



The Carriage Stone

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

December 2014



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

484 New Hempstead Road, New City, NY 10956

The Reverend Doctor Lori Knight-Whitehouse, Pastor

Office: (845) 354-2372

E-mail: office@nhpchurch.org

Web: nhpchurch.org

Look for us on Facebook!

Administrative Assistant: Kristen Rabeler

Newsletter Editor:

Robert Phillhower

Next Deadline:

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Submissions: in my mailbox
or e-mail to

carriagestone@nhpchurch.org

Advent 2014

*Bright morning stars are rising
Bright morning stars are rising
Bright morning stars are rising
Day is a breaking in my soul*
—Appalachian folk hymn



Once again, the Christian Year has turned.

Annually, we leap into another gospel tradition and maneuver into a familiar yet foggy cycle. Sounds and signs of dubious direction surround us. Slipper and pajama sizes, not the quiet beauty of our noble tradition, often preoccupy us.
(*An Advent Sourcebook*. Chicago: Archdiocese of Chicago, 1988)

It can be difficult to draw our attention away from the busy-ness of the season to attend to the “Bright morning star” that is to arise in our midst.

Our Advent worship services this year will start a bit differently. After the introit is sung (that’s the bit the choir sings to begin our worship!) Kryste the music director will strike a note on a “Singing Bowl,” a beautiful bowl of handmade crystal that sounds a clear tone, which she will allow to resonate for a time. We will “keep silence” as the hymn puts it, and listen to this beautiful crystalline note. This will be an opportunity for us to allow the Holy Spirit to shift our attention and energy away from the culture around us and its demands and toward God our Creator, who makes radically different demands of us, the Church.

I have experienced this glorious clear sound with Kryste in her home. It moves all through the body, reminding us that all of our being, not just our “soul” is brought into the presence of God. It is a sound that unites us. Kryste and I both hope that this will be a peaceful, calming way to begin our worship services. May it be a reminder of our baptism, of our unity in Christ.

*Let all mortal flesh keep silence, and with fear and trembling stand
Ponder nothing earthly minded, for with blessing in his hand
Christ our God to earth descendeth, our full homage to demand.*

May we all experience a Holy Advent this year.

Peace,





**Socks for the Homeless
To Benefit the Men & Women of
Helping Hands**

From Laura Bidon, Mission Committee Chair

To make the holiday season a little bit brighter (and warmer) for the men and women of Helping Hands, New Hempstead Presbyterian Church is having a sock drive.



Everyone deserves warm feet. Join us in providing warm socks to those in need. Donate a NEW pair of warm socks, now

through December 21st. Men's and women's socks are needed and very much appreciated.

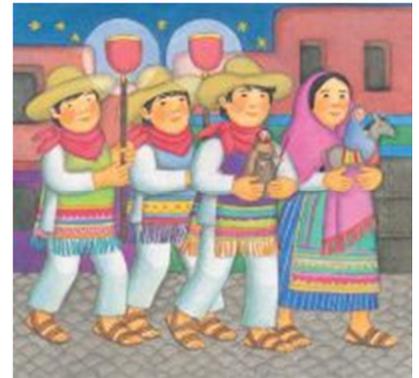
Why socks? Homeless people walk a lot, and are often on their feet all day. The only pair of socks they own is very likely to be wet, especially during the snowy winter months. Working, walking around all day, and no change of socks. No access to laundry facilities. You can guess how it is at night when our Safe Haven guests peel off their socks...

Drop off your donation of NEW, warm socks in the bin in the Colonial Room by December 21, and give a smile to the homeless...one pair of socks at a time.

Las Posadas comes to New Hempstead!

The festival of Las Posadas (or “the Inns” in English) is celebrated in Mexico other Hispanic cultures beginning December 16. It is a festival that celebrates Mary and Joseph looking for a place to stay in Bethlehem, and usually takes place over nine nights (to celebrate the nine months Mary was pregnant with Jesus.)

We will celebrate a truncated version on Sunday, December 14 at Sunday worship. This is a family celebration, geared especially toward children. Please mark your calendars and make sure to bring the kids for this special worship service. There will be special treats at Coffee Hour. And a piñata!!! Come, and bring a friend!





*O send out your light and your truth;
Let them lead me. –Psalm 43:3*

Christmas Joy Offering 2014

Supporting past, present and future leaders

The Christmas Joy Offering has been a cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930's. Today, it continues to support past, present and future church leaders in the following ways:

- 50% honors the faithfulness of current and retired church workers in need, through the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions
- 50% creates opportunities for students to attend Presbyterian-related racial ethnic schools and colleges.

“Without their help, I’d be out on the street. I have hundreds of friends now. Everybody here cares.”

–Reverend Thom Beech, Bradenton Florida, Westminster Manor

Rev. Beech and his wife received help from the Christmas Joy Offering to move into a retirement community. Though Beech’s wife lost her battle with Alzheimer’s a year after they moved, he was not alone because of the network of loving support he found at Westminster Manor.

Patricia Payan received a scholarship allowing her to attend the Presbyterian Pan American School in Kingsville, Texas, which is supported by the Christmas Joy Offering. It was there she

“I’m so very grateful for being able to go to this school. Presbyterians who contribute should know that, no matter how big or small the donation, they are doing something good.”

*–Patricia Hsu Payan, Helotes, Texas,
Forest Hills Presbyterian Church*

was given the opportunity to build her Christian faith, and a strong foundation for her future.

This season, follow in the tradition of meaningful gift giving by supporting the Christmas Joy Offering.

Please give generously.

Holiday Boutique

From the Fundraising Committee

The tables are sold. (24 at last count)

The new cookbook is back from the printer.

All that remains is to get the word out about our Holiday Boutique. Talk to Pam about getting posters to hang up and don’t forget to tell your family and friends.



Then, be sure to stop by Murchison Hall on Saturday, December 6 from 10 AM–5 PM where you’ll find lots of gift ideas. Start with some hot-spiced cider and then make your way through the vendor tables. So far, we have about 15 vendors signed up, bringing jewelry, cosmetics, housewares, wreaths and baked goods.

As always, we’re also looking for a few volunteers to supervise the church tables and to serve food. Please sign up on the sheet in the Colonial Room if you’d like to help out. And if you have any craft items or baked goods to donate, we’ll gladly take them. So be sure to bring your friends and families to the Holiday Boutique!



Our Talented Congregation

Jane Craig Sebok

For the month of December, we have several listings. Remember to let me know when you have performances coming up,

either at janesebok20@gmail.com, or during coffee hour.

Here are the listings for December:

December 6, 2 PM – Jane Sebok

Rockland County Concert Band

“Holiday Concert.”

Central Presbyterian Church, 89 Hudson Ave., Haverstraw, NY.

December 6, 4 PM – Sue Rentz

Rockland Camerata

“Handel’s Messiah (Christmas portion) with orchestra and soloists.”

Clarkstown Reformed Church, West Nyack, NY.

December 7, 3 PM – Jane Sebok

“Messiah Sing-Along.”

New Westchester Symphony Orchestra,
The Briarcliff Congregational Church,
30 S. State Rd., Briarcliff Manor, NY.

December 7, 4 PM – Barbara Zacheis

“Holiday Concert.”

Hudson Valley Wind Ensemble,
Mary Duke Ballroom, Tarrytown House,
Tarrytown, NY.

December 13, 6 PM – Jane Sebok

“Fund-Raising Benefit for the Community Food Pantry.”

Rockland County Concert Band,
St. Mary’s Episcopal Church, Tuxedo Park, NY.

December 14, 3 PM – Jane Sebok

New Westchester Symphony Orchestra,
White Plains Public Library,
100 Martine Ave., White Plains, NY.

December 17, 7 PM

December 18, 7 PM

Karl Witte, Katherine Witte and Naomi Philhower

“Holiday Concerts”

Nyack High School

Christian Herald Road, Nyack, NY.

(At press time, it is unclear who is performing which night.)

December 21, 3 PM – Jane Sebok

“Holiday Concert.”

Rockland County Concert Band,

Pearl River Library,

80 Franklin Ave., Pearl River, NY.



Hanging of the Greens

The first Sunday in Advent is November 30 and as is the tradition here, we will be decorating the church for the Christmas Season after the service that day. We’ll start at noon with a quick lunch, and then move into the Sanctuary. Many hands will make quick work and the result is always beautiful. So mark your calendar and plan on staying a little later that day.