

The Carriage Stone

January 2012

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



Congregational Meeting

Sunday, February 12, 2012
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"The Carriage Stone" is the Newsletter of
The New Hempstead Presbyterian Church

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**Do you really accept the message that God
is head over heels in love with you?**



--Brennan Manning, *The Ragamuffin Gospel*

I love this question and its implications so much that I have now posed it to you twice—once in the sermon on January 1 and here in my first column of the New Year. At first reading, it's an odd question to ask—why should we mortals, we human creatures, think that the Ruler of the Universe should love each one of us—be *in love* with us?

It's an odd question; some might suggest it is an heretical idea. But I believe that in the Incarnation of God in Jesus Christ, God has demonstrated the worth of each and every person who was ever born, or ever will be born. By becoming one of us, by suffering a tortuous death on the cross, God in Jesus Christ proved his love for humankind—and all creation. And God vindicated him by raising him from death.

So—what does it mean for you to say, “God is head over heels in love with me?” How would living in that kind of God-love change your life this year? How would your life be different if the love of God for you was your guiding principle? For me, when I remember God's overwhelming love for me, I'm easier on myself. And when I'm easier on myself, I am easier on others.

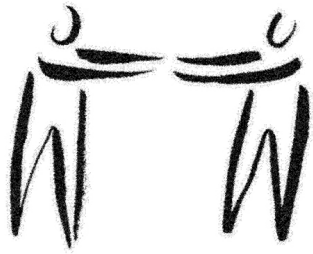
The closing verse to the Christmas carol, “Away in a Manger” goes,

*Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,
And fit us for heaven to live with Thee there.*

The scholar Mark Noll says, “Getting ready for life in heaven with God has the interesting consequence of getting us ready for life on earth with one another.” The more we realize God's incredible love for us, despite our sinfulness, the more we love ourselves in that light. The more of God's love we live in, the more of God's love we share with each other. And the more love we share among ourselves, the more we know there is a world dying (literally) to have that love spread around in concrete ways. Feeding the hungry. Visiting the sick and the imprisoned. Working for justice and human rights here in our own community and around the world.

My prayer for us at New Hempstead Presbyterian Church is that this year we know the crazy, head-over-heels nature of God's love for us. And that we so revel in that love that we can't help but live it out in our community, and the world.

New Year's Blessings, everyone!



From the Deacons

The Board of Deacons would like to thank the congregation for your generous support in our recent community outreach program. Thanks to you, thirty-three pairs of pajamas and fifty-two books were collected for needy children living in homeless shelters. The Pajama and Book program serves children in forty-two states and has donated 1,000,000 pairs of pajamas in ten years. Our collection will go to a center located in Rockland County.



Youth Food Drive

The Youth Group

From Mark Zacheis

The Youth Group is pleased to report that 990 pounds of food were donated to People to People last year. Thank you for your generous donations. We want to continue our food drive into 2012 by starting of January with food that starts with J. Jam, Jelly, Jerky, Junk Food... but any donation is gratefully accepted. Just a reminder that Shoprite has a can-can sale this time of year, and we like cans ('cause they're heavy!). We need your help to break 1000 pounds this year!

From The Treasurer

Mark Zacheis, Treasurer

The numbers for 2011 are in and I am happy to report that pledge giving exceeded \$100,000 last year – a nice increase over 2010. Your giving means that 2011's deficit is much smaller than 2010's was. For a full recount of 2011's finances, come to the annual meeting on February 12.

Tax statements for 2011 were distributed at the beginning of the month. If you have any questions about them, please be sure to ask. Envelops for 2012 are available for pick up in the narthex. Please pick them up and save us the cost of mailing. If you didn't find a box with your name on it, please ask.

The first envelope in the box is for the Per Capita offering. This year our church will be paying \$29.25 for each active member, a total for us of \$2867. This money is our contribution to the greater Presbyterian Church, with a portion of the money going to support the programs of the Presbytery of the Hudson River, a portion to the Synod of the Northeast, and a portion to the General Assembly. We're asking that each active member consider giving \$29.25 in this blue envelope.



Concert at the Church

New Hempstead Presbyterian Church proudly presents an Afternoon of Glorious Chamber Music on Sunday, January 22 at 3 PM in the Sanctuary.

A brass quintet and clarinet choir (members of the Hudson Valley Symphonic Wind Ensemble) will perform. Admission is free though a free-will offering would be appreciated.

Light refreshments will be served.



MILESTONES

We often ask children "what do you want to be when you grow up," and over the years we will usually get an assortment of possible callings. **Stephanie Martignetti** wasn't like that. In fourth grade, she said she wanted to be on Broadway. She is one of those very few people who has always known what she wanted to do, and she is so incredibly fortunate to have been given the gifts needed to achieve her goals. It hasn't fallen into her lap; she has worked hard, continually trained and paid her dues in summer stock, regional theater, and for almost four years on the road in touring companies and major productions (Oklahoma! A Chorus Line, Mary Poppins.) So it is with immense pleasure and pride I share the news that Stephanie will make her **Broadway debut** this spring in the new musical "Nice Work if You Can Get it" starring Matthew Broderick and Kelli O'Hara; and directed and choreographed by Kathleen Marshall. Stephanie will be an ensemble cast member as well as understudy the character "Billie Bendix" which is played by Kelli O'Hara. Rehearsal begins in February and more info will soon be up on the official website:

niceworkonbroadway.com

You can also read about the show by following the link

<http://BroadwayWorld.com/viewcolumn.php?colid=327400>

We recently learned of the passing of the **Rev Donn Jann**, on September 5, 2011. Donn was the pastor of our church from 1988 to 1993, having previously retired from his duties at the Presbyterian Church (USA) Foundation. We remember Donn for visiting us at our home the Sunday afternoon of the first time that we came to visit the church. Many of us have this same memory of him. Jocelyn and Bob Petrikat remember Donn as the pastor who married them. Craig Chalfin remembers Donn for his children's sermons – he always checked the bulletin for the title. And who can forget the pool parties?

Donn retired as our minister and moved with his wife Nancy to the southwest, where they lived the rest of their lives (Nancy preceded Donn in passing in 2009). We offer his children our condolences and prayers.



We are in the process of updating the **Church Directory**. If there are any changes in your contact information as it was listed last year, or if you would like to add or correct your email, add children's names, etc.; if someone was not listed that

you believe should be, please provide us with these additions, corrections, etc. by February 1. Information should be sent to

office@nhpchurch.org

or placed in Shirley's mailbox.

Congregational Meeting

The annual Congregational and Corporation meeting of the New Hempstead Presbyterian Church will be on Sunday, February 12 immediately following Worship.

We will elect officers, review an exciting year of mission and activity, hear the 2012 budget and discuss the life of the church.

The whole church family is welcome to attend; you must be an active member to vote.

Save Money on Energy

From Shirley Martignetti

Are you participating in the Affinity program with Just Energy?

If yes, then check to see that you are receiving the best rates.

If not, then what are you waiting for?

New rates are available. I locked in the church and my home for 1 year. Current enrollees may wish to make sure they are getting the latest rates

People that choose this provider should sign up with Just Energy under the Affinity Program and our code: NHPC.



Just Energy, the parent company of Hudson Energy, is New Hempstead Presbyterian Church's preferred gas & electric supplier.

Here is an easy way to not only save, but generate funds for our church as well. In fact, you will continue to be billed as usual by your utility. This is our way of helping you lower your gas & electric bills and at the same time make an

ongoing donation to our church. It is a WIN – WIN situation.

Just Energy is currently offering a variable rate program with an introductory 3-month locked-in rate of \$.62 per Ccf for gas, and \$.066 per kWh under our "Rate Flex" program.

In addition, Just Energy is also offering for Affinity Program participants the following fixed rates:

Electric fixed rates are:

\$0.074 per kWh for 1 year,
\$0.077 per kWh for 3 years, and
\$0.078 per kWh for 5 years.

O&R's 12-month average is over \$.09 per kWh.

Gas fixed rates are:

\$.66 for 1 year per Ccf,
\$.71 for 3 years per Ccf, or
\$.74 for 5 years per Ccf.

To take advantage of this offer, please call us and mention code: NHPC

To date, the church has received over \$1,700 in donations from Just Energy due to your expanding member enrollments! Your participation makes a difference!

I urge you to take immediate advantage of this ongoing program. For further information regarding residential or commercial accounts, call @ 877-463-7669 x 1956 or Miriam @ 845-228-3401.

[If you'd prefer to enroll by mail, either Shirley or Bob can send you a form to print and send in.]

Here are some pictures from Advent preparation



Couldn't hang all those greens on an empty stomach, could we?

Good thing we have so many talented chefs.

courtesy of Carmen Bermudez.

Pam adjusts a bow

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