

BY JIM MERRITT

Special to Newsday

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LIFE

Veterans Day, on Nov. 11 this year, is intended to honor and thank all U.S. military veterans, past and present, especially those living. A number of Long Island congregations will mark the occasion with services featuring veterans and active military members. This week's clergy discuss how their religious communities offer returning veterans spiritual guidance in readjusting to civilian life.

Lt. Cdr. Jeff Augustin

Chaplain for the 1st Marine Corps District, Garden City

Service members develop a routine of handling the stress of deployment, whether it's the constant, steel grind of ship life or an active combat zone. Upon reunion with family, it can be difficult to re-adapt.

The military offers a full palette of resources to help service members and their families conquer a variety of challenges. These resources include Samaritan's Purse: Operation Heal Our Patriots, a civilian ministry that works with churches and individuals, offering an opportunity for spiritual refreshment, physical renewal and marriage enrichment guided by professional, trained counselors.

Singles and couples return home from the biblically based seminars feeling refreshed and with the tools to succeed in relationships and life. Whether these resources are employed, the spiritual disciplines always need to be practiced. Spiritual disciplines are a kind of daily reprogramming for the mind, heart and soul. It is all too easy to drift away from God into the state men-



Jeff Augustin



Art Vernon



Frederick Miller

ASKING THE CLERGY

Honoring service members on Veterans Day

tioned in Ecclesiastes 1:2: "Meaningless! Meaningless! . . . Utterly meaningless."

Without God everything is futile, a chasing after the wind. A life focused on God, however, is the beginning of wisdom (Proverbs 1:7) and profits an emotionally stable life (Psalm 1).

Rabbi Art Vernon

Congregation Shaaray Shalom, West Hempstead

Many congregations have chosen to honor veterans in recent years in recognition of the growing appreciation and gratitude we all feel for those who have served and are serving in the Armed Forces. In some congregations, we also include veterans of Israel's wars because a growing population of

Israelis have chosen to live in America.

The highest honor we can bestow on anyone attending our Sabbath religious services is to be called to the Torah to recite the blessings while a portion of the text is read in the original Hebrew. In addition, our congregation has invited the Merrick-Bellmore Jewish War Veterans to participate in services and a past commander will address the congregation during services. The names of all the organization's veterans will be mentioned whether in attendance or not.

On Veterans Day, we laud the living who served, and on Memorial Day we recall those who perished. All Americans owe a great debt to the men and women of our Armed Forces, no matter whether they served in war or in peace time. Happily, many synagogues have

embraced this concept and conduct special services and programs to honor the living and recall the departed.

The Rev. Frederick Miller

Chaplain, American Legion Arthur H. Clune Post 1533 in Mastic Beach, and chairman of the Suffolk County American Legion Post-Traumatic Stress Committee

Suicide by veterans and service members is generally caused by moral injury — that is, the damage done to your conscience when you are ordered to do something that you believe goes against your moral beliefs. There is no medication for moral injury.

But the Department of Veterans Affairs is looking for clergy to help. Veterans Peer to Peer is a ministry that I founded at my American Legion Post. It was adopted by the Suffolk County American Legion. Once a month, we meet in four churches in Suffolk County and at the Long Island State Veterans Home in Stony Brook.

Having been a medic on active duty in the Air Force during the Korean conflict and afterward having served for eight years in the Air National Guard as first sergeant, I understand the way veterans talk and what a veteran needs. As a minister I have learned to help people come back to the Lord through prayer and Scripture. Our committee's primary goal is to help veterans to recover, and we have actually been able to stop about three veterans from dying by suicide.

DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS you'd like Newsday to ask the clergy? Email them to LLife@newsday.com or send by mail to Asking the Clergy, LI Life, Newsday, 6 Corporate Center Dr., Melville, NY 11747. Find more LI Life stories at newsday.com/LLife.

calendar**watch****TODAY****375TH ANNIVERSARY WORSHIP SERVICE**

HEMPSTEAD: In celebration of the 375th anniversary of Christ's First Presbyterian Church, all welcome, 10:30 a.m. Christ's First Presbyterian Church, 353 Fulton Ave., free, cfpcny.com, 516-292-1644.

LONG ISLAND CHRISTIAN MUSIC FESTIVAL

MERRICK: Featuring 11 top artists from Long Island including Peter Stanganelli, Rapture, Bridges Outreach and more, 5 p.m., Curé of Ars Church, 2323 Merrick Ave., \$10, cureofarschurch.net, 516-425-4089.

MASA ISRAEL PROGRAMS FAIR

EAST HILLS: Learn about opportunities to spend a semester, year, or gap year in Israel, 1-3 p.m., Sid Jacobson JCC, 300 Forest Dr., free, sjicc.org/event/masa-israel-programs-fair, 516-484-1545.

SUBMIT NOTICES ONLINE

three weeks in advance at newsday.com/submitevents. Look for "faith" in the "community" folder. When registered users of newsday.com submit an event online, it goes into our database with top priority. Upload photos and videos, too.

VETERANS DAY MASS

ROCKY POINT: Special Mass dedicated to veterans. Coffee, bagels and cake served after Mass, 10 a.m., St. Anthony of Padua R.C. Church of Rocky Point, 614 Rte. 25A, free, starockypoint.com, 631-873-8272.

THE WEEK AHEAD**ESTHER CIRCLE**

BAYPORT: Join this new Bible study on the women of the Bible, which starts with Eve. Meetings held second Tuesday of each month in Classroom #4, United Methodist Church of Bayport, 482 Middle Rd., free, bayportumc.org, 631-472-0770.

KRISTALLNACHT COMMEMORATION

JERICHO: Night of Broken Glass commemoration. Speaker Mark Halpern will share the methods used by Japanese Vice Consul Chiune Sugihara to save approximately 2,000 refugees in Lithuania by issuing false visas to Japan, 7:30-9:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jericho Jewish Center, 430 N. Broadway, free, jerichojc.com, 516-938-2540.

EAST END YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

SAG HARBOR: Youth group gathers in the lower level of the church, all teens welcome, 7 p.m. Wednesday, Hamptons Christian Fellowship, 2837 Noyac Rd., free,

hamptonschristian.com, 631-725-4155.

INTERFAITH MORNING PRAYER SERVICE

STONY BROOK: Morning prayer service led by Dan Kerr from All Souls Church and Don Estes from the Stony Brook Community Church, all faiths and traditions welcome, canned food donations accepted, 7:30 a.m. Wednesday, All Souls' Episcopal Church, 61 Main St., free, allsouls-stonybrook.org, 631-655-7798.

ST. ALOYSIUS SOCIABLES

ROSLYN: Wednesday monthly luncheon sponsored by St. Aloysius Sociables of Great Neck, register, 12:30 p.m. Wednesday, The Jolly Fisherman & Steak House, 25 Main St., cost of meal, jollyfishermanrestaurant.com, 516-482-3795.

JEWISH HOLIDAYS 101: SHABBAT

HUNTINGTON: Explore the history and meaning of Shabbat and learn how and why it is celebrated. This class is geared towards those new to Judaism either through personal journey or marriage. Materials and recipes will be provided. Refreshments will be served. Open to all who wish to learn, register, 7:30-9 p.m. Thursday, Temple Beth El of Huntington, 660 Park Ave., free, tbeli.org, 631-421-5835, ext. 206.

LUNCH AND LEARN: EXPERIENCE THE ZOHAR

COLD SPRING HARBOR: Join Rabbi Lina Zerbarini as she leads an adventure into the Zohar, the foundational text of Jewish mysticism, 12:30 p.m. Thursday, Kehillath Shalom Synagogue, 58 Goose Hill Rd., free, kehillathshalomssynagogue.org, 631-367-4583.

SANGHA MEDITATION GROUP

EAST SETAUKET: Meditative community following the tradition of Vietnamese Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh, all levels welcome, 9-11:30 a.m. Saturday, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship at Stony Brook, 380 Nicolls Rd., free, stonybrooksangha.com, 631-751-0297.

FOOD, FUN AND FELLOWSHIP

NEW HYDE PARK: A roast beef dinner will be served followed by bingo. Register, 4:30 p.m. Sunday, First Presbyterian Church of New Hyde Park, 16 S. 9th St., \$25, \$15 for children under 12, 516-354-5013.

PAINT AND WINE FUNDRAISER

RONKONKOMA: As Cenacle calligrapher share her enjoyment of painting while inspiring others to express their creative artistic talent. Bring your own beverage, 2-4 p.m. Sunday, Cenacle Retreat Center, 310 Cenacle Rd., \$40, \$20 deposit and materials fee, cenaclesisters.org/ronkonkoma, 631-588-8366.

Compiled by Ann Donahue-Smukler