

# The Carriage Stone

November 2011

New Hempstead Presbyterian Church, New City, N.Y.  
*The English Church*



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

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## **Spiritual but Not Religious? Please Stop Boring Me.**



I found this on the United Church of Christ website (they are our sisters and brothers in the Reformed tradition). I have shared it already with the Monday Night Bible Study, and thought it needed a broader audience. Let me know what you think!

Blessings,

Pastor Lori

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lori" in a cursive script, with a flourish underneath.

"And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it." — Matthew 16:18

### **Reflection by Lillian Daniel**

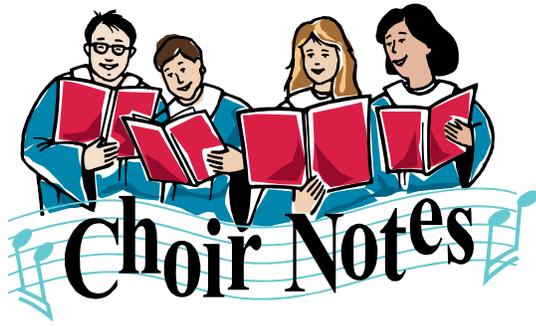
On airplanes, I dread the conversation with the person who finds out I am a minister and wants to use the flight time to explain to me that he is "spiritual but not religious." Such a person will always share this as if it is some kind of daring insight, unique to him, bold in its rebellion against the religious status quo.

Next thing you know, he's telling me that he finds God in the sunsets. These people always find God in the sunsets. And in walks on the beach. Sometimes I think these people never leave the beach or the mountains, what with all the communing with God they do on hilltops, hiking trails and . . . did I mention the beach at sunset yet?

Like people who go to church don't see God in the sunset! Like we are these monastic little hermits who never leave the church building. How lucky we are to have these geniuses inform us that God is in nature. As if we don't hear that in the psalms, the creation stories and throughout our deep tradition.

Being privately spiritual but not religious just doesn't interest me. There is nothing challenging about having deep thoughts all by oneself. What is interesting is doing this work in community, where other people might call you on stuff, or heaven forbid, disagree with you. Where life with God gets rich and provocative is when you dig deeply into a tradition that you did not invent all for yourself.

Thank you for sharing, spiritual but not religious sunset person. You are now comfortably in the norm for self-centered American culture, right smack in the bland majority of people who find ancient religions dull but find themselves uniquely fascinating. Can I switch seats now and sit next to someone who has been shaped by a mighty cloud of witnesses instead? Can I spend my time talking to someone brave enough to encounter God in a real human community? Because when this flight gets choppy, that's who I want by my side, holding my hand, saying a prayer and simply putting up with me, just like we try to do in church.



## **An Invitation to the Congregation**

From Kryste Andrews

The New Hempstead Presbyterian choir has renewed enthusiasm and focused spiritual energy this year as we begin our sixth year together. As director, I'm constantly inspired by the dedication of our group and I look forward to each rehearsal and to each Sunday morning service that I share with my talented singers who never forget how to have fun.

We've been together long enough to have a catalog of favorite songs and to know how we work best as a unit. Trust is of paramount importance in any musical group and that combines with the joy of making music to make a truly enriching spiritual/musical experience for all of us.

We are blessed to welcome our newest (and youngest) choir member, Katharine Witte who attends rehearsals regularly in spite of her long school days.

We enjoyed listening to the beautiful blend of voices a couple of weeks ago when a lovely trio of May Li, Syenni Lucas and Liring Sullivan shared a particularly melodious number. We look forward to more special music from them and other soloists and small ensembles from within the choir.

Please keep in mind that members of the congregation are welcome to join us on Thursday evenings as we rehearse and prepare for the Sunday service. Often there are

refreshments and always there is laughter and sharing of our joys and special events in our lives. Also, if you have music to offer on a Sunday morning, please call me to be included in the schedule.

*I don't sing because I'm happy, I'm happy because I sing. – William James*



## **Concert at the Church**

The Hudson Valley Wind Ensemble will present a Chamber Music Concert on January 22 in the sanctuary of NHPC at 3 PM. A free-will offering will benefit both the Wind Ensemble and the Church. Be sure to put it on your calendar, as it will be a wonderful variety of music and sounds! Questions: see Barbara Zacheis

## **Hanging of the Greens**

Advent is just around the corner. It begins Sunday, November 27.

As has become our tradition, we will be celebrating the first Sunday in Advent by decorating the church after Worship. There will be soup and a light lunch served.



## Art Show and Auction

From Pam Fink

Save the date! On Saturday, December 3, we will have an art show and auction in Murchison Hall. The show will begin at 2:30 pm and the auction will start at about 4 pm, so there will be plenty of time to view the artwork. All forms of art that have been crafted by some of the vastly talented members of our congregation will be on display. Selected works that will be auctioned off have been generously donated by the artists, and the proceeds will benefit our church and the programs we support. There will be light refreshments served during the event.

To make this a success, there are three things that we need from you: First, if you have any form of art that you want to display – photography, painting, knitting, sculpture, quilting, jewelry, or other crafted things – please contact one of the Fundraising Committee members (Kim Deen, David Garcia, Mark Zacheis or Pam Fink) to reserve



### ART SHOW

your space. If you wish to donate something for auction, all the better.

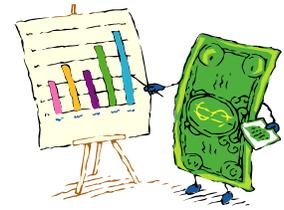
The second is a request to all of the bakers in the congregation for baked goods to serve and to sell at the show. Portable foods like cookies, brownies and cupcakes would be best. Again, please contact the Fundraising Committee if you can help.

The last request is for volunteers to help set up, serve refreshments and clean up after the show. We'll post a sign-up sheet in the Colonial Room for the baked goods and volunteer help.

So come one, come all, and bring your friends, relatives and neighbors out for a fun afternoon of eating and art!

## From the Treasurer

From Mark Zacheis,  
Treasurer



## Stewardship Update

At my last update, I talked about the Fordham remedial reading group taking space in Murchison Hall in August. I'm pleased to report that this arrangement went well, they were very pleased with the venue and we think that they will repeat the program next summer. We also have another group using Murchison Hall in the evenings. This one is Gambling Anonymous and they use the space on Mondays and Tuesdays. The news on the day care center in the basement is not so good. They continue to find it a challenge to attract clients, and it is likely that they will cease operations before the end of the year. Given the long time that it has taken them to get up and running, this is a great disappointment.

We had a good July and found ourselves right on budget at the end of the month. August dropped off the map and we ended that month \$5,000 behind budget. September made some of it back but we are still behind budget again. Given that we only have two months left in the year, that we are behind budget now, and that the day care will be ending operations, it is likely that we will once again spend more than we take in at the end of the year. Given that the church will likely incur a deficit again this year, if you have the ability, I ask that you please also consider making an additional gift above and beyond what you pledged.

Third quarter giving statements were sent out in mid-October. Most folks are up to date, but not everyone. If you are one of those that are behind and can do it, please make every effort to catch up.

As always your giving, regardless of the amount, is greatly appreciated.



## Women's Group

The women's group will get together Friday, November 18 at Liring Sullivan's house. For more information, contact Liring or Carmen.

## Available for the asking

From Shirley Martignetti

Ink cartridges for a Brother Inkjet printer: black LC41BK and all LC41 color cartridges C, M and Y (at least 2 of each, worth the call!). The MFC printer broke and was replaced with a laser printer. These work on several machines so check and see if you can use them. I can't sell them back and I'd hate to just junk them.

They're free (but of course, ANY donation will be accepted!) Please call the church or email Shirley at [office@nhpchurch.org](mailto:office@nhpchurch.org)

## Classes for Seniors

The Adult Learning Center of Rockland is an organization of retired seniors who volunteer to teach other seniors (and over 50s) how to use computers. We are affiliated with Meals on Wheels.

Classes are 2 hours, once a week for 4 weeks at a cost of \$47 for the course. More advanced classes are 8 weeks at a cost of \$64.

We teach Introduction to Computers, Word Processing, Internet and E-Mail, Digital Imaging, Picasa and Genealogy. How to Use Your Digital Camera, Computer Maintenance, Using Facebook and How to Use E-Bay are 2-hour classes and cost \$15. We are planning a class on how to make full use of a cell phone.

Classes are small—only eight students per class, with one instructor and two coaches.

For more information, call Eileen Herkes, Director of Education, at 845-623-5467 or 845-356-4198.

## Pittsburgh Presbyterians Hit Hunger Out of the Park

From Presbyterian News Service

The Pittsburgh Pirates will not be seen in the major league baseball playoffs again this year — they just concluded their 19th consecutive losing season. But thanks to a unique partnership with Pittsburgh Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Bucs are big time champions off the field this season.

On July 22, Pittsburgh Presbytery had their night at the Pirates' PNC Park and launched "Home Runs for Hunger" to help raise awareness and support for those people in Southwestern Pennsylvania needing food.

During the second half of the season, Presbyterian congregations "sponsored" Pirates home games and every time a Pirate player hit a home run, the sponsoring Presbyterians gave \$100 or more to the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank.

Through on-line giving, individuals, churches, and several businesses — and Pirates hitters — raised \$8,076, easily exceeding the goal of \$6,000 set when the campaign started.

"We learned a lot and more importantly we helped people in the context of the Biblical mandate to 'feed the hungry.'"

On Fan Appreciation Night at PNC Park, September 24, a check was presented before the Pirates game to the food bank by the Rev. Doug Portz, associate pastor to Pittsburgh Presbytery and the Rev. Ken White of Southminster Presbyterian Church in Mt. Lebanon, one of the major supporting congregations of the campaign.