



# The Carriage Stone

November 2012

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



## Jesus Calms the Storm

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

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## The Season of Gratitude

“Satisfy us with your love in the morning  
And we will live this day in joy and praise”

(Psalm 90: 14, paraphrase)

As many of you know, sunflowers (*Helianthus annuus*, for those of you who are gardeners and/or horticulturalists) are my favorite flower. Someone once told me that sunflowers are the flower of gratitude. I have never been able to find any references to support this, but in my mind, they are always linked to gratitude: they lift their heads to the sun as if to say, “Thankyouthankyouthankyou”!

This is, of course the season of gratitude. But I have found that my life seems even more blessed if I take the time to say “thank you” to God every day. The more specific I am the more God’s blessings penetrate my often gnarly, anxiety-ridden heart.

So, in the spirit of Thanksgiving, here is a very partial list of the things I am grateful for, in no particular order.

- Naps
- New Orleans Coffee from the Art Café in Nyack
- Worship at New Hempstead Presbyterian Church
- Autumn leaves
- Cats and their purrs
- My long-suffering husband, Howard
- New babies here at church
- A congregation excited about sharing Jesus and his love with the community
- A hot bath scented with lavender
- Stories—those of the Bible, and others.
- Seekers who are wondering if following Jesus is the path for their lives.

What’s on your gratitude list?

Thanksgiving Blessings, everyone!



## Thanksgiving Baskets

From the Fundraising Committee

It's hard to believe that Thanksgiving is only a few weeks away, on November 22. As we're making plans to feast with friends and family, let's take time to remember those who worry about putting food on the table every day.

New Hempstead has a great and long-standing tradition of providing food for a Thanksgiving meal to needy families in Rockland County, and we'd like to keep that tradition going. This year, we're again asking folks to sponsor Thanksgiving food baskets. For about \$40, you can provide everything needed for a complete turkey dinner with all the trimmings.

If you wish to sponsor a basket, please sign up on the sheet in the Colonial Room before November 18. There are two ways to sponsor a basket:

- 1) Take the Thanksgiving basket shopping list and head for the grocery store. When you've purchased all of the items on the list, please put them in 1–2 grocery bags and bring them to church on or before Sunday, November 18. Please plan to keep the turkey at home in the freezer until November 18.
- 2) If you'd rather have us shop for you, please give your \$40 donation to Mark Zacheis or Pam Fink by November 18.

Also, we'll gladly accept any monetary donations or food items from the list that will help us to

provide more Thanksgiving dinners for Rockland's needy. If a group of folks want to go together to put together a dinner, that would be great, too. Just let us know how many of you plan to participate— use the sign-up sheet—so that we have enough meals for the families.

The Youth Group has “volunteered” to do the shopping, but we're looking for volunteers to help get the food organized. If you have time on November 18 after coffee hour, we'd really appreciate some help. And if we have a few volunteers to help with the food distribution on Monday November 19, that would be fantastic. Let's do our part to make Thanksgiving a little happier for some of our Rockland neighbors.

*[Parents, this is an excellent opportunity to introduce your child to helping others in an atmosphere which is safe and familiar to them—in the supermarket buying food or in the church organizing the bags. Naomi helped shopping for food items (counting out for the baskets we sponsored) and putting food into bags. We had many opportunities to share values and discuss the plight of the poor in our community. Now she regularly prepares food for and serves the hungry in Nyack at Soup Angels. —Bob]*



## **The Mission of our Church**

Back in May, Lori used her column to introduce the new mission statement drafted by the Mission committee and approved by the Session. This statement, published to anyone interested in our church through our website, describes in general terms our mission. Four of the seven points describe our intended outreach to the community and the world.

What we were missing, until now, was a statement of what we were actively doing as a congregation to fulfill that portion of our mission. Now, thanks again to the Mission committee, we have this summary of what we are doing in the community—and what an impressive list it is!

*The mission of New Hempstead Presbyterian Church calls us to partner with community organizations to help those in need, and to promote social justice. Here are some of the organizations and efforts we have participated in over the past several years:*

- *Youth Group Food Drive to benefit the food pantry of People to People of Rockland County (ongoing)*
- *Helping Hands of Rockland County – hygiene kits and serving meals to safe haven clients*
- *School supplies to benefit the children of the Martin Luther King Multi-Purpose Center in Spring Valley*
- *“Walk to Feed the Need”, sponsored by Germonds Presbyterian Church, to benefit Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, Meals on Wheels of Rockland County, Interfaith Breakfast Program in Spring Valley, and the food pantry of People To People of Rockland County*
- *Thanksgiving Baskets to local missions and individuals in need*
- *Pajama Program – Rockland County Chapter, providing pajamas and books to homeless children*

- *Warm clothing for day laborers in Rockland County*
- *Ramapo High School Multicultural Club, to benefit Young Haitian Refugees*
- *College Care Packages for youth away at College*
- *“Gift Angels for Seniors” program of Rockland Home Aides*
- *Peru Pilgrimage and Partnership with the people of La Oroya, Peru*
- *Supplies for families in need at Rockland Family Shelter*
- *Hygiene Kits for Victims of Natural Disaster through Church World Services*
- *Soup Angels – support and volunteers*
- *Red Hands Peace Project, to create awareness of the use of children as soldiers in armed conflict*
- *Peace Prayer Board to emphasize our role as peacemakers during A Season of Peace*
- *Habitat for Humanity*
- *Presbyterian Prison Ministry*

*The Deacons’ ongoing “Change-in-a-Jar Program” supports many causes, including:*

- *Helping Hands of Rockland County*
- *“Colors” Books for Haiti*
- *Rockland Interfaith Breakfast Program*
- *Rockland Family Shelter*
- *People to People of Rockland County*
- *Martin Luther King Multi-Purpose Center*
- *Golden Stitchers*

*NHPC also actively supports national and international mission activities of the Presbyterian Church, USA:*

***One Great Hour of Sharing*** – sharing resources with people in need around the world through programs

*providing disaster assistance, hunger relief and self-development of people;*

**Pentecost Offering** - *supporting ministries with children, youth and young adults at the local and national level;*

**Peacemaking Offering** – *gifts are used to advocate peace and justice around the world;*

**Christmas Joy Offering** – *supports students at racial ethnic schools and colleges, and supports the needs of families who have devoted their lives to the mission of the PC(USA).*



### **Peacemaking Proceeds to Benefit Wounded Warrior Project**

Thank you to everyone who gave generously to the Peacemaking Offering in October. New Hempstead's portion of the proceeds will be going to the Wounded Warrior Project, whose mission is to honor and empower military service members who incurred service-connected wounds, injuries or illness on or after September 11, 2001, and their families.

Until the day we can say, "Hallelujah, no more war!" let us remember and help those who've served so bravely.

**DON'T STOP PRAYING FOR PEACE!**



### **From the Deacons**

Thank you to all who have been giving so generously to the current Change in the Jar objective. The Deacons are very excited to be able to send a sizable contribution toward the purchase of beautiful and colorful books to Haitian children. It is hard for us at New Hempstead to fully comprehend a home, or a child, void of a single book, as most of our homes and certainly our schools have an endless supply of choices and genres. We hope to be able to send donations enough for at least one case of books, and hopefully more.

Please circle the date November 17 on your calendar if you enjoy good food and extraordinary talent. The evening will be filled with many delightful surprises, laughter and good old-fashioned fellowship. The Deacons as well as our talented line-up of entertainers are working hard to guarantee a good time for all. A soup supper will be served at 6 PM followed by the entertainment at seven. All activities will take place in the Colonial Room and the sanctuary. A donation of \$10 will be taken at the door. Children under 13 will be free.

On October 21, the families of our newest, most precious members were recognized with a special coffee hour and gift. The newest additions to our flock of little ones at NHPC are Teagan Loren, son of Kim Deen and Ricky Wan; Olivia, daughter of Arni Osei and Rex Asare; Lilyanna, daughter of Kristen and Stephen Coyle; and Alexandra, daughter of Yomin and Ratih Gunawan.

## **Helping Hands: Saving Lives, Giving Hope, Preserving Dignity**

On Sunday, October 21, the congregation of New Hempstead Presbyterian learned how we could make a real difference in the lives of homeless men and women in Rockland County. Jean-Max Naissant, Executive Director of Helping Hands, visited us during worship service on that date and explained the mission and programs of Helping Hands.

Helping Hands' primary mission is to help homeless men and women find alternatives to life on the streets. One way they achieve this is by working with local communities of faith to provide overnight shelter to homeless individuals. Since 2004, a network of local houses of worship has opened their doors to the guests of Helping Hands, from mid-November through mid-April each year.

Jean-Max explained how the Safe Haven Program works: Individuals seeking shelter for the night are picked up by van from the International Marketplace in Spring Valley, and transported to that night's safe haven host site, where they receive a hot meal. Each guest has a sleeping bag supplied by Helping Hands. All guests are screened for alcohol and drugs, to ensure the health and safety of all. In the morning, guests are picked up and transported back to Helping Hands' Outreach Office, where they are able to shower, do laundry and eat breakfast provided by the Interfaith Breakfast Program. They can receive counseling, case management and other needed services at the Outreach office as well.

Helping Hands is currently getting ready for their ninth Safe Haven season, and Jean-Max is hoping to be able to extend the network of participating houses of worship this season. Last year, as many as 40 individuals were sheltered some nights, and Jean-Max believes the numbers will, unfortunately, grow this season.



Jean-Max Naissant, MS, pictured at the Helping Hands Outreach Office.

New Hempstead Presbyterian will be joining in partnership with Helping Hands this season, and is planning to provide dinner and overnight shelter to Safe Haven guests on March 19, 20 and 21. We'll need volunteers from our congregation to serve dinner and be overnight chaperones on those dates. Jean-Max will be working closely with us to get ready to welcome our guests. Laura Metallo-Bidon and other members of the Mission Committee will be coordinating this effort at NHPC.

Thanks to Jean-Max Naissant for taking the time to visit us, and sharing this opportunity to serve the most vulnerable members of our community.