

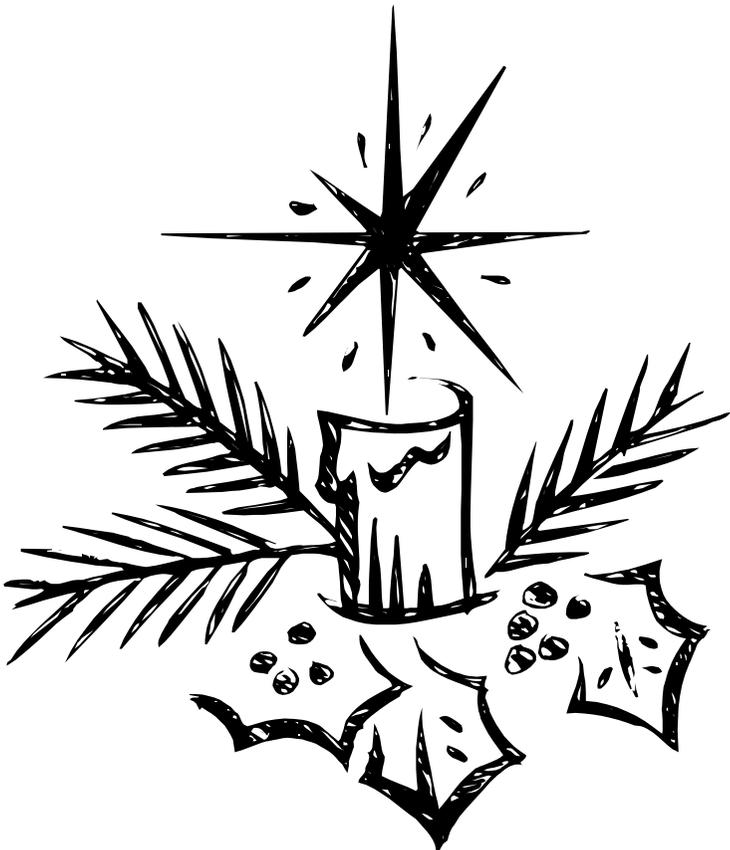


The Carriage Stone

December 2005

New Hempstead Presbyterian Church, New City, N.Y.

Newsletter of the English Church



Pastor

- Pastor's Message2
- Installation.....4

Christian Education

- Christmas Pageant.....4
- Sunday School Schedule5
- Children's Activities.....8

Mission / Evangelism

- Letters from Santa.....3
- Christmas Joy Offering.....3
- Volunteer Opportunity3

Worship / Music

- Advent Calendar.....4
- Christmas Eve Service4
- Christmas Day Service5
- Join the Choir for Advent.5
- Poinsettia Order Form6

Stewardship

- Commit Your Time/Talents5

Life of the Church

- Milestones6



"The Carriage Stone" is the Newsletter of
The New Hempstead Presbyterian Church

484 New Hempstead Road, New City, NY 10956

The Reverend Doctor Lori Knight-Whitehouse, Pastor

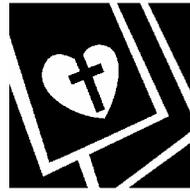
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FROM THE PASTOR

Mother Mary Comes to Me

By the time you read this, we will be well into the season of Advent, with Christmas just around the corner. There are lots of things I don't really like about this time of year, chiefly all of the pressure to buy, and to acquire more stuff. Howard and I have dealt with this by giving gifts to folks' favorite charities in their honor. Our dads don't really need any more ties, and our mums have plenty of nightgowns and house slippers. There **is** one thing I really like about Advent and Christmas, however. It's about the only time of year when Protestants really pay attention to Mary.

We don't get a lot of information in the Bible about Mary. We know she was young, Jewish and poor (she offered a either turtledoves or pigeons, not a lamb at Jesus' presentation in the temple; this was the substitute for people who could not afford a lamb. {Lev. 12: 2-6}). We know that she was promised in marriage to a man named Joseph.

We also know that pre-natal care in first-century Palestine was non-existent, as indeed it is in many parts of the developing world today. Childbirth was a life-threatening event. For a young, unmarried woman to be told she was having a baby (by the angel Gabriel, no less) was risky not only socially, but also potentially deadly.

So often, Mary is depicted in art and literature as a dainty, will-o'-the-wisp slip of a girl. I think many artists and poets have it wrong. No mere milquetoast female would be brave enough to say "yes" to the divine

request to become the Mother of God. I think it takes a very sturdy woman to rear God's son to adulthood. I like to think that Mary was a strong, feisty sort of gal who didn't miss too many earthy, peasant meals. The writer Anne Lamotte says she thinks Mary looked like a demure version of Bette Midler. I like that idea.

Mother Mary is a model for all of us—men, women, boys and girls—who seek to live a fearless, courageous life. She trusted God completely when she told Gabriel, "Here I am, the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." I am in awe of that kind of trust, and I want to learn to live in it. Mary demonstrates complete co-operation with God's plan, even through the agony of watching her son die. The fact that she was a mere teenager when she assented to God's request makes her all the more outstanding for her wisdom and fidelity.

I pray that we may all hear God's call to us this Advent and Christmas season. May we say "yes" to God's desire for our work of preparing for Jesus' return by feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, housing the homeless, and visiting the sick and imprisoned.

Blessings to you all,



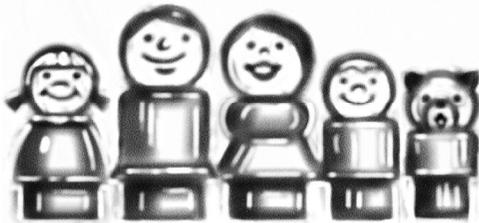


LOCAL MISSIONS

Letters from Santa

The holiday season is especially significant when we can share in the joy it brings to children. Again this year, the Deacons have adopted two families through People to People, and we will try to fulfill as many wishes of the children in those families as possible.

If you are able, please help us purchase new toys and clothing that the children have asked for in their letters to Santa. We will try to make it possible for each child to receive the toy of their wish, along with a warm sweater, pair of pants and a pair of shoes! How wonderful to know that we are making it possible for needy families to give their children something special for the holidays.



Adopt-a-Family

A sign up sheet is available in the Colonial Room with details about what each child's special wish from Santa is and his or her clothing size. The deadline for us to deliver the gifts to People to People is Sunday, December 11.

If you would prefer to make a donation toward the purchase of a Christmas gift for one of the children, please let one of the Deacons know. Thank you for your help and for helping us bring the magic of Christmas to children in need.

Volunteer Opportunity

The CHORE Service of the Volunteer Action Center needs volunteers to provide useful services to residents of Rockland County. If you are available during the day and can handle a hammer, work a saw or turn a screwdriver, you can help! Volunteer your skill and talent to help the elderly and/or handicapped people in the county. Enjoy the company of other handy-persons as you work together to help residents remain safe and secure in their homes.

To volunteer, call Janet Anderson at 364-2114.

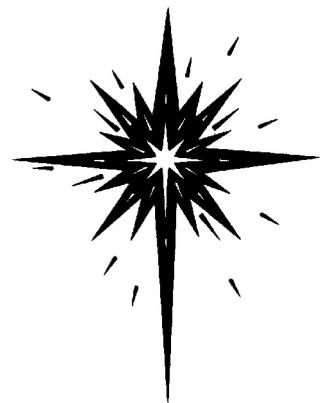
Christmas Joy Offering

During the Christmas season, Presbyterians may celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ by giving to the Christmas Joy offering.

Fifty percent of contributions to the Offering are distributed to the Board of Pensions, which provides assistance programs to support retired and active church workers, their spouses and families during financial difficulties.

The other fifty percent supports seven Presbyterian-related racial ethnic schools and colleges throughout the country. The National Ministries Division of the General Assembly Council distributes these funds to help with school operating costs and to provide student scholarships.

The offering will be received on Sunday, December 18 and at the Christmas Eve service.



**Christmas
Joy Offering**

Decorate the Church, November 27

Advent at New Hempstead Presbyterian Church starts with the traditional hanging of the greens on Sunday, November 27. The whole family can enjoy this event because there are activities for everyone. Those wishing to help with the actual

HANGING OF THE GREENS



hanging of the greens should bring garden shears and gloves. In addition, freshly pruned evergreen branches are always welcome.

The fellowship committee will supply a light lunch for the workers and plenty of seasonal music.

Prayer Cards, December 4

We will hang Advent Prayer Cards on the tree on the second Sunday in Advent. This is an opportunity to write out our hopes, concerns, joys and sorrows as we approach the birth of the Prince of Peace.

In addition, Poinsettia orders are due the same day. There is an order form on page 6 of *The Carriage Stone*.



Celebrate the Installation of our New Pastor, December 11

There is a special opportunity on the third Sunday in Advent to participate in our church's history by witnessing the installation of the Reverend Doctor Lori Knight-Whitehouse as our pastor. The presbytery of Hudson River will install the Rev. Dr. Lori Knight-Whitehouse as pastor of New Hempstead Presbyterian Church on Sunday, December 11 at 4 in the afternoon.

All are invited and welcome to attend.



Hymn Sing, December 13

From Barbara Zacheis

Are there hymns you miss singing? Favorites we don't get to often enough or even ever in our regular church services? Well, here is your opportunity to sing the songs you love or the songs you miss! You are invited to attend an open Hymn-Sing, where those attending will get to choose hymns to sing. If the hymns are not in the current hymnal or the Old Blue Favorites booklets (that have been in the pews in the last few years), feel free to research other hymnals in the church library and print out a few copies for the hymn-sing. Bruce Rentz has kindly offered his musical talents to accompany, and you can even choose Christmas and Advent tunes as well!

The Hymn Sing will be held on Tuesday afternoon, December 13 at 1 PM. Bring some friends with you! Pastor Lori may even add some of these favorites to services of the future!

Questions: speak to
Barbara Zacheis, Chair,
Christian Nurture and Spiritual
Growth

Christmas Pageant, December 18



Please be sure to put Pageant Sunday on your calendars! The Sunday School will present their Pageant of the Christmas Story at the 11 AM worship service on the fourth Sunday of Advent, December 18.

Christmas Eve, December 24

The Christmas Eve service will be held at 8 PM this year in the Sanctuary.



Christmas Day, December 25

The Christmas Day Worship service will be a service of lessons and carols. It will be held at the regular 11 AM time.

Sunday School Schedule

December 4 – December 18 Nativity of Christ

December 18 Christmas Pageant

December 25 No Sunday School

January 1 No Sunday School

The Sunday School Pageant of the Christmas Story will be presented at the 11 AM worship service on December 18. Children who plan to participate will need to be at rehearsals on Saturday mornings, December 10 and 17, from 9:30 to 12 noon. Please be sure to tell Leslie Rosenow if your child(ren) would like to participate.



Join Choir for Advent!

The adult choir has begun rehearsals for the Advent Season. New members are always welcome!

Choir Rehearsals are generally held on Wednesdays from 8 to 10 PM in the Colonial Room. Several rehearsals have been changed to Tuesday. Please check the calendar for the following changes: Tuesdays, November 22, December 13 and December 20; Wednesdays, November 30, December 7. There is no rehearsal December 28. Choir resumes Wednesday, January 4.

Commit Your Time & Talents

Membership, Media, Time & Talents Committee

If you have not already done so, please take a few minutes today to complete the Time & Talents Survey you recently received, and return it to the church office. Remember that your time and your talents are valuable assets to your Church, and the rewards are priceless.

In the past several weeks, many of us have made our financial pledges to New Hempstead Presbyterian Church, and many will continue to do so in the weeks ahead. However, some of us may not be able to pledge as much as we would like; Rockland has become an expensive place to live, and for many, it can be difficult to make ends meet. However, there is something else you can give to NHPC that is just as valuable as your financial pledge, and this is a commitment of your time and talents.

What is your time worth? What about your talents and your skills? Think about it for a few minutes. How much would it cost to have a plumber come to your house and fix a leaky faucet? If you have the skill to fix a faucet here at your church home, that's a valuable contribution. How much would it cost to paint your house? If you have the time to help paint your church home, that's a valuable contribution. Are you an accountant... a teacher...do you have writing or computer skills? Serving on the audit committee, teaching for one week in Sunday school, contributing to the newsletter or website...all of these are valuable contributions.

We can easily put a monetary value on some of these contributions, but some are priceless. How much is it worth to make sure that a needy family has a real thanksgiving dinner? How about making sure a 10-year-old girl gets that special gift on her Christmas list? You cannot put a price on singing in the choir on a magical Christmas Eve, or helping one of our children memorize their lines for the Christmas pageant. There is much to do, and so much that each of us can offer.

MILESTONES

Congratulations to Tim Maroney who was elected to the Session at a congregational meeting on Sunday, November 13. Thanks, Tim, for giving of your time and talents in this way.



There will be no separate January issue of *The Carriage Stone* again this year.

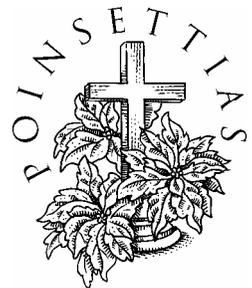
Instead, there will be a combined January/February

issue coming out later in January. The deadline for this combined issue is Sunday January 8. By adjusting our publishing schedule in this way, both Shirley and I are able to enjoy a less stressful Christmas season.

The Rev. Heather Morrison-Yaden has taken the job of Temporary Supply at the Calvary Presbyterian Church on Staten Island. She will be leading worship and preaching, supporting the church's Bible Study and prayer groups, moderating Session and Deacon meetings, and doing hospital visitations there. Calvary Presbyterian is an older congregation, though they do have a small but growing immigrant population in attendance. The church is about four miles from Heather's home and she will be commuting from there. The position is half time and six months in duration (renewable) while the church continues its search for an installed pastor.

Bill continues to work for the Coast Guard. Jess started college this fall. Stuart is in elementary school and Heather is a class parent and member of the PTA.

To order poinsettias, please return this form along with a check made payable to the New Hempstead Presbyterian Church (and marked Christmas flowers) to: 484 New Hempstead Road, New City NY 10956 by December 4.



Please purchase _____ (how many) poinsettias for me at \$15 each.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

I (we) would like the poinsettias to be dedicated as follows:

_____ To the Glory of God _____ In Celebration of Christ's birth

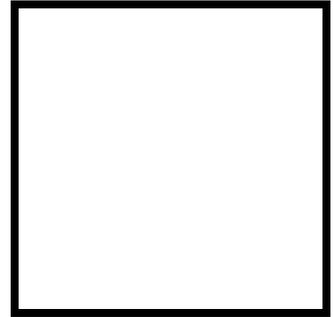
_____ In memory of: _____

_____ Other: _____



Newsletter of the English Church

New Hempstead Presbyterian Church
 484 New Hempstead Road
 New City NY 10956



DATED MATERIAL DECEMBER 2005

Make Ornament Cookies!

Make Christmas ornament cookies to hang on your Christmas tree.

You will need:

- * package of refrigerated cookie dough
- * rolling pin
- * cookie cutters (star, bell, tree, etc.)
- * cookie sheet
- * icing
- * a drinking straw
- * ribbon
- * an adult to help!

How to make them:

1. Roll out the dough and cut shapes with the cookie cutters.
2. Place on cookie sheet.
3. Use the straw to make a hole near the top of each cookie.
4. Bake according to the package directions.

Important: Have an adult help!

5. When cool, decorate the cookies with icing and tie a ribbon through each hole.
6. Hang them on your tree or give them as gifts to friends!

Countdown of Giving

As people remember the gift of Christ, let's remember those around us with little acts of giving. Make an Advent paper chain to count down the days until Christmas.

25 24 23 22 21 19 17

What you will need:

- 5 sheets of construction paper (8" x 11")
- scissors
- markers or crayons
- tape or glue

Here's what to do:

1. Cut the construction paper into 1" x 11" strips (You will need 25 strips but you will have extra.) **12**
2. Have fun thinking of 25 different acts of giving you can do for others. (Here are just a few suggestions: Make and send a card; draw a picture; make an ornament; give a hug or a smile; have a cheerful attitude (all day); call someone you haven't seen for awhile or send the person an e-mail; bake cookies to share. The possibilities are endless!)
3. Number each strip with one number, numbering them 1-25. **7 6 5**
4. Write one giving idea on each strip. You can repeat some.
5. Tape or glue strips into a paper chain, with number 25 first, counting backwards to 1. **4**
6. Start on December 1 and give the gift on link 25. The next day give gift 24. Continue until you reach gift 1 on Christmas! **3**
7. When you give your gifts, remember God's greatest gift to us — His Son Jesus. **2 1**