

# The Carriage Stone

October 2013

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



I bless God  
every chance I get;  
my lungs expand with his praise.

Psalm 34:1, The Message



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

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## Because We All Need to Be Reminded...



Ah, autumn. My favorite time of year. (Until spring, that is.) That time of year when we get back into routines. School, sports, musical groups and Church on Sundays. Worship has returned to 11:00, and the choir is back! It's a good time for a refresher course on worship: what it is, and what it is not.

First, what worship **is not**. Worship is not a weekly "pit stop," a spiritual filling station where we come in and top up our tank to get through the next week. If we leave feeling enriched, that's wonderful, and a result of having been in the presence of God and the people of God. But if we think there was something amiss with the service because "I didn't get anything out of it," we are missing the point. Indeed, we are missing the Object of our worship.

This leads us to what **worship is**.

**We worship God because God is God, and we are not.**

In a culture of "entertain me," we forget that we are not the audience. The lay leader, preacher and choir are not the performers.

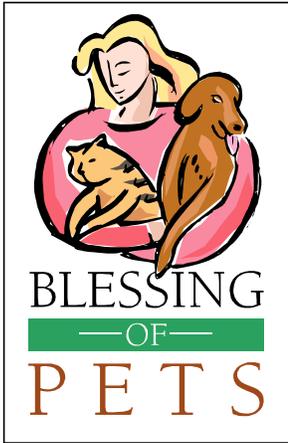
The Christian philosopher Søren Kierkegaard rightly reminds us that GOD is the audience. The congregation are the performers.

"Alas, in regard to things spiritual, the foolish of many is this, that they in the secular sense look upon the speaker as the actor, and the listeners as theatergoers who are to pass judgment upon the artist. But the speaker is not the actor – not in the remotest sense. No, the speaker is the prompter. There are no mere theatergoers present, for each listener will be looking into his own heart. The stage is eternity, and the listener, if his is the true listener (and if he is not, he is at fault) stands before God during the talk. The prompter whispers to the actor what he is to say, but the actor's repetition of it is the main concern – is the solemn charm of the art. The speaker whispers the word to the listeners. But the main concern is earnestness: that the listeners by themselves, with themselves, and to themselves, in the silence before God, may speak with the help of the address. The address is not given for the speaker's sake, in order that men may praise or blame him. The listener's repetition of it is what is aimed for. If the speaker has that responsibility for what he whispers, then the listener has an equally great responsibility not to fall short in his task. In the theater, the play is staged before an audience who are called theatergoers; but at the devotional address, God himself is present. In the most earnest sense God is the critical theatergoer, who looks on to see how the lines are spoken and how they are listened to: hence here the customary audience is wanting.

What a blessing it is to be able to come before God and praise God simply because God is the Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer. We are not. That is a relief as refreshing as an autumn breeze.

To God be the glory!





## Blessing of the Pets

On Saturday, October 5, we will be blessing our pets and celebrating our animal companions at 4 PM in the Sanctuary. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to bring their pets to this special worship service. Bring your small pets and

participate in this service of praise to God for the gift of our furry, finned, winged, scaled, and otherwise accoutered pets!

As we have not reached the point Isaiah envisioned when the wolf and lamb will lie down together, please make sure your pets are properly housebroken and restrained for their safety.

## Peacemaking Offering 2013 to Benefit "Homes for Heroes"

October 6 is World Communion Sunday, and each year on this day, we receive the Peacemaking Offering. This is one of the four special offerings of the PC (USA), and your gifts to this offering support a variety of activities for peace and justice at all levels of the church: 50% is allocated to the Presbyterian Mission agency's peacemaking ministries; 25% is used by presbyteries and synods, and 25% is retained by our congregation for local peacemaking efforts.

This year, our local portion of the Peacemaking Offering will benefit "Homes for Heroes." This local, Rockland County not-for-profit organization is working to build housing for homeless veterans of the Iraq/Afghanistan War, at the former Camp Shanks site in Tappan, right here in Rockland County. That site served as a staging area and last stop in the US for over 1.3 million GI's who were leaving to fight in Europe during WWII. It is fitting that the site be preserved in part and used to house veterans now in need of housing and community support.

Through the efforts of "Homes for Heroes," eight units of rental apartments have already been constructed at the old Camp Shanks site, built specifically for honorably discharged, disabled and displaced men and women veterans. Tenants will be referred by the Veterans Administration. They hope to open the units on Veterans Day of this year, and they are now in the process of decorating and furnishing the apartments and putting on all the finishing touches in preparation for their incoming tenants.

The ultimate goal of "Homes for Heroes" is to build over 50 apartments at the site, so your support is very much needed. Please give generously to the Peacemaking Offering, and help "Homes for Heroes" give back to those who have given so much for our country.



Did you know that?

- On any given night, more than 300,000 veterans are living on the streets or in shelters in the U.S.
- Approximately 33% of homeless males in the U.S. are veterans
- Veterans are twice as likely as other Americans to become chronically homeless
- The number of homeless Vietnam-era veterans, male and female, is greater than the number of soldiers who died during the war.

Source: Veterans Inc., 2010

## Talent Show

From Howard Whitehouse and Kryste Andrews

Everyone had such fun at last year's talent show that we are planning another one, but it won't be complete without you! We know you have a talent. Here's your opportunity to share that talent with the congregation and see everyone



else perform as well. Music, storytelling, comedy, magic, poetry reading, drama, juggling, etc. are all welcome. Contact Howard or Kryste for help putting together your act.

The show is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, November 2.

## Save the Dates!

### Safe Haven at NHPC on December 11, 12 and 13

From Laura Metallo-Bidon

Once again this year, NHPC is proud to partner with Helping Hands of Rockland County to provide Safe Haven for our neighbors in need. Volunteers will be needed on these dates to prepare and serve dinner, and to provide overnight chaperone to our guests in Murchison Hall. Contact Mission Chair Laura Metallo-Bidon to learn how you can help.

## Adult Learning Center of Rockland

The Adult Learning Center of Rockland is an organization of retired seniors who volunteer to teach other seniors how to use computers. They are starting classes on computers, word processing, genealogy, digital imaging, etc. They also have an open house where they can answer questions. For more information, contact Eileen Herkes at (845) 623-5467 or (845) 356-4198.

## Call Bell Connect

Good Samaritan Hospital is embarking on a new program called Call Bell Connect. They are looking for volunteers who would interact with staff, guests and patients in a non-clinical manner. Volunteers do not need to have any medical knowledge, just a willingness to help others and to be "good help to those in need." The hospital will train you.

If this sounds interesting, contact Andrea Studnitzer at (845) 368-5588 or via e-mail at: [andrea\\_studnitzer@bshsi.org](mailto:andrea_studnitzer@bshsi.org) and she will ensure that you get the proper paperwork.

## Thank You

Thank you to the Thruway Men's group for installing a new mailbox for the church. They have dedicated the effort in memory of Barbara Hurley.



Regular reader **Sandy Miller** pointed out that last month's *Carriage Stone* mentioned that money was given to the Heifer Fund in honor of **Charles Martin** but I had not noted his passing (November of 2012) previously. I have not been good at keeping up the milestone column, so I will try to catch you up.

I also failed to welcome **Geraldine Cleminson, David Hoag and Donna Hoag** who joined at Pentecost. Donna was baptized at that time as well. Recently, however, Geraldine announced she was returning to Indiana to be with her family. We will miss her (and Wyatt.)

**Barbara Wassmann** entered the church triumphant in April. She served NHPC as an Elder and as financial recording secretary.

In May, **Kristen Zacheis**, who grew up in this church, transferred her membership to a local church in Maryland.