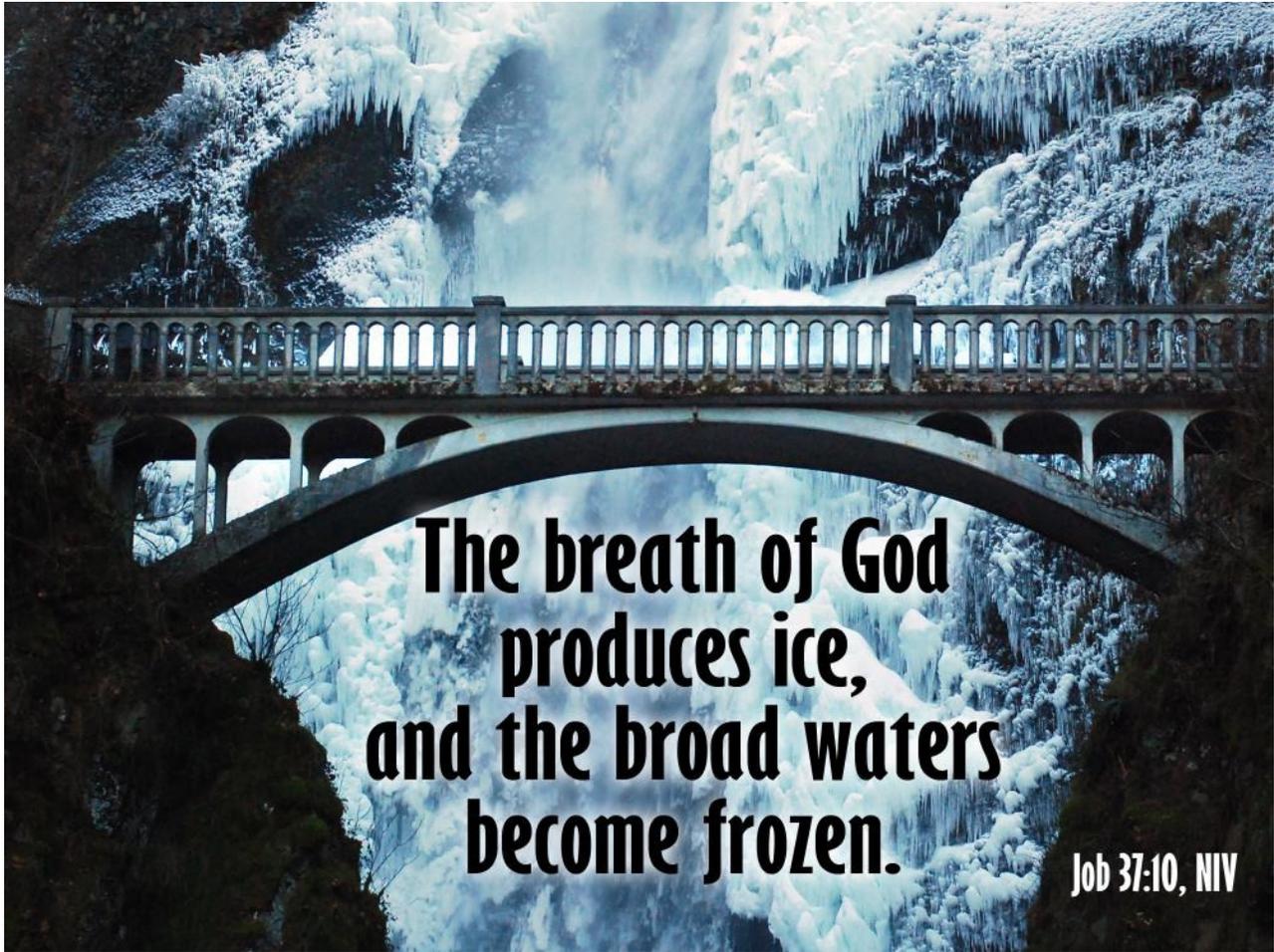




# The Carriage Stone

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

February 2014



**The breath of God  
produces ice,  
and the broad waters  
become frozen.**

**Job 37:10, NIV**



"The Carriage Stone" is the Newsletter of

**The New Hempstead Presbyterian Church**

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**Next Deadline:**

Sunday, February 23

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## Things I Love About My Job: Part Two



Last month I listed the joys of the congregation I am privileged to work with—you all. This month I want to share one of my favorite tasks. As you probably expect, one of the biggest thrills I get is studying Scripture to prepare for Sunday worship and the sermon.

The stories of our holy writings—The Bible—are stories (and letters, and poetry, and instruction) which constitute one long Love Story of God and God’s people. Being able to enter the sometimes alien territory of the Bible makes me feel like a scout for my people—I enter the world that the text presents, and I look around. I prayerfully bring those stories into conversation with the world in which we live, and see where there are points of contact. I then get to come back to you all on Sunday morning and report on what I have seen and learned. I invite you to come with me to the God who calls us to follow Him/Her in THIS world—Twenty-first century New York, and beyond.

The Bible is the first part of this conversation. My beloved lectionary study group, The Hudson River Heretics, is a source of God’s illuminating love in this conversation. We gather twice a month to discuss the upcoming texts. We listen for the voice of the Holy Spirit in our conversations. We pray for our congregations, that you all will be as excited about the Bible as we are, that your lives will be changed through the power of God’s love as we proclaim it weekly.

The second part of this conversation is in the form of other, non-holy texts (the newspaper, novels, poetry, art, music) to illumine the scripture for me. To show me things that have points of contact with God’s Word in scripture. The reformed theologian Karl Barth said that we are to do theology with the Bible in one hand and the newspaper (today, news may come to us in electronic forms) in the other. The better we know scripture, the more every aspect of our lives will remind us of something in the Bible.

The final conversation partner which joins me as I study Scripture is YOU—the congregation. You have been so gracious in allowing me to get to know you. I try to have you all in the study with me as I write the sermon. “What Good News do my people need to hear now?” It gets crowded on Saturdays in my study, but it’s a comfortable, beloved crowd.

As I wrote last month, it is a privilege to be your pastor, to have you all as conversation partners as together we follow Jesus into God’s Reign which is coming, and is indeed already among us. God bless you all!



## Helping Hands/Safe Haven Update

From Laura Metallo-Bidon

NHPC's next Helping Hands/Safe Haven is scheduled for Friday, February 14 in Murchison Hall. Volunteers are needed to cook, serve and clean-up on that night. Contact Mission Chair Laura Metallo-Bidon if you are available to help. Also, please see the message below from Helping Hands President, for an update on how Safe Haven clients have been faring in the brutal

Dear friends,

With the blowing snow making it difficult to see for more than half a block, and the temperatures dropping rapidly toward zero, we can all be grateful to be sheltered in our warm homes. I'm sure many of you may be wondering how our homeless neighbors in the county are faring under these extreme conditions. Here's some news:

This morning, the Helping Hands Outreach Center in Spring Valley was, as is usual these days, besieged by people in need of clothing, showers and help from Jacqui Drechler, our caseworker.

At noon, when the Outreach Center closed, Jacqui made calls to make sure that Spring Valley was opening the Kurtz Multi-Purpose Center as a warming center. Soon the word spread among the homeless, and people who had been camping out in the woods, in Memorial Park and under the Route 59 bridge began to arrive in the Kurtz center. So many of them were cold and soaked to the skin that they were invited to come to the Outreach Center to use our dryer.

Among the men who came in from the cold was a young fellow who has been afflicted by frostbite in one foot. He has been in and out of the Safe Haven and the hospital, but also struggles with a drinking habit that has caused him to be turned away at the pick-up spot at International Food. It's for people like him that we have set up a new AA meeting in Spanish every Tuesday. Hopefully, our friend with the frostbite will come to the meetings!

Because of the hazardous road conditions, we have made arrangements to walk into our back-up Safe Haven in United Church tonight. If the last couple of nights are any guide, we will have over thirty guests again. Jean-Max and Jacqui will be on duty and, thanks to United Church (and Carolyn Giles, who runs the Breakfast Program there), there will be plenty of food.

We are in conversation with several communities of faith that have expressed interest in joining our Safe Haven network (currently comprising nineteen houses of worship). If you know of congregations that might want to take part (either as Safe Havens or as partners of Safe Havens), please let me know. We want to extend the Safe Haven season, but need more help to accomplish this goal.

Despite the enormous demands of the Safe Haven in winter, we have not forgotten our goal of developing a supportive housing facility. Please contact me if you know of a likely site for a building that would accommodate between twenty and forty efficiency apartments. We need to be close to public transportation in a community that will welcome the kind of innovative housing we are planning to help people find a place they can call home.

That's all the news that's fit to print.  
Stay warm!

Peace, Raoul Cansino, President



winter weather.

### **Our Talented Congregation**

Jane Craig Sebok

“Our Talented Congregation” is a new column I am writing for the Carriage Stone starting with the March issue. In this column, I will let you know about any upcoming performances by members of the congregation for the month. For the month of March, we only have three, but I hope as time progresses, that I will be able to list more. If you or any member of your family has a performance coming up, be it a concert, play or any other expression of talent, please send me the information at [janesebok20@gmail.com](mailto:janesebok20@gmail.com) or simply tell me during coffee hour.

Here are the listings for March:

**March 2, 3:00 PM – Barbara Zacheis,**  
Hudson Valley Wind Ensemble,  
Maryknoll, 10 Pinesbridge Road,  
Ossining, NY. “Maryknoll Sisters  
Benefit.” For tickets and information, call  
[866-662-9900](tel:866-662-9900).

**March 16, 3:00 PM – Jane Craig Sebok,**  
Rockland County Concert Band, Green  
Meadow Waldorf School, Arts Building  
Auditorium, 307 Hungry Hollow Road,  
Chestnut Ridge, NY. Tickets can be  
obtained through a band member or at  
the door. Senior discounts available.

**March 23, 4:00 PM – Barbara Zacheis,**  
Adelphi Chamber Orchestra, River Dell  
Regional High School, 55 Pyle Street,  
Oradell, NY. “[Mozartean Echoes: An  
Orchestral Showcase](#).”