

The Carriage Stone

June 2006

New Hempstead Presbyterian Church, New City, NY.

Newsletter of the English Church

What does the Lord require of you



**but to do justice...
love kindness,
& to walk humbly
with your God?**



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"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

Office: (845) 354-2372

Fax: (845) 354-2344

E-mail: office@nhpchurch.org

Web: nhpchurch.org

Newsletter Editor: Robert Philhower

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Submissions: in my mailbox or to
carriagestone@nhpchurch.org

The Church has Never Been a Tidy Place; or, Why I'm Not Afraid of the Gospel of Judas

With the recent publication of the English translation of the Gospel of Judas, many Christians are on the defensive. "What is this new heresy the Devil is putting forth in our midst?" many ask.

Actually, it's not new. The Gospel of Judas represents an ancient understanding of who Jesus is, known as Gnosticism. Gnosticism is the name given to a complex set of pre-Christian and early Christian beliefs that make a clear distinction between the body and the soul, and emphasize a secret knowledge revealed only to those more spiritually enlightened. There were many versions of Gnosticism floating around in the first two or three centuries of the Church's history. Orthodox Christianity (by which I mean those whose understandings about God, Christ, the Holy Spirit and the Church carried the day at the Council of Nicea in 325) has always maintained that in Christ, God was revealed in his fullness to all who sought him, not just to a select few who were more spiritual than the rest.

In fact, a major, though often overlooked claim of the Judeo-Christian faith is that both body and soul matter to God, therefore they should matter to God's followers. We do not simply tell hungry folk that their physical hunger matters less to God than their spiritual hunger. More to the point, that would be just as heretical as we claim Gnosticism to be!

As to one of the claims of the Gospel of Judas, that Jesus asked him to betray him, well, if that were true, we all would be off the hook. The orthodox understanding is that, in some way, we ALL betrayed the Messiah. Jesus died to take away the sin of the world.

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On some level, each of us has a hand in betraying the Son of Man, not just Judas; not just the Jews. We can't make Judas (or our Jewish sisters and brothers) our scapegoat, nor should we make Judas our hero.

The Church on earth has never been an ideologically or doctrinally pure household. Early Christianity is no exception. In the words of scholar Elaine Pagels, "early Christianity is far more diverse than nearly everyone expected..." (The Gnostic Gospels, 1979).

So, as faithful Christians, we needn't get too exercised about the translation of a 4th century document. We should continue to follow our Lord, Jesus Christ, and, in the world of the prophet Micah, "do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God."

As a footnote, will I be going to see The DaVinci Code? You betcha! But I will watch it to be entertained, not to learn anything new about Church history. I've read the book: it's fiction. It's not history. It's a page-turning, thrilling whodunit, not a scholarly work of academic study. We shouldn't spend out intellectual and spiritual energy getting all worked up about its plotline, not when Jesus commands us to love one another by feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, giving drink to the thirsty, and visiting the sick and imprisoned, and proclaiming his Lordship by striving for justice. Should we let shiny conversations of popular culture distract us, the Devil will have indeed scored a victory.

Blessings,



Church Picnic

This years Annual Church Picnic will be on June 4 to give early vacationers a chance to attend. The picnic will be held between the Manse and the side entrance to the Church. Please sign up and let us know if you would like to bring a dessert or salad (finger foods are optional). We will provide the drinks and all the food for the BBQ.

If the weather is warm enough, the children usually play with water behind Murchison Hall. So, they should bring bathing suits and towels so they can join in the fun!

Online Benefit Auction

From June 1 through June 25, an online auction will be held to benefit Church World Service. CWS is the relief, development and refugee assistance ministry of 35 Protestant, Orthodox and Anglican denominations in the United States.

Auction items will range from vacation getaways to celebrity items to antiques and collectables. Proceeds will help CWS to continue to assist refugee families as they seek safety, food and medicine; dig wells so that children can have clean water; work with AIDS orphans in Africa and respond to disaster survivors with food, water, shelter, medicines and trauma counseling.

For details, see www.cws.cmarket.com

Bargains Galore!

From Wendy Keryk

Clean out your attic
Your closets and more,
And donate it all
To Bargains Galore!

Yes donate it all
And your spring cleanings done,
Then come and enjoy
A day of pure fun.

If your closets are empty
And your basement is bare,
You can bake up a cake
Or cookies prepare.

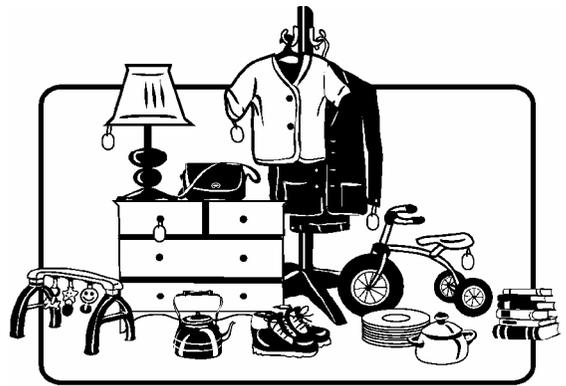
When - Saturday, June 17, 9 AM –3 PM

Where - Murchison Hall

Why - A Fundraiser is Fun

What - You can start bringing your donations the afternoon of Sunday, June 11 to the Colonial Room

Who - You, that's who — and tell your friends and neighbors too!



Trash & Treasures Sale

Upcoming Events

- June 4 **Feast of Pentecost** 11 AM Service
Last day of Sunday School; annual church picnic. Rockland Opera will be in the sanctuary to rehearse by 2:30 PM for a 4 PM performance.
- June 10 **Premiere of “The Parting”,** 7 PM
- June 11 **Trinity Sunday** 11 AM Service
Confirmation class will be received. This is also the last 11 AM service until after Labor Day.
- June 17 **Bargains Galore!** 9AM–3PM
Spring fundraiser in Murchison Hall.
- June 18 **Eleventh Sun. in Ordinary Time**
Fathers' Day 10 AM Service

Haverstraw Farmer’s Market

The Haverstraw farmer’s market will be held every Wednesday from 11 AM to 6 PM and every Sunday after church until 2 PM from now until November 22. The market is on Maple Avenue between New Main Street and West Broad Street in the Village of Haverstraw.

Growers will be selling farm fresh vegetables, fruits, jams, flowers and much more. WIC coupons accepted at approved vendors. For more information, call the market coordinator, Peggy Koval at (845) 429–0300, ext. 10 or the downtown coordinator, Jeanne Struck at (845) 620–9852



FADE IN: FILMS PRESENTS

The Parting

A Short Film by Thomas Collardeau & John Frobels Hong

Movie Premiere

From Mark Zacheis

The movie, “The Parting” that was filmed on location at New Hempstead Presbyterian Church last August, has completed postproduction and had its New York City premiere on April 15. The twenty-minute short film is not scheduled to be shown in theaters but will make the rounds of the film festivals. If you missed the April 15 showing, you’ll need to go to Cannes or Sundance to be able to see it.

Alternatively, you could mark your calendar for Saturday, June 10 and plan to attend the Rockland County premiere. We will be showing the film in Murchison Hall in its entirety that evening. We will also have as our special guests, the producers Thomas Collardeau and John Hong in attendance to give a talk on the making of the film.

Join us at 7 PM on June 10 for coffee, dessert and fellowship. There is no charge for admission, so bring your family and friends along with you. Save the date, after all, how often do you get to a movie premiere anyway?

The Parting tells the story of a couple dealing with the changing dynamics of their relationship and the role the community plays in supporting their marriage.

For more information about the film, including a short trailer, you can go to the production company’s website, at www.fadeinfilms.com



From the Presbyterian Center at Holmes

Camp information from the Holmes newsletter

The weather has given us glimpses of spring so we know that summer is not far behind. Preparations for summer camp are in full swing. The schedule has been set and brochures are on their way. So it is time to start planning for a fun and faith filled experience for you, your children or youth this summer. "Peace Talks", this summer's theme, brings the Presbyterian Center programs to life for children and youth entering first grade through high school, graduates, families and adults.

- If camp is new to you and you are not sure what camp is all about, we are offering half-week camps for children to "*discover*" camp.
- Or if you are not ready to be away from home by yourself, first through third-graders can come to *You and Me* camp with an adult.
- If you enjoy our traditional camp experiences, we offer one almost every week of the summer.
- If you are someone who enjoys performing and want to share your gifts and talents, come and enjoy our *clowning, theater and dance camps*.
- Maybe you are looking for more adventure. Then you would enjoy our *canoe camps*. These camps will teach basic to advanced canoe skills and put these skills to the test.

Whatever experience you are looking for, find it at Holmes.

For more information and schedules and to register, visit the website:

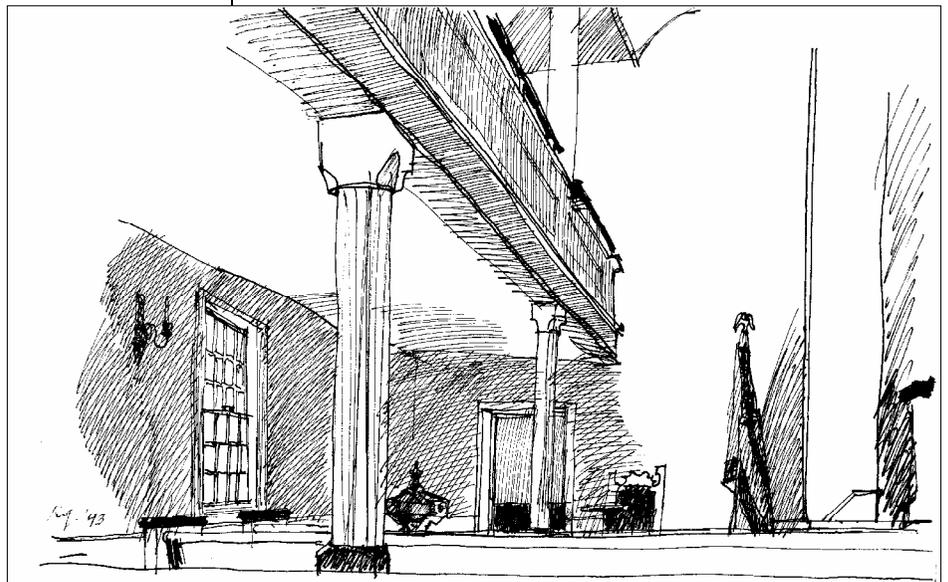
www.presbyteriancenter.org
or contact Robin Garzoni, Program Director at:
robin@presbyteriancenter.org
or (845) 878-6383.

Aquatics School June 12-17

The Presbyterian Center at Holmes will be conducting an Aquatics School for those who would like to receive American Red Cross Lifeguarding Certification and for those would like to become re-certified both as a Lifeguard and in first Aid and/or CPR. Call the office at (845) 878-6383 for more information

A Page from Bob Greenhalgh's Sketchbook

Last fall, Bob Greenhalgh lent me one of his sketchbooks filled with drawings of the church so that I could scan the drawings and use them in the newsletter. A few drawings have run in recent months.



The Rev. Dr. Susan Ruth Andrews Elected Executive Presbyter

The Reverend Susan Ruth Andrews was elected to be the called Executive Presbyter of the Presbytery of Hudson River on May 20, 2006 at the stated meeting of the presbytery held at First Presbyterian Church, Katonah, NY. Susan will begin her work in Hudson River in mid-August.



Interim Executive Presbyter, Rev. David Prince, received accolades for his work

during the same meeting. Former Moderator Elder Aram Casparian, Rev. Chip Low and Stated Clerk Elder Harriet Sandmeier spoke on behalf of the presbytery expressing deeply felt gratitude for Dave's service during the past three years. Moderator Rev. Nancy Thornton McKenzie then presented a gift to Dave on behalf of the body.

Susan comes to us as a well-known pastor, preacher and leader in the Presbyterian Church. She writes, "I have seen every nook and cranny of the PCUSA—and it is a thrilling, disturbing and hopeful place to live and serve."

Susan exhibits an enthusiasm for the church, a deep commitment to Jesus Christ and a comprehensive knowledge of our Reformed heritage. In speaking of the important theological issues of the day, she wrote, "I believe that the church must continue to celebrate and proclaim the sovereignty and grace of a Living God in an increasingly complex and high-paced world. With its rich tradition of ardor and order, the Presbyterian Church (USA) is called to embody the compassion and courage of Jesus in all aspects of contemporary life."

Selected from an outstanding group of applicants, Susan is a recognized leader. References and colleagues described her leadership style as enthusiastic, intelligent,

joyful and engaging. Dr. Andrews is deeply committed to growth in multi-cultural ministry and has a host of ideas to help us in this area.

Susan received her BA from Wellesley College, her Master of Divinity from Harvard Divinity School and her Doctor of Ministry from McCormick Theological Seminary. She is married to the Rev. Simmons (Sim) Gardner, Chaplain at Suburban Hospital in Bethesda and is the mother of two.

For more information, see the Presbytery web site: www.hudrivpres.org.



Lifting Up

Joanie Fiore

I'm never alone anymore!
God is lifting me up.
He makes me soar!

I realize now it's not a **me** program to life;
but a **we** journey on Earth, that gives us hope,
gifts and virtues that leads us to soar on up high!

Jesus is the way,
the truth,
the life
and the light.

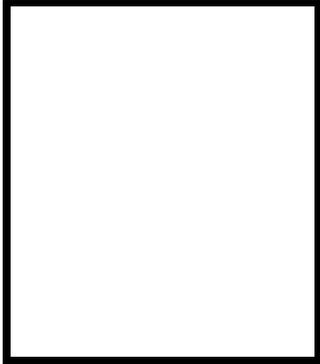
The Bible gives us the trinity of us not me;
It's the only answer to the joy as in the journey
of true ecstasy.

The Carriage Stone welcomes your submissions of original poetry, prose or drawings about our church, the walk with Christ or other Christian topics.

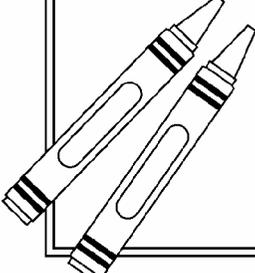


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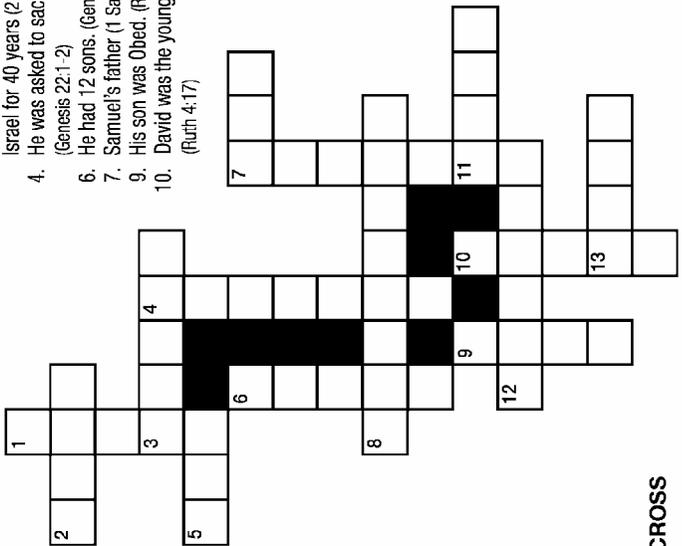
Just for KIDS

FATHERS IN THE BIBLE

God plans for our fathers to play important parts in our lives. Fill in the puzzle squares with names of important fathers from the Bible. Use the clues and verse references below to help.

DOWN

1. King Solomon's father, who ruled over Israel for 40 years. (2 Samuel 5:4)
4. He was asked to sacrifice his son Isaac. (Genesis 22:1-2)
6. He had 12 sons. (Genesis 35:22)
7. Samuel's father (1 Samuel 1:19-20)
9. His son was Obed. (Ruth 4:21)
10. David was the youngest of his 8 sons. (Ruth 4:17)



ACROSS

2. His 3 sons helped him build an ark. (Genesis 6:10)
3. His youngest son, Jacob, tricked him into giving away the birthright of his older son Esau. (Genesis 27:30)
5. The Father of our Lord (Ephesians 1:3)
7. His sons were not like Samuel. They were wicked. (1 Samuel 2:12)
8. David's best friend and father of Mephibosheth (2 Samuel 9:6)
11. Father of Cain, Abel and Seth (Genesis 4:25)
12. He was married to Mary, mother of Jesus. (Matthew 1:20-21)
13. Father of Jonathan, he was chosen by the people as the first king of Israel. (2 Samuel 9:6)