



The Carriage Stone

September 2017

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



New Memorial Walkway!!



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

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FROM THE PASTOR

As I write, Southern Texas is being pummeled by Hurricane Harvey. Cars completely submerged, rooftops of homes barely visible. It is a catastrophe of Biblical proportions.

We live with such catastrophes personally as well. It begs the question, “Where is God?” The big, \$10.00 theological word for this is theodicy: why God lets bad things happen to good people. In the Bible, the entire Book of Job is dedicated to this question. The last four chapters give the answer, which is no answer at all. Job, who has maintained his innocence throughout the book, receives no answer.

What Job gets is God. God’s very self addresses Job, and tells him, essentially, I am God, and you are not. And God says this in some of the most beautiful poetry known to humanity—be sure to read it.

In the Gospels, God comes to share in our catastrophes in the person of Jesus Christ. Yes, Jesus heals, and raises the dead. Why doesn’t he do that for us now?

As Tevye the dairyman said in Fiddler on the Roof,

“I’ll tell you.
I don’t know.”

But here is what I do know.

In Jesus Christ, God knows the worst that humanity can know. Jesus died the most horrible death a Jew could die (Deut.21: 22; Gal. 3: 23) Jesus himself descended to the dead, and opened the doors of the underworld prison (1 Peter 3: 18-29ff). He knows our weakness, and has carried our pain. We who are baptized into Christ’s Body do not face our perils alone. We are promised that God will never leave us nor forsake us. When catastrophe strikes, we face it together, with God. Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

If you are looking for concrete ways to help the people of Texas, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance will be on the ground as soon as possible. Make you checks payable to New Hempstead Presbyterian Church, and put “Texas disaster relief” in the memo line.



Race and White Privilege Book Discussion

By Lori Knight-Whitehouse

The race and White Privilege discussion group will meet again on September 6 at 7:30 in the Colonial Room. We will be discussion (and comparing/contrasting) two books: *The Star Side of Bird Hill* by Naomi Jackson and *Between the World and Me*, by TaNahisi Coates. The Jackson book is a novel of two young girls from Queens who spend a summer in Barbados with their grandmother. The Coates work is a memoir in the form of a letter from the author to his son about the experience of being a Black Male in the US.

This discussion group has been meeting for about 18 months, (with breaks in the summer) and we have had many thoughtful, provocative discussions. Please join us for what will be more lively and loving discussions!



Choir practice is starting up, too, on Thursday, September 7 at 8 PM. If you enjoy singing, why don't you consider joining us? You don't have to be great at reading music to sing with us.

Talk with Kryste and she can answer any question you have.

Worship at 11 AM Starting September 10

On September 10, we go back to Worshipping at 11 AM with Bible Study in the Colonial Room at 9:30.



Fall Notes from the Mission Committee

- Thank you! Your generous gifts to the Pentecost Special Offering enabled us to send gifts of \$500 to each of our three recipients: Center for Safety and Change, Nyack Center, and the Martin Luther King Multipurpose Center. Your gifts are at work to serve children in need in our community!
- The Peace & Global Witness Special Offering will kick-off in September and be received on October 1, World Communion Sunday. This offering will benefit a local organization working for peace and social justice in our community. Who will be the recipient this year? Stay tuned!
- Save the date: Helping Hands' Annual Gala & Auction will be on Sunday, November 5 this year, at a new location and with a decidedly musical flair! NHPC had a great showing at this event last year. Mark your calendar; this is Helping Hands' major annual fundraiser, and your support is needed.