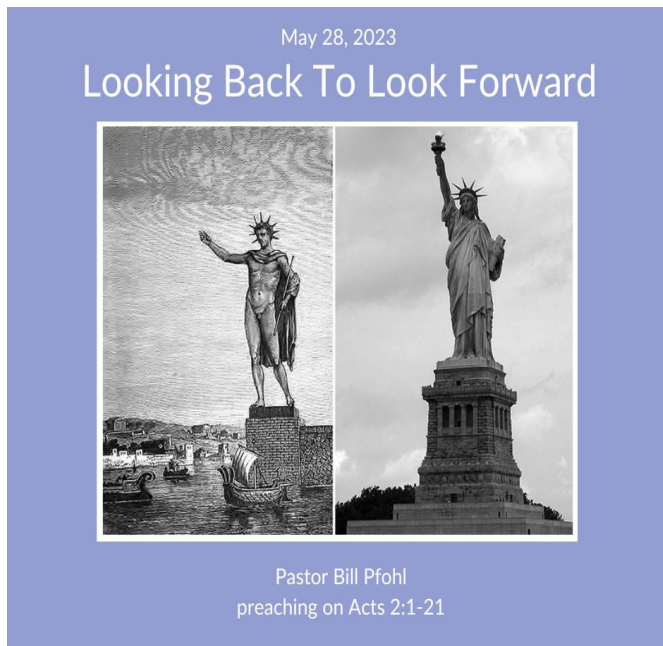
May 14



May 21



May 28





# Heart of the Matter: The Couris

By Heidi Yeranossian

The Couri family has lived in Ridgefield Connecticut since 1974. Elaine Couri, formerly Elaine Conklin, was born and raised in Ridgefield. She attended Ridgefield schools from kindergarten through high school, graduating high school in 1956. Elaine has been a member of Jesse Lee Methodist Church since March 1951 (a period of over 72 years). Elaine is the second longest member at Jesse Lee, second only to Dottie Lockwood.

After graduating from Ridgefield high school in 1956, Elaine attended the University of Connecticut before taking a position with American Airlines, at JFK, checking in passengers for various flights.

John, a Brooklyn native, graduated from Syracuse University in 1963 and served in the US Army stationed in Germany for two years as a first lieutenant. He was living in Larchmont, New York when he met Elaine at Kennedy airport. John was a cofounder of a Duty-Free business that had shops in the American Airlines terminal building at JFK. John and Elaine got married in 1974 at Jesse Lee Church and settled down on an eight-acre farm located in Ridgefield on Ramapoo

Road and Mulberry Street.



In 1976, Elaine and John adopted Christopher, a four-month-old boy from Bogota, Columbia. After 13 years at American Airlines, Elaine quit her job to take care of Christopher. He grew up in Ridgefield, graduating from Ridgefield High School in 1994 and Babson College in 1998.

While raising Chris, John was President and CEO of Duty Free International, Inc., a company headquartered in Ridgefield Connecticut that employed over 2500 people. The company had 187 Duty Free Stores located at International Airports and on the US side of the Canadian and Mexican borders. This company was listed on the New York Stock Exchange and was sold to a British conglomerate in 1997. John is a trustee at Syracuse University and was chairman of the board of trustees from 1984 to 1989.



Christopher married Megan Dayton, from Brookfield Connecticut, in 2003 at Jesse Lee Church. Chris has two businesses based in Ridgefield. He owns Youngs of Ridgefield, a fencing and landscaping business and We Do Lines, a line striping business that does parking lot line striping as well as airport gate striping at airports from Boston to Florida. Megan Couri is also an entrepreneur in her own right, doing pediatric

occupational therapy as well as being a certified Reiki instructor. Chris and Megan have three children, Cameron 16, Desmond 15, and Madison 11 and all are members of Jesse Lee Church.

Over the years the Couri family has been active in the town of Ridgefield, as well as at Jesse Lee. The family, along with another couple, founded and operates Founders Hall, a Senior Center with over 3000 active members.

At Jesse Lee, the family has been involved in many projects. These include the setting up and furnishing of the parlor at Wesley Manor, the redecoration of the Narthex, the painting of the sanctuary, the setting up of the Memorial Garden as well as the doors from the Narthex to the garden. The family was very active in helping Jesse Lee with the purchase of the Carriage House from the Odd Fellows.

Both Couri families were married at Jesse Lee. Elaine has many fond memories of Jesse Lee on both Catoonah and Main Street as well as in its current location. The Couri's were very active with the Yankee Peddler Fair and baking apple pies for sale at the church. John has served on the SPRC committee as well as being president of the board of trustees. Chris, as a youth went to ASP several times, and attended Sunday school.

The Couri family is very pleased to have the main room at the Carriage House be named "Couri Hall" and hopes that the Couri's will continue to be close to Jesse Lee for generations to come.





# SENIOR SPOTLIGHT:

## *Elaine & Dan Winward*

By Darla Shaw w/ Elaine Winward

Elaine grew up in Tarrytown, New York and attended church there with her family. Her grandfather Rev. Robert Leon Mauterstock was pastor at the time. She was an athletic child and was waterskiing when she was 12 years old when a photo of her on the water revealed the “S” curve of scoliosis. Elaine’s parents took her to a specialist in NYC and she had surgery to correct the spinal curve. Her healing process required a long recuperation at home in a torso cast. She participated in classes at Sleepy Hollow High School via a walkie-talkie device. She remembers the day the cast was sawed off her; she felt like a turtle without a shell! She returned to high school and made the cheerleading team.

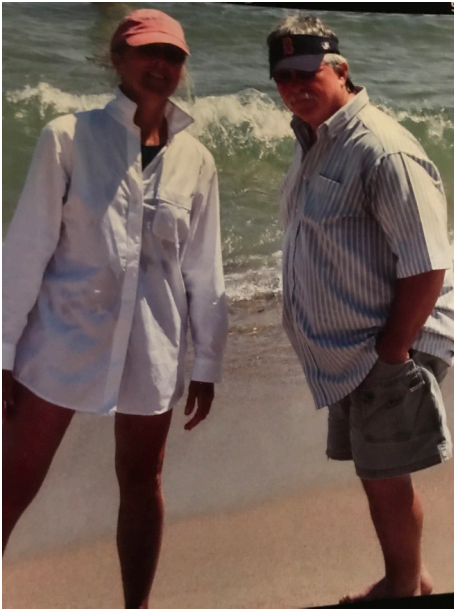


After graduating from Sleepy Hollow High School, she got a job at TWA at the executive offices on Third Avenue in New York City. Elaine met Danny at their mutual best friend’s wedding. Elaine and Dan were married at the Tarrytown Methodist church in 1970. It was there, on their wedding day, that she met Danny’s grandmother Lizzie Tarbell, (see picture) who had come down from Akwesasne, which is the St. Regis Mohawk reservation in upstate New York. Lizzie had her best Sunday hat on that day and Elaine still has this special hat today. Lizzie lived with Dan’s mother (Mohawk) and father for a few years on Mohawk Road in Ossining. Elaine, Dan and young son Matt would visit every Sunday. They would find Dan’s Grandma Tarbell in her room reading the Bible. When Lizzie finally went back upstate, they wrote letters very often.



At Jesse Lee, Elaine took the Disciple Bible study course at Jesse Lee and that’s when she became close friends with Dick Cuddeback. She and Dick would visit Elsie Sixby often and meet at Dimitri’s for lunch or just coffee. If they didn’t see each other, they’d talk on the phone. She also became good friends with Sandy Reed; they often sat together in church.

Elaine took the Lay Speaking program through our United Methodist New York Annual Conference and after completing it and receiving a certificate, found herself being invited to lead Sunday services all over Jesse Lee’s UM districts, in both New York and Connecticut churches. She enjoyed leading special services for Native American Sunday, often accompanied by Rev. Doug Osgood who was a fellow member of the Conference Committee on Native American Ministry (CONAM). She also took the Healing Prayer classes with Pastor Debby Mygatt.



Elaine recalls when her otherwise healthy mother, Grace was at home caring for Elaine's father after he had heart surgery. Her mother had a heart attack and was taken by ambulance to the hospital. As Elaine pulled into the parking lot of the hospital, she received a call on her flip phone from Pastor Bill. She vividly remembers standing in the hospital parking lot as Bill prayed with her over the phone. When the prayer was complete, Elaine went into the Emergency Room and found her father and her sister there. Her father was weeping and her sister, Joyce, was trying to stay calm after learning that their wonderful mother had passed. Pastor Bill's prayer enabled her to be strong for her father.



Elaine's father was "the best of the best." Everyone loved him, she says. He had been a First Sergeant in World War II. After the war, Elaine's father became co-owner of Roy's Deli on Main Street in Tarrytown. The store was written up in the New York Times once for the making the best sandwiches and for the wonderful way the store was decorated with antiques that local residents gave them. Some of the items were from the Rockefeller (Kycuit) Estate where her father had grown up in Pocantico Hills in NY. Her father's family (six brothers and two sisters) went to the Union Church in Pocantico as did the Rockefellers. John D. would give her father and seven siblings a dime every Sunday.



After being married, Elaine and Dan made many trips over the years to the "Rez" (reservation) to visit and stay overnight in their very small houses. Back then they only had sulphur water which was not good to drink, so they got water in jugs from the creek. There has never been, nor will there ever be, a casino on their reservation. Pastor Bill joined them on one visit and he met Dan's cousin, Chief Irv Powless. Elaine and Dan also went to weddings, funerals, pow-wows and all kinds of events at the "Rez."

After living in Tarrytown, they bought a home in North Salem on Peach Lake. Elaine was then working for doctors in Katonah and was invited by a co-worker to help at a local estate one evening for a formal dinner at Cantitoe Farm. The owners urged her to come and work for them on their estate and so she did for many years as a personal assistant. Her boss held a

Fantasy Ball at Caramoor, inviting her friends from NYC.



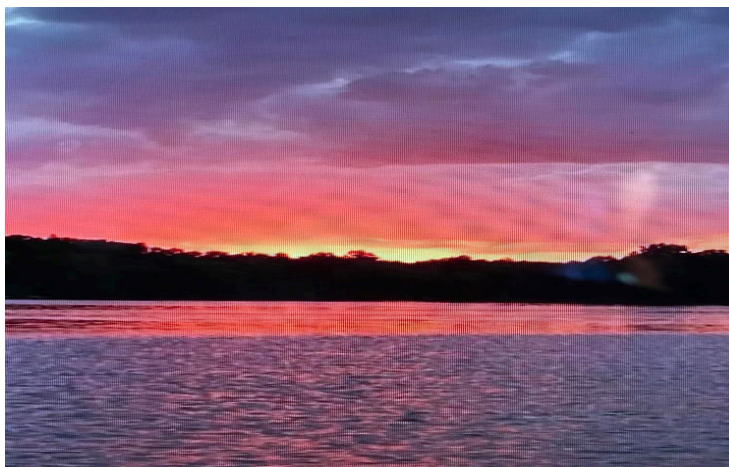
After that family moved back to NYC, Elaine worked for popular author Michael Crichton, for a short while, who bought the estate. He sent her and a few co-workers into NYC to see his movie, "Twister." Then for two years she worked for Chevy Chase. Chevy had dogs that were named after Saturday Night Live actors. Christmas was especially fun there and if you've seen his Christmas movie, yes, their real home was decorated inside and out.

After retiring, Elaine started volunteering at local nursing homes, visiting residents weekly, often with their Black Lab, Karta. She led church services, although she was often asked to do the Rosary since most of the residents were Catholic. The residents liked the evening Memorial services best. Her favorite resident was Elsie and they became best friends. Elaine visited Elsie weekly for almost 20 years until she died two years ago.

Dan had been in the Marines. When he got out of the service, he taught history in a local high school for a while but then got a job at General Foods, then Phillip Morris. He had an unfortunate fall while at work and being examined for that, was diagnosed with Parkinson's which was caused by contaminated water on the Marine base where he served years prior.

Elaine and Dan have lived happily on Peach lake in North Salem since 1974. With Danny having Parkinson's, he falls now and then, but they have some wonderful neighbors who come over to help him up. He also has a recurrence of cancer. She says thanks to the wonderful Jesse Leers who currently are bringing dinners to him once or twice a week. She's grateful for the availability of live streamed church services and for living in a wonderful neighborhood.

It is said that home is where the heart is and she says her heart is truly grateful that she is exactly where she is.



# NEWS



## Jesse Lee Town Hall & Fellowship Brunch SAVE THE DATE!!!

Sunday, May 21, 2023

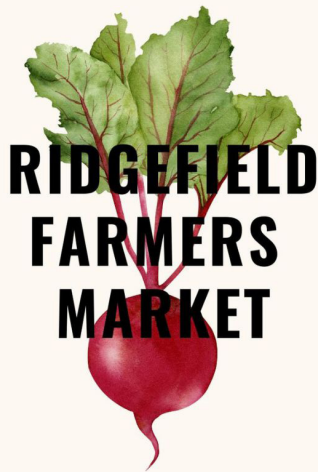
Immediately after service, hear important updates on what's happening at Jesse Lee.

- Change for Good Update: Topics include updates on Finances, Ministry, and Communications
- Jesse Lee Campus Update
- Important Initiatives for the Summer & Fall

Town Hall Update: 10:30 – 11:00 (Sanctuary) \*  
Brunch: 11:00 – 12:00 (Martin Hall)

ALL ARE WELCOME!

\* Childcare will be provided



## FARMERS MARKET IS COMING TO RIDGEFIELD IN JULY

A proposal to host a bi-weekly farmer's market on the Jesse Lee Church Commons in the heart of Ridgefield has been thoroughly vetted and approved by civic and church leaders. Corrin Arasa, a Ridgefield resident and the founder of the Ridgefield Farmers Market, is lining up the vendors who will bring the outdoor market to life. The goal is to open on Saturday, July 15 from 10AM-2PM and to run every other Saturday through October.

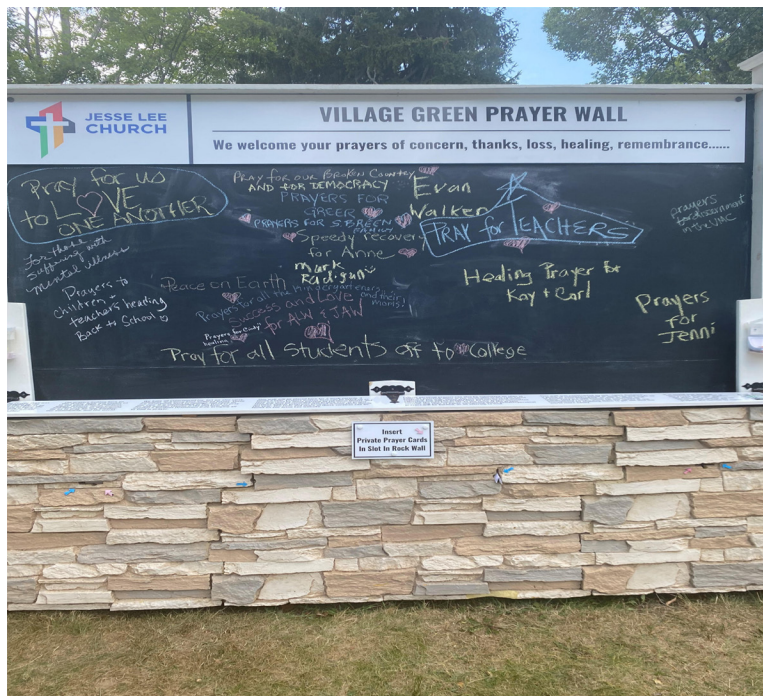
"We are excited to announce that the Ridgefield

Farmers Market on the Jesse Lee Church Commons has been approved and the project is moving forward," said Jeff Vreeland, one of the Trustees at Jesse Lee Church. "We are happy to welcome people here to shop for farm-fresh, locally grown food," Vreeland said. "Jesse Lee Church has always been committed to serving our community and this farmers market offers one more way to do that. We hope it will be a place where people will enjoy coming to gather, shop and connect."

"I am so pleased to be able to host the Ridgefield Farmers Market at Jesse Lee Commons. Not only is it a beautiful location, but it is also perfectly aligned with Jesse Lee's community-driven mission, and it was once Ridgefield's original town green making this a very special location for the market," said Arasa.

Visit [www.ridgefieldfarmersmarket.org](http://www.ridgefieldfarmersmarket.org) to learn more. More specific information about the vendors that will be setting up shop at the Ridgefield Farmers Market on the Jesse Lee Church Commons will be released in the coming weeks.





## The Prayer Wall Will Be Up May 14-29th at the Corner of King Lane & Main Street!

"God's Spirit at work in ways seen and unseen" is not just a catchy title; it is a prayer someone posted on the Prayer Wall. It is also a powerful declaration of what is revealed when people come together to share what is on their minds, hearts and souls as they do when they post on the Jesse Lee Prayer Wall. This prayer was one of hundreds of prayers that were posted on or in the Jesse Lee Church Prayer Wall at King Lane and Main Street in Ridgefield, CT.

The Prayer Wall goes up on this corner for two weeks in May from the 14th-29th. It comes up again from August 20-September 4 and from November 12-26th.

The Prayer Wall is a place where people can post prayers and others will lift those prayers up as well. It serves that purpose well and is beautiful in its simplicity.

It also showcases the love and care that people in our community share generously with one another. We hope you'll post your prayers here when the Prayer Wall is up.



Pastor Thomas w/ kids during Parable Box discussion.  
Photo Credit: Ben Shaw



### HELP WANTED: Nursery Attendant

Jesse Lee Church is seeking to hire a childcare provider for infants and toddlers, newborn to three years old on most Sundays from 9:15-10:45AM. Opportunities to work during other church activities are available. Prerequisite is two years of experience in working with infants and toddlers. Full job description provided upon request. Interested candidates should contact Leticia Soltero:

[Leticia@jesseleechurch.com](mailto:Leticia@jesseleechurch.com). Jesse Lee Church is an equal opportunity employer committed to a diverse workforce.



## THE PSALMS & BEYOND: POETRY AS SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

"Poetry is the voice of God speaking through the lips of man..." ~ Sir Aga Khan III

Theology and poetry meet in the use of imaginative language and metaphor to express transcendent, almost unknowable truth. Join us as we read and discuss accessible poems that link to key Biblical themes, then respond in poetry or prose of our own. No knowledge of poetry or Biblical verse is required—just a willingness to open one's heart and mind.

Join Barb Jennes (pictured at right), Ridgefield Poet Laureate, Jesse Lee Church Associate Pastor, Thomas Stubbs and Director of Music Ministries, Sarah Fox at this FREE poetry workshop. All are welcome!

The event will be held on Sunday, May 14 2:30-4PM in Couri Hall in the Carriage House @ Jesse Lee Church, 207 Main Street, Ridgefield. Questions? Email [info@jesseleechurch.com](mailto:info@jesseleechurch.com) or call 203.438.8791.



Jesse Lee Appalachia Service Project's 2023 mission trip is two months away, and we are busy busy busy getting ready, with lots of planning and training.

We expect to have about 180 youth and adults traveling to two counties in Virginia July 1-9.

Quick refresher: ASP is a national Christian volunteer organization founded by Rev. Glenn "Tex" Evans, a Methodist minister, in 1969. Since then, some 437,000 volunteers from across the nation have participated in

weeklong mission trips to repair 19,000 homes in West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia and North Carolina. This is the 39th year for Jesse Lee ASP.

It's too late to sign up for the trip but you can still help by paying us to wash your car. Car washes are each Saturday in front of Jesse Lee, and funds raised will help us to rent a fleet of minivans to caravan everyone down to Appalachia and back. The vans also will be used daily by each work crew.

Additionally, Jesse Lee ASP gratefully accepts direct contributions toward the needed number of vans. Inquire at church with Deb Ahle, Steve Coppock or Peter Seirup.

Besides the car washes in May, you also may see weekend skills trainings in Jesse Lee's back parking lot. Teen and adult volunteers – both those going down to Appalachia, as well as a smaller group volunteering for an "at-home" week of local home repairs – get hands-on practice using their tools while building wheelchair-ramp panels. These sessions give everyone some practical experience before we go, while also – a win-win situation – giving Jesse Lee's Spirit Builders ready-made ramp sections when the call comes in for a needed wheelchair ramp.

Want to learn more about ASP? Go online to [www.jesseleeasp.org](http://www.jesseleeasp.org).



*"Lovely flowers are the smiles of  
God's Goodness."*



**Show God's Goodness by sharing your family joys and  
love on the Sanctuary Altar**

**ANNIVERSARY, BIRTHDAYS,  
MEMORIALS, SPECIAL OCCASIONS**

Go to the bulletin board next to Jessica's office to sign up! OR  
Contact Jessica at 203-438-8791 or [jessica@jesseleechurch.com](mailto:jessica@jesseleechurch.com)  
to order flowers to be displayed at the Sunday church service of your choice.



Questions? Contact Melody @ 203.431.6805 or [nmfritz@att.net](mailto:nmfritz@att.net)

## SAVE THE DATE!

Join us for a retreat in beautiful Ocean Grove, NJ  
August 7-10

Details to come! Contact Jessica with any questions.  
[jessica@jesseleechurch.com](mailto:jessica@jesseleechurch.com)



## HOMEBRIDGE

HEALING • HIRING • HOPE

Homebridge Ventures & Kairos  
are working hard to break the cycle of  
recidivism by helping formerly  
incarcerated people find gainful employment.

Jesse Lee Church family & friends are invited  
to a CELEBRATION of this powerful ministry  
on May 20 @ 10AM at Homebridge  
1 Lafayette Circle, Suite 102 in Bridgeport

Musical guest Matt Butler will be performing &  
inspirational leaders will share news on  
progress being made to help people get a fresh start.

[info@homebridgeventures.org](mailto:info@homebridgeventures.org) ~ (203) 333-3335

THE SYMPHONY CHORUS  
directed by Henrik Idström  
presents

## Bridges, Boroughs & Bagels

Saturday May 20 6 PM

Sunday May 21 6 PM

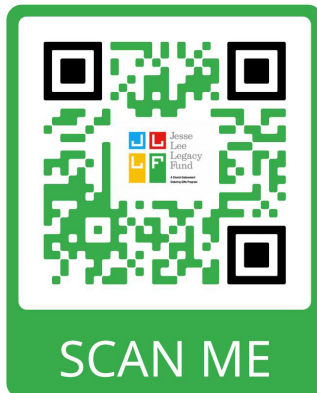
St. Luke's Lutheran Church  
308 W 46th St, New York, NY

[thesymphonychorus.com](https://www.thesymphonychorus.com)



Get info at: [bit.ly/TSCbb2023](http://bit.ly/TSCbb2023)  
or scan the QR code above  
Tickets:  
General admission: \$19 plus fees  
Child (age 2 to 12): \$12 plus fees

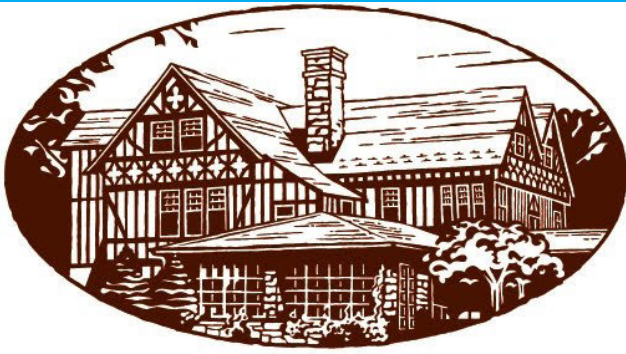
## May 14 is JLLF Matching Sunday



**All gifts that specify  
they are designated for  
the JLLF will be matched  
up to \$1,000.**

**Scan the QR code to  
learn more about JLLF or  
GIVE via the Elexio App.**

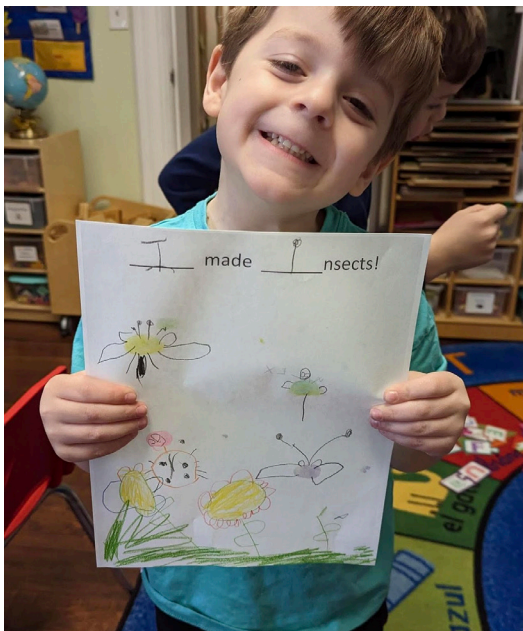




**Jesse Lee Day School**  
Growing with Confidence

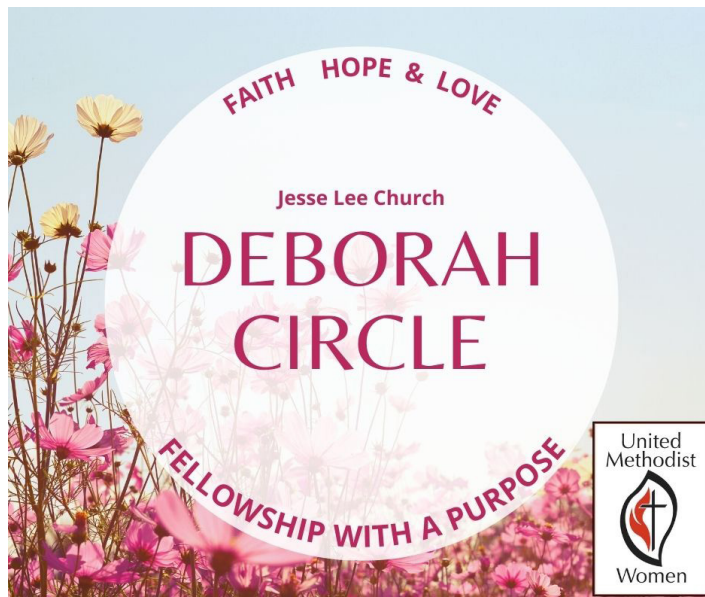
**The Jesse Lee Day School  
swung into spring and  
enjoyed the warm  
weather! We were  
buzzing with learning  
about all that spring  
brings and enjoyed time  
with friends.**

"A kind word is like a spring  
day" ~Russian Proverb





# MINISTRIES



## DEBORAH CIRCLE SPRING MEETING AND LUNCHEON

Wednesday, May 24, at 10:00 a.m.

It's time to put Deborah Circle's Spring luncheon on the calendar! It will be held at Ronda Lanzi's home, and with good weather, on her lovely porch and patio!

Plan to attend the Potluck bringing an entrée, salad, OR dessert to serve eight. Along with your delicious food, we'll play a few games, led by Jean Cole. A delightful morning for everyone!

All ladies of Jesse Lee are welcome to attend. Leave a message with Ronda at [rlanzi@optonline.net](mailto:rlanzi@optonline.net) or Jean at [jecinct63@comcast.net](mailto:jecinct63@comcast.net) with any questions. There will be carpooling and caravanning from the Carriage House leaving at 9:45a.m. Ronda lives at 250 Linden Tree Road in Wilton.

A lovely morning with fellowship, fun, and good food.





# EASTER HAPPENINGS

Supporting our community families- we had 183 kids along with parents, friends, and grandparents all gathered for Jesse Lee Church's Community Easter Egg Hunt on April 5th, 2023. Even with the threat of rain in forecast, these folks poured in ready and eager to hunt for Easter Eggs, have a book with a Christian perspective read to them, engage with puppets and of course to take their photo with our Easter Bunny!

Many thanks to all the helping hands that made the second annual Community Easter Egg Hunt happen:

Rev. Bill Pfohl, Rev. Thomas Stubbs, Todd Carpenter, Meredith Anderson, Vanessa Neumann, BG Brown, Ginny Vreeland, Mary Hoermann, Karen Doman, Caroline Murray, Dave Sigworth, Chris Patterson, our awesome Bunny.

Special Thanks for their leadership and the 4,000 filled Easter eggs!!  
Deb Ahle and Sandy Carpenter

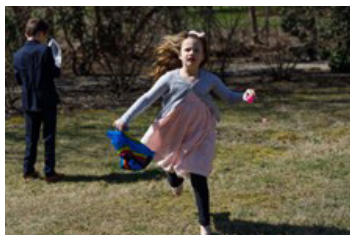
Big shout out for their supporting roles! Heidi Yeranossian, Jessica Bardelli, Jose Granados, Lawrence Soltowski







Also, thanks for those that helped with our second Easter Egg Hunt for our Jesse Lee Church kids on Sunday morning! Special mention: Thanks to the Lyons family and Maddie Phelan for their contributions.



It's because of you all that our kids and the kids in the community experienced fun celebrating the risen Christ!

**EXTREME PLAY!** Our kids at Jesse Lee Church pray and play together! Eight of our 5th and 6th Graders spent an afternoon at Danbury's Xtreme Play!

**Arcade  
Mini Bowling**

**Ballocity  
Rock Climbing**

**High Ropes  
Spin Zone**

**Laser Tag  
Warrior Course**

All these activities and snacks were a few of the attractions. Thanks to Pastor Thomas for leading the kids and Eric Allen for chaperoning. Stay tuned for their next adventure coming up soon!



## Sunday School Update:

We had guest Tina Schwab visit and teach the kids how to make Easter Egg decorations. We learned about why Easter Eggs became part of celebrating. The eggs were placed on the forsythias in the Sanctuary on Easter morning for all to enjoy.







**Resurrecting Buildings  
Transforming Lives**



It is hard to express how exhilarating it was to return from six weeks in the sunny south to be reunited with the Spirit Builders. They are just so uplifting to be with!

April was a busy month and for once, most of the ramps we built were in Ridgefield. This makes moving material, tools and volunteers to and from the sites much easier.

We were rained out on April 1 so we worked the second Saturday of the month between Good Friday and Easter instead building 73 foot-long ramp. A ramp can be thought of as a little resurrection of its own since it allows an otherwise shut-in person to re-experience mobility and fresh air. This fellow with Parkinson's was at a loss for words to sufficiently express his joy at having an easy way to get in and out of his home.

Believe it or not, two days before that Saturday, the Thursday workers built a 120-foot ramp for an elderly woman who could no longer navigate her front steps. With railings on both sides of the new ramp, she has the option of using a walker, trying to walk alone or opting for her wheelchair.

We also provided a proper exit platform and set of steps from the house to the garage of a woman with Multiple Sclerosis to extend her time before a wheelchair will be necessary.



(continued)

Spirit builders also built a 56-foot ramp for a bed ridden elderly man in Wilton so he can be transported by wheelchair to doctors appointments.

We are looking forward to making strategic renovations to the home of a senior this Spring, so that they can better enjoy their home in the time remaining.

Each year at this time we make a huge purchase of lumber so ASP can build new ramp sections as their skills training. Finally, the lumber prices have come back down to a reasonable level after the almost 200% Covid surge. Yippee!

God blesses us to have fun being a blessing.

Peter Seirup.

## AN INVITATION FROM JOAN:

The "launch code" for these builders and givers is CARING. With compassion and respect, they give the full arsenal of their considerable gifts and talents to make life easier for others.

Won't you join us in creating more "flyzones."



# FINANCIALS



## I LOVE JESSE LEE CHURCH

I love my church because the worship services inspire me and because I feel loved and cared for. I love the friends that I make and enjoy at my church. I love my church because their programs are designed to help children, youth and adults of both our congregation and our community. My church achieves that through Spirit Builders building ramps and elevators throughout CT and NY, offering counseling and support with Stephen Ministries, sponsoring ASP where every person participating experiences changes in their lives, offering small group participation, providing an exciting Vacation Bible School program to our community, offering outstanding music programs open to our community, supporting Dondo Orphanage in Africa as well as a missionary to help spread Christianity in a foreign land plus the many projects sponsored by our outreach mission program, too numerous to list here. I know there are other caring activities that are provided by Jesse Lee Church but too numerous to mention here.

Do you love your church? If you love Jesse Lee Church and see how it can benefit families both in our community and beyond there are ways that you can help make that happen. The Jesse Lee Legacy Fund provides support for the church to continue these and other services as long as Jesse Lee Church exists. You can be a part of this important endeavor and become a member of the JLLF Club by leaving a donation to the JLLF in your will and advising the church treasurer (Ginny Konopka) that you have done so. Leaving a gift to the JLLF is a gift that keeps on giving because your gift remains in the fund and provides annual support to the church every year to keep these and other caring programs ongoing. Join us in this enduring gifts endowment endeavor and be blessed that you have done so.

## QUARTERLY FINANCIALS

*For those interested in more detail*

Jesse Lee Memorial UMC  
Quarter Ended March 31, 2023  
\$ in Thousands

	Sources of Operating Income	Directed Donations Received	Increase (Decrease) to "Reserves"	Total
<b>Sources of Funds</b>				
Unrestricted Giving	\$ 146			\$ 146
Facility Donations/Transfers, includes JLDS/ASP	54			54
Rental Income, net	9			9
Investment Income (loss)	5			5
Directed Donations	-	31	-	31
<b>Total Inflows</b>	<b>\$ 214</b>	<b>\$ 31</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 245</b>
	Use of Operating Sources	Use of Directed Donations	Use of Funds Set aside in Prior Years	Total
<b>Uses of Funds</b>				
Personnel Costs	\$ 140	\$ -	\$ 25	\$ 165
Property Maintenance	74	-	-	74
Largest Maintenance Projects	-	2	3	5
Conference Apportionments	40	-	-	40
Programs and Music	5	2	4	11
Missions and Service	-	5	4	9
Admin Expenses, including Communication	11	-	-	11
<b>Total Outflows</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>315</b>
Inc(dec) to cash flow and other reserves	\$ (56)	\$ 22	\$ (36)	<b>\$(70)</b>

### Inflows:

- \$214k operating income from unrestricted giving, facility donations & transfers, and parsonage rental
- \$31k directed donations (to be used this year or held for future)
  - primarily Jesse Lee Legacy Fund bequest and Spirit Builder donations
  - smaller donations support church programs and maintenance

### Outflows:

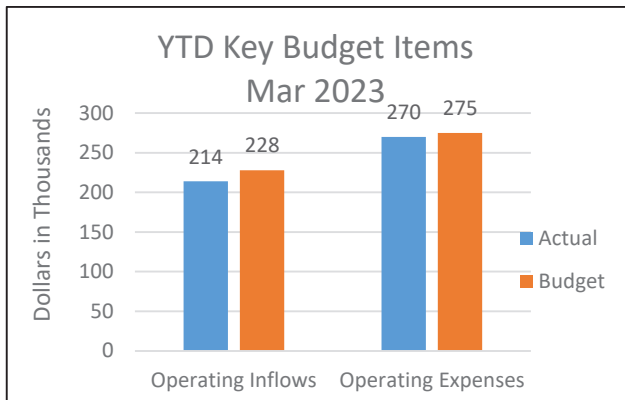
- Regular operating expenses of \$270k exceeded operating inflows as expected and budgeted
  - Reserves exist to cover deficit of this level for approximately one more year after this year
- \$9k directed donations/current grants used; \$22k directed donations/grants held for the future use
  - \$2k supported Maintenance of church properties
  - \$2k supported church programs – primarily Music Ministry
  - \$5k supported Missions and Service – primarily Spirit Builder ramp builds
  - \$22k to be used as designated in the future for property maintenance
- \$36k of funds set aside in previous years were used
  - Personnel grants for Communications and Pastoral Renewal Leave
  - Maintenance, primarily refresh Carriage House and Couri Hall
  - Music Ministry Grant
  - Missions and Service primarily for preparation of Shoeboxes and support for local partner ministry

### Summary:

- Spent \$70k more than we received; reduces our total reserves; approximates anticipated reduction
  - 2023 budget anticipates use of ~160\$k operating reserves & staffing grants
  - Budgeting process also anticipated ~\$100k use of maintenance reserves
  - Other Reserves are anticipated to be used but also replenished throughout the year

Questions contact Ginny Konopka, Treasurer at [gabby@jesseleechurch.com](mailto:gabby@jesseleechurch.com) or 203-438-8791 x111.





## FINANCIAL COMMENTARY

### Year to Date Actual v Budget

As you can see from the charts:

- our inflows approximate budget
  - giving approximates budget
  - giving slightly lower than prior year
- our expenses also approximate budget

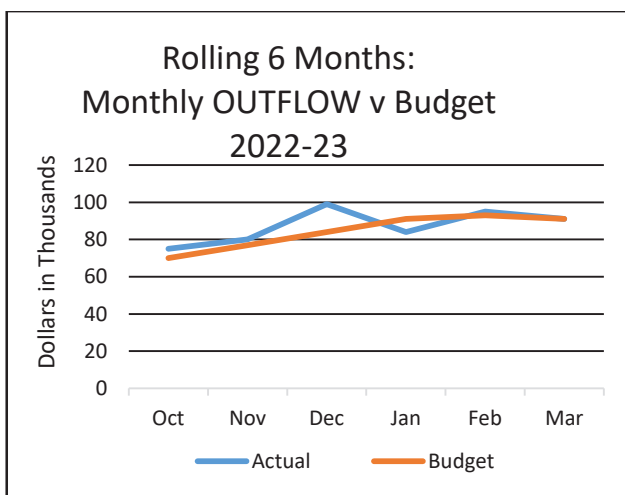
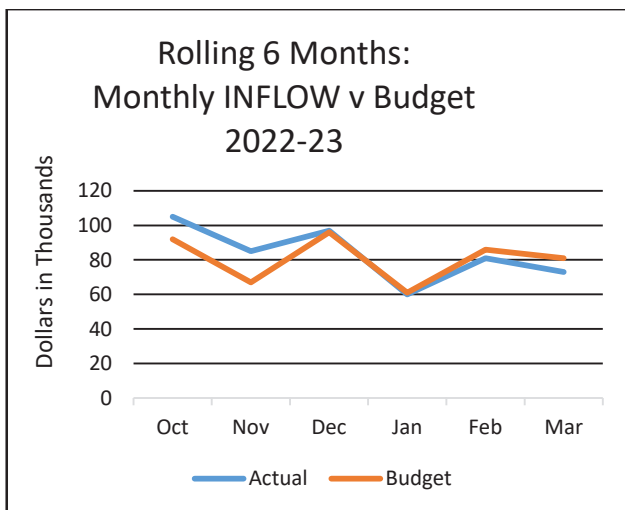
Top chart shows expenses significantly in excess of inflows, as expected:

- overall annual expenses greater than inflows is budgeted and expected

Reminder: we budgeted for ~\$160k deficit spending in 2023 at January 2023 Charge Conference.

- Grants allow us to step out in faith as we reach out to our community and to each other to share the love we know from God
- Reserves exist to cover deficit of this level for approximately one more year after this year

Thank you to all who submitted a pledge card for 2023. With continued financial pressures, it is helpful to be able to estimate our inflows more accurately. This will inform our future spending decisions as we anticipate continued deficit spending under the current income levels.



Note: Excluded from the charts on this page are Use of Donations and Grants, and Use of Funds set aside in prior years. These additional details are reported quarterly, and are available in January, April, July and October Spires. See next page.

For questions, please contact our Treasurer Ginny Konopka at [ginny@jesseleechurch.com](mailto:ginny@jesseleechurch.com) or 203-438-8791 x111.



Jesse Lee Memorial  
United Methodist Church  
207 Main Street  
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## STAFF

Senior Pastor  
Associate Pastor  
Deacon  
Pastor Emeritus  
Music Director  
Director of Christian Education  
Exec. Dir. of Jesse Lee Day School  
Communications Director  
Office Manager  
Data Management  
Treasurer  
Sextons

Rev. Dr. William B. Pfohl  
Rev. Thomas Stubbs  
Rev. Maria Pia Seirup  
Rev. Dr. Roy Hassel  
Sarah Fox  
Leticia Soltero  
Kathy Carroll  
Heidi Yeranossian  
Jessica Bardelli  
Kerry Marino  
Ginny Konopka  
Jose Granados  
Lawrence Soltowski