

The Carriage Stone

October 2009

New Hempstead Presbyterian Church, New City, NY.
The English Church

WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY



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"The Carriage Stone" is the Newsletter of

The New Hempstead Presbyterian Church

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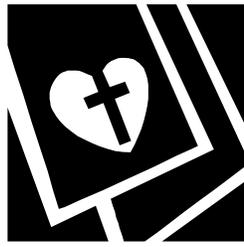
Robert Philhower

Next Deadline:

Sunday, October 18

Submissions: in my mailbox
or e-mail to

carriagestone@nhpchurch.org



FROM THE PASTOR

Practicing Secret Goodness

This month, I want to share a story with you that I found in Mathew Woodley's book, *Holy Fools*. I found it powerful, and I hope that you will too.

A few years ago I heard an old Jewish tale entitled "If Not Higher." The story opens by describing a small village's beloved rabbi who disappeared every Friday morning. Unable to find him anywhere, the devoted villagers boasted that their rabbi must ascend to heaven every Friday so he could talk with God.

One day, however, a newcomer to their small village heard the stories and merely scoffed. "People don't ascend to heaven. I'll tell you where your rabbi really goes on Friday mornings."

So the next Friday morning the newcomer crept into the woods by the rabbi's house. He quietly watched the rabbi rise, say his prayers, and much to the onlooker's surprise, dress in the clothes of a common peasant. The rabbi walked into the woods, chopped down a small tree, and then cut it into firewood. Still following at a safe distance, the newcomer saw the rabbi

carry a bundle of wood to a shack in the poorest section of the village. An old woman and her sick son gladly received the bundle of wood for the coming week. They thanked the anonymous woodsman, unaware that it was the rabbi in disguise.

Deeply moved by the rabbi's secret goodness, the newcomer became his disciple. And whenever he heard the villagers say "On Friday mornings our rabbi ascends all the way to heaven," the newcomer would quietly add, "If not higher."

This story of hidden goodness illustrates a key aspect of the lifestyle of Christian holy fools. Like the rabbi, holy fools often lived lives of secret spirituality. The beauty of holiness was hidden behind the disguise of folly.

(pp. 139-149)

May we all find joy in the beauty of being
"fools for Christ."

Amen.



From the Deacons

The Deacons of New Hempstead will, once again, provide Thanksgiving baskets to those in need within our immediate community. A goal of thirty baskets, complete with turkey, stuffing mix, cranberries, canned vegetables and bread, has been established. If contributions surpass this goal, all the better.

The Deacons ask your help in identifying persons or families in need by supplying names, reason for need and a contact number to the Board.

Monetary contributions as well as food donations will be gladly accepted at any time. A basket will be labeled and placed in the Colonial Room so as not to be confused with the Youth Group's food drive.

Suggestions for Thanksgiving basket items:

- Stuffing mix
- Mashed potato mix
- Canned vegetables (yams, corn, beans, peas, carrots, mixed vegetables, etc)
- Cranberry sauce
- Gravy mix

Until Thanksgiving, all monies collected in the "spare change" jar will go to New Hempstead Presbyterian Church's Thanksgiving mission.

The Board of Deacons asks that our members keep in mind those among us, our loved ones and friends, who need our thoughts and prayers. A simple phone call, a personal note or a visit can bring sunshine into the lives of others.

275th Anniversary Gala

From the 275th Anniversary Committee

Get ready to celebrate our church's 275th anniversary together at the '76 house in Tappan. We'll be gathering during the day on Saturday, November 14, so clear your calendar!

The cost is \$30 per person, payable in advance. Don't delay, because the deadline to sign up is October 25 so that the reservation can be finalized. A signup sheet is in the Colonial Room.

Blessing of the Animals

The blessing of the animals will be on Saturday, October 3 at 4 PM in the Sanctuary. Your small animals (in cages or on leashes) are welcome to come for blessing. Invite your friends and neighbors to come and bring their pets as well.

Adult Education Opportunities

Education and study is a vital part of each Christian's walk of faith. This fall, New Hempstead Presbyterian Church is offering three opportunities for study and discussion for adults.

On Sunday mornings at 9:30, Ed Garcia leads an Adult Bible study group in the Colonial Room. The class follows a curriculum that explores biblical themes. Readings are published in the bulletin each week.

Also on Sunday mornings is a new class that will discuss contemporary issues. Parents of Sunday school students are encouraged to join the discussion while their children are in class.

Finally, the Monday night discussion group just started up again on September 28. Come for fellowship, holy conversation and a snack or two!

All are welcome to any of these classes any week.

Lesson schedule for Sunday School 2009–2010

Sunday School is off to a good start under the leadership of Pauline Mattis. The class meets from 9:30 to 10:30 in Murchison Hall. Registration is ongoing; please see Pauline for registration information.

Also, your help is needed. Please talk with Pauline to learn how you can help teach our children on a monthly, weekly or one-time basis.

September:

- 6 God has good plans for our lives.
Genesis 37:1–11
- 13 God is with us in difficult times.
Genesis 37:12–36
- 20 God helps me help others.
Genesis 39–41
- 27 God wants us to forgive one another.
Genesis 42–26

October:

- 4 God gives us people to love and protect us.
Exodus 2:1–10
- 11 God calls us to do important things.
Exodus 3:1–12
- 18 God will help us do what God calls us to do.
Exodus 4:10–12:39
- 25 We can always trust God.
Exodus 14:1–29

November:

- 1 God takes care of our needs.
Exodus 16:1–21
- 8 God's laws help us live well.
Exodus 20:1–7.
- 15 I can worship God.
Exodus 25–30
- 22 Obedience to God helps my faith grow.
Joshua 6
- 29 God promised to send the savior.
Isaiah 9:6–7



Work of the Capital Fund

From Mark Zacheis, Treasurer

Over the summer we've been busy working on two capital projects in Murchison Hall, both designed to improve our energy efficiency. The first is the instillation of two insulated doors on the north and the south ends of the building. The old doors were original to the building and leaked air badly. The new ones are much more efficient and are more attractive too. Thank you to Barbara Zacheis, Pam Fink, Craig Chalfin and Mark Zacheis for doing the work. The second project is the installation of new toilets in the bathrooms there. The new ones flow better and use less water.

One of the major projects of the capital fund is the remodeling of the bathrooms in Murchison Hall. You may be wondering where we are on that project. The answer is that we're going to start working with an architect at the beginning of next year, with the expectation that we will do the construction next summer.

Why would we change the toilets in the bathrooms a year before the remodel? The answer is that the old toilets were not functioning sufficiently to be useful and needed to be changed right away. Next summer they will be removed and reused. It would have been preferable to wait, but we really couldn't wait that long. It also serves as a reminder that the rest of the bathrooms still need to be done. Stay tuned.

OUR CHURCH'S FINANCIAL HEALTH

Church Finances

From Mark Zacheis, Treasurer

The finance committee strongly believes in keeping the congregation informed of the church's financial position. Today we report on where we stand as of the end of August.

Pledges received are close to budget, meaning that everyone is doing a great job of keeping up with their giving, a remarkable feat given the economic environment. It is expected that we will be able to reach our budgeted goal by the end of the year, and maybe surpass it. There are some of you however, that were away in August, and we would appreciate it if you would be sure to catch up your giving right away.

Building Use Donations are substantially below the budget, due in large part from the nursery school space being vacant this year. We do have a new group of people who have moved into that space as of September and we expect them to make a contribution soon. Our estimate is that we will take in another \$16,000 in building use donations by the end of the year, leaving us short of the budget by about \$11,000.

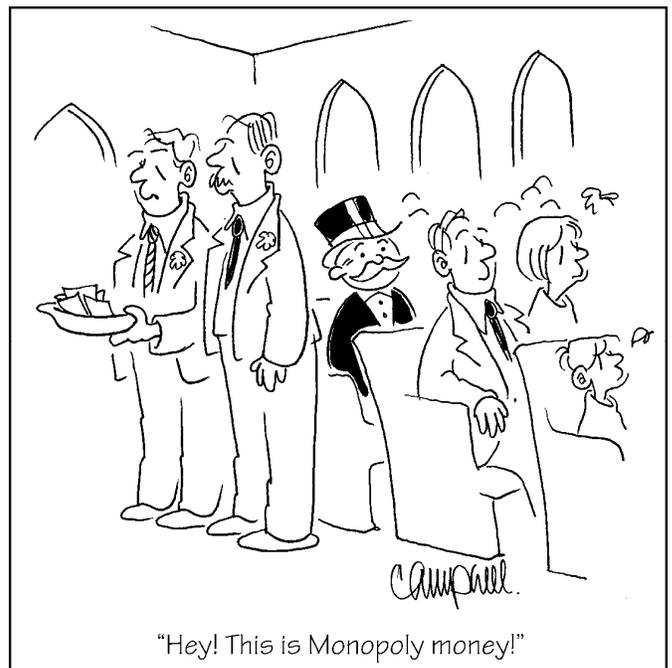
We received a bequest (unbudgeted, of course) this year, which has been committed to the operating fund. This helps offset the shortfall in building use donations. Overall, by the end of the year we expect total revenue to fall short of the budget by \$3,000.

On the expense side, we expect the salaries and benefits to come at or below budget. We also expect maintenance and taxes to come in below

budget, due to the lower utility bills. Insurance and taxes should come in at budget.

This year we budgeted very little in general operating expenses. Some of those unbudgeted expenses we still incurred, and as a result, the actual expenditures through eight months have exceeded the 12-month budget. Session members have been instructed to be very careful in their spending, and have been asked not to spend anything further for the remainder of the year. Our hope is that the savings in some of the other expense categories will fall short of budget enough so that in the end total expenses for the year will come in at budget. If this happens, we will end up with a net loss for the year, by the shortfall in the revenue.

You can help in several ways: first by keeping your pledge up to date (exceeding your pledge would be nice too!) and second, by helping our Session keep our expenses in check. You can also help by asking questions of your finance committee and staying aware of our tight financial situation.



Mission Study Opportunity

Stony Point Center will be hosting OctoberQuest on Sunday, October 25 from 2–7 PM.

The church is not a building... The church is a People... a people engaged in Mission.

Join in the fun and learning of OctoberQuest, as we think together about what it means when **“The Church has Left the Building.”** This will be a day to celebrate, learn and share about Mission in the life of our congregation and our presbytery.

Our special guest for OctoberQuest 2009 is the Rev. Jed Koball. Jed is returning to us from his present call in Peru, serving as a Mission Co-Worker for the PCUSA. We will join in spirited worship, and Jed will be preaching for us – sharing his insights and experiences in Mission – and encouraging us to listen for the ways God is calling us all.

Two sessions of workshops will follow – you can see the descriptions listed on the presbytery website at

www.hudrivpres.org/octoberquest.

Bring friends and family so that you’ll have many experiences to share.

The full day, including dinner at the Stony Point Center is only \$20.

Children under 12 are welcome for just \$12. (A family of 4 or more can register together for \$50 total...if you choose this option, please email Chris directly, see below.)

Please do not let the expense be a hindrance – if you need financial support to take part in the day, contact Chris Shelton at chris@hudrivpres.org.



Give to the Peacemaking Offering

The Peacemaking Offering was created in 1980 to support the efforts of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to live out a deeper commitment to peacemaking as part of our faithfulness to God. It is one of four special offerings designated by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s General Assembly.

Churches receive the Offering on World Communion Sunday, the first Sunday in October, which this year is October 4.

Each congregation is encouraged to retain 25 percent of the Offering it receives to use for local ministries of peacemaking within the church and its community. Twenty-five percent is used by presbyteries and synods, and 50 percent is used by the General Assembly ministries through the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program.

The work of the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program is guided by three affirmations outlined in *Peacemaking: The Believers' Calling*:

1. The church is faithful to Jesus Christ when it is engaged in peacemaking.
2. The church is obedient to Jesus Christ when it nurtures and equips God's people as peacemakers.
3. The church bears witness to Christ when it nurtures the moral life of the nation for the sake of peace in the world.

More information, including a calendar of daily devotions that bear witness to peacemaking can be found at:

www.pcusa.org/peacemaking

