



# The Carriage Stone

January 2014

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



It's time once more  
for the congregational meeting

A meeting of the congregation and corporation of the  
New Hempstead Presbyterian Church  
is called  
after Worship on **Sunday, February 9, 2014.**  
All members are requested to attend.



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

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**Next Deadline:**

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**Submissions:** in my mailbox  
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## Things I Love About My Job: Part One

I'm going to take my next two newsletter columns to write about what a wonderful job I have, and why I'm happy that I get to get up every morning and go to work with you.

The first thing I love is this congregation. You are loving, open-minded and open-hearted, always eager to welcome folks. You are willing to try new things: in worship, in study and in mission to those outside of our faith community. You are respectful of other people: their ideas, their feelings, their differences, their quirks.

I love that you have welcomed me and Howard into your fellowship. I am grateful that you have welcomed me into your homes for visits with you. Whenever you have the need or desire for a visit, I am a phone call away. (All of my clergy friends agree that folks think that when someone needs a visit, the Angel Gabriel to come down to the pastor in person to tell the pastor, "Go see Mrs. Jones." It doesn't work that way. We pastors are not psychic. When you want or need us, call us!)

I love that we can have hard conversations with love, and agree to disagree with one another.

I love that we eat together, laugh together, worship God together, sing together, pray together.

I love that we go out into the world to serve the risen Christ together.

In short, I love the work I do here with and among you. The last eight years have been some of the most joy-filled of my life. I look forward to many, many more.

*Go forth and see  
Mrs. Jones for she  
has need of your comfort.*





## Helping Hands/Safe Haven Update

From Laura Metallo-Bidon

On December 11, 12 and 13th, New Hempstead Presbyterian Church once again provided Safe Haven to our fellow Rocklanders in need of a hot dinner and overnight shelter, through our partnership with [Helping Hands Interfaith Coalition for the Homeless of Rockland County](#). On Wednesday night, we were privileged to host 26 guests; on Thursday night, we hosted 23 guests, and Friday we hosted 21 guests. To mark the holiday season, we were also able to provide each guest with a gift of a new warm winter scarf to keep them warm through the winter. And thanks to generous donations from members of the congregation, we also had plenty of hygiene supplies, clothes and winter coats on hand for those who needed them.

The Mission Committee sends a special thank-you to *everyone* who volunteered and donated to this effort: special thanks to the Youth Group and Deacons for cooking and serving, and to the Bermudez family --Joe's Chili extraordinaire, and desserts donated by Christina were a big hit! We were also moved to be joined by members of the Men's Group who use Murchison Hall, who joined with us in this effort—helping to serve our guests with grace and overwhelming hospitality. Our overnight chaperones also deserve a special thank you, for their willingness to give up the comfort of their own beds to make sure we could provide safe, overnight shelter to those who have no bed of their own. Thanks to one and all.

**Mark your calendars—our next Safe Haven nights are scheduled for Friday, February 14 and Friday, March 7. Contact Laura Metallo-Bidon if you are able to**

**cook, serve or chaperone on either of those nights.**

Please remember that Helping Hands is always in need of volunteers to screen, drive and provide support to their guests throughout the season. Please read this letter from Helping Hands Board President Raoul Cansino, and consider how you can help.

Dear friends,

Our ability to offer Safe Haven to our homeless neighbors depends almost completely on volunteers.

We especially need volunteers with cars to drive our guests to the Safe Haven from Spring Valley in the evening or back to Spring Valley in the morning. Evening drivers meet the screener in the International Food Market Plaza in Spring Valley at 8:15 PM and follow the Helping Hands van to the Safe Haven with assigned passengers. Morning drivers pick up at the Safe Haven and drop off their passengers in Spring Valley.

We are also looking for overnight chaperones for the Safe Haven (21 years and up). The chaperones (ideally one man and one woman) spend the night at the Safe Haven. Their purpose is to respond in case there is need during the night (for example, because of a medical emergency) and to supervise the morning clean-up. It is extremely rare that the chaperones need to take action, and, in my experience, many chaperons sleep through the night.

My most rewarding task as president of Helping Hands is to be a Safe Haven volunteer, knowing that with my help, dozens of people who would otherwise be out in the cold are safe and warm for the night. Won't you join me?

Peace, Raoul Cansino, President



## LOCAL MISSIONS

### Keep the Light Shining in 2014!

From Laura Metallo-Bidon

Last month's Christmas Joy offering reminded us to "let the love represented by the birth in Bethlehem *illuminate* our hearts and *shine* in our actions." As we look back on the past year at New Hempstead Presbyterian Church, we can see that the one true light really did illuminate our hearts and shine in our actions:

- Our light shined on the **Mazariego Family**, as we helped them return to their home in Ba Mar Trailer Park after they were forced out by Hurricane Sandy;
- Our light shined on the hungry of Rockland County, as we donated over 1,000 pounds of food to **People to People** this year;
- In March, our light shined as we served over 55 hot dinners and provided overnight shelter for our **Helping Hands/Safe Haven** guests;
- Not to forget the needs of our furry friends, our "Change in the Jar" program shined our light on **Hi Tor Animal Shelter** and the **House Rabbit Society**, among others;
- Our light shined on our brothers and sisters facing **crisis and natural disasters** around the world, through our donations to One Great Hour of Sharing;
- We've provided the gift of clean water, **chickens for laying eggs** and seeds to grow fruits and vegetables through

Heifer International, in memory of **Charles Martin**;

- Our light shined on **homeless veterans** in Rockland County, through our support of Homes for Heroes, which opened eight supported apartments in November of this year;
- Our light shined on 40 families who were able to enjoy a hearty Thanksgiving meal through the **Thanksgiving Baskets** you provided;
- In December, our light shined again as we served over **68 hot meals** and provided overnight shelter to our Safe Haven guests;
- Not to mention Soup Angels and all the other efforts where **individual members** of our congregation **shine their light** on a regular basis.

The light of NHPC is shining brightly in our sanctuary, in our community, and beyond. Thanks to your prayers, support and generosity, we will keep the light shining in 2014 and beyond!

### Video Camera

From Mark Zacheis

Many thanks to Jane Sebok who a number of years ago donated a video camera, which we have been using each week to record and broadcast our church service each Sunday. Unfortunately, we have come to the end of the useful life of the camera. Before we go out and



buy a new camera, we wanted to put out the word to the congregation. If you happen to own a video camera that you don't use anymore, consider donating it and speak to Mark.



### **New Hempstead Congregation to Study Gun Violence and Gospel Values**

It seems that you can't listen to the news without reports of more violence, especially violence involving guns. For four Sundays in March, we will be studying "Gun Violence and Gospel Values." This is a denominational resource guide written to start a conversation around the relationship between our Christian Values and the havoc wrought in our nation by the abuse and misuse of firearms.

We will meet in the sanctuary after worship as we begin the season of Lent, a time of introspection, prayer and deepening our relationship with Christ and his call to us.

Please plan to be a part of this important conversation. Exact dates to follow soon.



**Rev. Margery Rossi  
to Lead Worship and  
Workshop on  
Spiritual Gifts**

Sunday, March 2, the Rev. Margery Rossi will lead worship and preach. After worship, she will conduct a workshop on "Rediscovering our Spiritual Gifts." Rev. Rossi led this workshop for the elders and deacons in the fall, and it was a fun, enlightening event.

God has blessed each one of us with gifts and skills. When we discover what those are, we find our place for joyful service in Christ's Church.

Please mark your calendars for this important event. Details will follow.

### **From the Finance Committee**

Your finance committee would like to thank you all for your very generous donations over the past year. Final pledge statements for the year 2013 will be coming out shortly, if they have not already. If your statement says that you came up a little short last year, please consider writing a check to catch you up. Mark your check "pledge 2013." And if you haven't already, please pick up your envelopes for 2014 in the narthex. Thank you.



### **Per Capita**

From Mark Zacheis, Treasurer

The first envelope in your pledge envelope box is blue and it is marked *Per Capita*. Being Presbyterian, NHPC is part of a greater church, the Presbyterian Church (USA). Each year we contribute money to the work of the greater church, with some going to the Presbytery of the Hudson River, some to the Synod of the Northeast, and some to the General Assembly. The funds are used to support the operations of all three bodies, from salaries to mission programs to local church support programs. Some of the work of these bodies goes to directly support our church. Other goes into projects that are greater than any individual church.

The *Per Capita* is calculated on a per-member basis. New Hempstead's total contribution comes to approximately \$2,000 this year, which we will be paying. We are asking each of you to be part of the greater church as well, and contribute the individual per capita amount of \$30. Use the blue envelope at the front of your box of envelopes, or mark your check "per capita."

## Just Energy

From Mark Zacheis

A number of years ago state law deregulated the utility industry. Prior to deregulation we paid Orange and Rockland Utilities for all of our utility needs, including energy (gas and electric), delivery and maintenance. After deregulation, O&R kept the delivery and maintenance portion. Everyone was given the opportunity to select an energy provider, but assigned one if none was selected. The idea was to foster competition and in fact, it did. Our church selected Hudson Energy and our utility costs came down. Further, Hudson Energy ran a program where any of our members who signed up with them not only got a better rate on gas and electricity, but they also paid a monthly bonus to our church. A number of our members did sign up and the program was a winner. The rates were better and the

church did get the bonus.



Fast forward to today. Hudson Energy has been

taken over by Just Energy, the program continues, and our church still benefits. Moreover, O&R still does the billing, does the delivery and maintenance, and is still the contact point if you have a problem.

If you have not selected an energy provider, consider Just Energy for your own home. Checking the rates this month, it is still a great deal over the default O&R vendor. If you already are signed up with Just Energy, check on the life of your contract. It will expire and does need to be renewed. And be sure that they know to use promotion code NHPC on your account.

There are Just Energy forms on the table in the Colonial Room and an electronic copy should have accompanied this newsletter. And if you have any questions, please speak with Mark Zacheis.



## Christmas Letters

I received a copy of Joanna Meckley's Christmas letter from a member who thought that we all might be interested to hear how her life is going in California. If you sent out a letter this year to your friends that you'd like to have published, just send me a copy.

Season's greetings, my dear friends,

Well, it has been a year of life changes in many ways. I left Stony Point Center at the end of September 2012 (after eleven years there as a volunteer) and returned to my home in Sarver. The rest of 2012 was frenetic with downsizing and selling our home (an 8 room house on 1 1/2 acres with a large garage/workshop), hence no Christmas greetings last year. Not only was it a lot of physical effort, but also an emotional challenge. We had built that house and spent fifty years there raising our children, collecting "treasures", and making memories. By the end of the year there was a buyer for the property, and by late January 2013 I was settled in my new home.

I have a lovely three room apartment (independent living) on the campus of Mount Miguel Covenant Village, a life care facility in

sunny southern California. An active retirement community, MMCV has so much to offer it is a challenge to balance activities and personal time. This is a wonderful place to continue my "aging process". As my physical body presents more challenges, I sense my spiritual self continuing to grow.

I have been heartily welcomed into life at the village and have made many new friends; I am a teacher for woman's Bible study, help plan socials for our complex (eleven individuals and five couples), participate in a Univ. of Ca aging study, attend some exercise classes, chapel services, and other events both on and off campus.

It's a real joy to have Bridget and Tom about twenty minutes away, and I am now in the same time zone as Nathan and Priscilla. The downside is leaving other family and dear friends back east.

I am blessed and content. My wish for you at this holy season is that you might also be blessed and content, that the One whose birth we celebrate may be the source of all joy.

In the spirit of the season, Joanna

Laura Metallo-Bidon forwarded this little interesting tidbit from the letter sent out by the Rev. Willem and Janet Bodisco Massink. Willem was an interim pastor back at the turn of the century.

Laura writes:

In addition to the typical news of family get-togethers, vacations and church activities, this little gem was hidden:

"...Otherwise, things are going their usual ways, except one unusual way when Willem was arrested on May 13 for committing an act of civil disobedience, in the context of the "Moral Monday's" weekly protests in front of and inside the North Carolina General Assembly building. On several occasions, Janet, Elaine and Janet's sister Sue joined Willem in these weekly protests against the actions of the Republican led General Assembly to dismantle educational standards, women's rights, voting rights, health care, unemployment benefits, environmental standards, etc., in North Carolina. This has been quite an interesting time here in NC...."

And the Bidon family says, God bless you, Willem!

And the editor adds an Amen!