

IHM to Offer Healing Mass, Advent, Christmas Events

SCOTCH PLAINS — The Immaculate Heart of Mary (IHM) Parish will host a Healing Mass, or Mass of Anointing, this Saturday, December 14, at 11 a.m., in the Main Church. IHM is located at 1571 South Martine Avenue, Scotch Plains.

The sacrament termed "Anointing of the Sick" is normally associated with the terminally ill. However, this Mass represents a broader outreach to those who are troubled in body, mind and spirit. As such, it takes a holistic approach towards the well-being of the individual in a communal setting that acknowledges the need for healing, forgiveness and acceptance by God and by one another.

Healing, and the peace it brings, is but another step in the journey of the Advent season leading up to Christmas. Although the Mass is a religious celebration, it is free and open to all who feel a need for healing.

Continuing a tradition which originated in 19th-century England, IHM's choirs will present "Lessons and Carols" on Sunday, December 22, at 6:30 p.m., in the Main Church. Combining Scripture readings with hymns of the season, the program will offer an opportunity to take a step back to relax and reflect as Christmas nears. The event is free, although free-will offerings would

Christmas Show to Be Saturday at FUMC

WESTFIELD — The First United Methodist Church Westfield invites everyone to its third annual Community Christmas Show this Saturday, December 14, at 4 p.m.

This free, musical variety show will spotlight multigenerational talent and aspiring musicians from Westfield and the surrounding areas. The show will feature many different music styles and genres, including traditional, popular, jazz and Broadway.

Following this fun, one-hour show, attendees are invited to stay for some complimentary light refreshments. For information on other local holiday events, go to christmasinwestfield.com.

Westfield Library to Host Winter Holidays Program

WESTFIELD — The Westfield Memorial Library will present a program on all the winter holidays on Tuesday, December 17, at 7 p.m. The library is located at 550 East Broad Street.

When winter days are short and the nights are long, people have traditionally gathered to celebrate many different kinds of holidays. Judith Krall-Russo, food historian and certified tea specialist, as well as an educator and restaurant consultant, will speak about the history, customs and foods of various winter celebrations. These include Christmas, the Winter Solstice, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa and Twelfth Night, among others.

Ms. Krall-Russo will explain how current and ancient cultures have celebrated and currently celebrate the winter months. During her talk, she will share stories laced with humor and surprising detail.

The program is free and open to Westfield Memorial Library and MURAL cardholders. MURAL cardholders belong to the 40-plus

Best Friend Holding Sale At Shop During December

SCOTCH PLAINS — Best Friend Dog and Animal Adoption has announced it will feature a 60-percent-off sale on most merchandise in its thrift store throughout December. Some exceptions apply.

An open house will be held at the shop this Saturday, December 14. Light refreshments will be served. The store is located at 1750 East Second Street, Scotch Plains. It is open Tuesday, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.; Wednesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sundays, December 15 and 22, noon to 4 p.m.

The Best Friend Rescue group is a not-for-profit organization run solely by volunteers. Proceeds from sales at the thrift shop support the care of homeless animals.

Brand-new scarves, shawls, gloves, socks, belts, leggings and jewelry are available for sale, along with many one-of-a-kind items, collectibles, pet products, books, pictures, holiday merchandise and knickknacks, among multiple other wares carried in the thrift shop.

The shop is accepting donations of

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be gratefully accepted.

All in the community additionally are invited to "come home" for IHM's celebration of the feast of Christmas. On Tuesday, December 24, the parish will present a depiction of the nativity by its youngest members at 3:30 p.m., followed by Mass at 4 p.m. Additional Masses will be celebrated at 6 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. on Christmas Eve.

On Christmas Day, Wednesday, December 25, Mass will be offered at 9 a.m., 10:30 a.m. and noon.

For additional information and directions, call the Parish Office at (908) 889-2100 or see the parish website, ihmparish.net.

Religious School Plans Hanukkah Party

SCOTCH PLAINS — The Congregation Beth Israel Religious School will hold a community-wide Hanukkah Party on Wednesday, December 18, from 5:15 to 7 p.m. The celebration is free and open to the public.

The evening will feature games, arts and crafts, and music. In addition, traditional potato latkes and other kid-friendly food will be served. The Bible Players will perform an interactive retelling of the Hanukkah story.

"We look forward to bringing our community and guests together for this celebration," said Lev Metz, director of Congregational Learning and Engagement at Congregation Beth Israel. "This is a great opportunity to experience the joy of the holiday and showcase the learning of our Religious School classes."

Congregation Beth Israel has been recognized as an ABLE Awarded Congregation by the Jewish Federation of Greater MetroWest for its commitment to inclusion and accommodation for all its members.

Congregation Beth Israel is located at 18 Shalom Way, at the corner of Martine Avenue, in Scotch Plains. To RSVP for the Hanukkah Party, visit cbinj.org. For more information or to request an accommodation, contact Lev Metz at Lev@CBIsj.org or at (908) 889-1830.

libraries that are part of the Middlesex Union Reciprocal Agreement Libraries. Interested persons are encouraged to check the Westfield Memorial Library's website, wmlnj.org, to see if their library is a MURAL participant.

To register for the Winter Holidays program, visit wmlnj.org and click on the Online Calendar, or call (908) 789-4090, option 0.

Westfield Memorial Library hours are 9:30 a.m. to 9 p.m., Monday through Thursday; 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Friday and Saturday, and 1 to 5 p.m. on Sunday. The library will be closed Tuesday and Wednesday, December 24 and 25, for Christmas; it will close at 3 p.m. on Tuesday, December 31, for New Year's Eve, and will be closed Wednesday, January 1, for New Year's Day.

For more information about library programs and services, call (908) 789-4090, visit wmlnj.org and sign up for the monthly e-newsletter, "Library Loop," or stop by the library for a copy of its award-winning, quarterly newsletter, "Take Note."

much-needed canned and dry cat food, as well as clumping litter, for their foster animals in need, but no fish. New volunteers are always welcome for the shop and on adoption days.

Besides the thrift shop, Best Friend volunteers can be found at the Cat Adoption Center, located at 410 Springfield Avenue, Berkeley Heights, on Saturdays for cat/kitten adoptions. Pet photos with Santa will be taken at the same location on December 14.

Best Friend has several kittens and several dogs in its care that need loving homes.

For more information, call (908) 322-2502 or visit pets awaiting permanent homes at bfdaaa.com. Monetary donations are urgently needed and appreciated. Donations may be mailed to: Best Friend, P.O. Box 335, Cranford, N.J. 07016.

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ROTARY GUEST...Helen Rentoulis, left, owner of Vicki's Diner in downtown Westfield, was the guest speaker for the Rotary Club of Westfield at its November 12 luncheon. She is pictured with Ray Kostyack and Club President Liz Ensslin.

Owner of Vicki's Diner Speaks to Rotary Club

WESTFIELD — Helen Rentoulis, the owner of Vicki's Diner in downtown Westfield, spoke to the Rotary Club of Westfield at the Addams Tavern luncheon on November 12.

Her husband, Peter, came from Greece at the age of 14 by himself. After working hard for many years, the couple eventually purchased the Lido Diner on Route 22. As a young waitress at a diner in Hillside, Mrs. Rentoulis had often served New York Yankees Hall of Fame inductees Joe DiMaggio and Phil Rizzuto. In September of 1999, Mr. and Mrs. Rentoulis sold the Lido Diner and purchased Vicki's Diner at 110 East Broad Street.

The couple is known for their personal service and charitable works in town. They go through 30,000 eggs and 300 pounds of bacon every week, and have many regulars. For many years they delivered dinners to shut-ins, but more recently have focused on delivering food — including turkeys — to the St. Joseph Social Service Center in Elizabeth.

In 2004 Peter and Helen Rentoulis were awarded the Rotary Jimmy Coventry Award, which is given to local businesses that demonstrate excellence in business and high ethical values.

Rotarian Ray Kostyack's father owned the restaurant "Ray's" in downtown Westfield at the corner of Central and North Avenues. Mr. Kostyack volunteers to help the St. Joseph Social Service Center, including cooking turkeys every Thanksgiving. Rotary Club President Liz Ensslin has focused the club activities on food insecurity this year, and has run two projects that made 1,600 sandwiches which have been donated to "St. Joe's."

Bernadette Murphy is director of the St. Joseph Social Service Center, which provides food assistance, health

services, employment assistance, counseling services and children's programs, including school supplies and summer sleep-away camp. The center also offers job-hunting skills, houses the homeless and runs a soup kitchen. It has a daily sandwich program, and also provides food for 250 people every Saturday; monthly food bags for 400 to 500 families, and 700 bags of food at Thanksgiving. For more information on the St. Joseph Social Service Center, visit sjeliz.org.

The Rotary Club of Westfield meets on Tuesdays for lunch, and guests are always welcome. Further information is available at westfieldrotary.com or by contacting Club Secretary Michael Hart at drmhart@yahoo.com.

Christmas Concert To Be on Saturday

SCOTCH PLAINS — St. Bartholomew the Apostle Roman Catholic Church will present its 17th Annual Parish Christmas Concert this Saturday, December 14, at 7 p.m.

Prelude music by local bluegrass group Dollr Hollr will commence at 6:30 p.m. The main concert will begin at 7 p.m.

The adult and children's choirs will perform with a chamber orchestra, a contemporary band and special guests, with the program enhanced by the acoustics of the church.

Concert-goers will have an opportunity to enjoy old, familiar carols, contemporary holiday tunes and unexpected arrangements of traditional songs, as well as a sing-along portion.

Admission to the concert is free, but a suggested \$10 donation will support the parish's music ministry. St. Bartholomew the Apostle Church is located at 2032 Westfield Avenue, Scotch Plains.

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Trinity to Celebrate Elevation Of Father Kruger to Rector

CRANFORD — The Vestry of the Trinity Episcopal Church, located at 119 Forest Avenue, Cranford, has unanimously approved the Reverend Andrew Kruger's elevation from Trinity's Priest-in-Charge to Rector of Trinity. The decision received enthusiastic support from the Right Reverend William H. Stokes, the 12th Bishop of the Diocese of New Jersey. As Rector, Father Kruger now has tenure as Trinity's priest.

"We have been very blessed by Father Andy's leadership in our worship of God and our service to others in his two-plus years at Trinity. It is very fitting that he becomes only the 19th Rector in Trinity's 147-year history," said John Beier, Trinity's Senior Warden.

"I am truly humbled by this honor and I am excited by the future of our shared ministry together serving Jesus Christ's call to discipleship," said

Father Kruger.

To celebrate Father Kruger's elevation, a Taizé-style Vespers or Evensong service will be held on Friday, December 13, at 7:30 p.m. A reception will follow. "The Taizé form of worship originated in the ecumenical monastic order in Taizé, France. It utilizes short, repetitive chants and periods of silence to nurture a quiet meditative space for us to encounter God," said Father Kruger.

The church will be decorated with Taizé-inspired elements to create an environment of intimacy. All are welcome.

Sunday services, celebrated by Father Kruger, are at 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. In addition, from Tuesday to Friday, the Daily Offices of Morning and Evening Prayer are led by Father Kruger in the Witherington Chapel at 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m., respectively. For more information about Trinity, call (908) 276-4047 or visit trinitycranford.org/.



Rev. Andrew Kruger

Westfield Area Y Men's Club Continuing Annual Tree Sale

WESTFIELD — The Westfield Area Y Men's Club is continuing its Annual Christmas Tree Sale, a community tradition since 1947. All proceeds benefit local charities and organizations.

This year's tree selection includes top-quality Fraser Firs and Balsam Firs. Sizes range from three-foot "table top" Balsams all the way up to 12-foot Balsams. Also featured this year is a new hybrid tree called a "Fralsam," which is grown in Vermont and combines the needle longevity of a Fraser with the evergreen smell of a Balsam. Wreaths, evergreen roping, grave covers and tree stands also are available.

The tree lot is located on the Elm Street Athletic Field, across from Stop & Shop. The sale continues through Monday, December 23, or until the trees run out. Lot hours are 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays, and 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Selling Christmas trees has been the club's primary fund-raising method. Since its inception, the Y's Men have raised more than \$2.5 million for community charitable donations. Some of the many orga-

nizations that have benefited from the money raised include the Westfield United Fund, Caring Contact, Children's Specialized Hospital, Imagine, Resolve Community Counseling Center, Scotch Plains and Westfield Rescue Squads, Westfield Crew, Master Gardeners Club and the Westfield Area YMCA.

Volunteer opportunities are available, including for youth groups and others looking to help out in the community.

For more information, visit <https://www.westfieldynj.org/get-involved/community-partners/ysmens-club/> or visit the club on Facebook at Westfield Area Y's Men's Club Christmas Tree Sale.

Historical Soc. Seeks Gift-Wrap Volunteers

WESTFIELD — The Westfield Historical Society is seeking volunteers to wrap gifts at the Lord & Taylor store in Westfield during the month of December as a fundraiser. Wrapping supplies are provided. Interested persons are asked to sign up for a two-hour shift or more. To sign up, visit signupgenius.com/go/508044faca62ea3fd0-gift1.

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Winter Holidays With Judith Krall-Russo
At the Westfield Memorial Library
On Tuesday, December 17 at 7:00 pm

Learn about the history, customs, and foods of various winter celebrations including Christmas, the Winter Solstice, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Twelfth Night, and more! Learn how current and ancient cultures celebrate the winter months from Judith Krall-Russo, educator, food historian and tea specialist. Her talks are always informative, entertaining and fun!

It's your Library ... make the most of it
550 East Broad Street
Westfield, NJ 07090
www.wmlnj.org

Open to WML and MURAL cardholders. Sign up online at www.wmlnj.org and click on the Calendar link, or call 908.789.4090 option 0.