



The Carriage Stone

December 2017

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



ADVENT



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

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Under Pressure (Cue the David Bowie song!)

Advent is upon us—that season of preparing for the birth of Our Lord Jesus. This year, because Christmas is on a Monday, Advent is only 3 weeks long. (Last year, Christmas was on a Sunday, so Advent was 5 weeks long.)

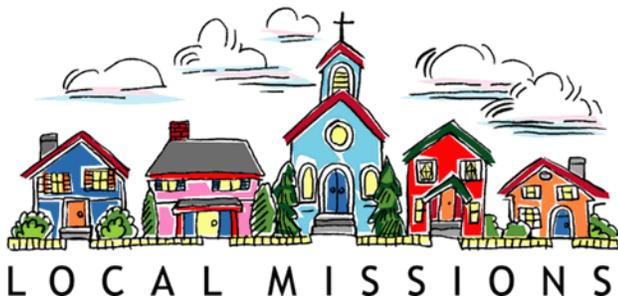
Three weeks feels really rushed to me. I feel pressured! There seems to be so much to do. Cards to write and send (when is the international post deadline, anyway?), maybe some cookies to bake, definitely sermons to write and worship services to plan. (That's my favorite bit.)

But it is good to remember that as Jesus told his friend Martha, “Only one thing is needed”. All we REALLY need to do to prepare for Christmas is to make a larger place in our lives for the Christ. It's not about the trappings—it's about the Child.

Advent (which means “coming”) is about watching and waiting, and preparing the way of the Lord. We look back to Christ's first coming, and ahead to his return, when history will end. Will we (and the world) ever be truly ready? Our world is an irrational world, and often our interior worlds are just as irrational. We cannot control that, but we can remember the words of the poet Madeleine L'Engle:

*"This is the irrational season,
when love blooms bright and wild.
Had Mary been filled with reason,
there'd have been no room for the child."*

May this Advent be a holy time of waiting and preparation, and making more room for Jesus Christ in our personal lives, and in our world.



Warm up the Winter

With New Hempstead Presbyterian Church

As we collect Hats, Gloves, and Socks for the Homeless.

Remember the needy of Rockland County as you do your Christmas shopping this year. Bring purchased items to Church in December.

They will be distributed to our homeless neighbors at Helping Hands and to the clients of the Salvation Army Food Truck in Spring Valley.

Contact Laura Metallo-Bidon with any questions.



Introducing... The New Safe Haven of Rockland!

Helping Hands' Safe Haven opened in the new Rockland County Warming Center on Veterans Day! There were about 30 guests on opening night, and it was toasty warm inside. Dinner is prepared by Bella Vita of Congers, delivered to the Center, and served by volunteers from local houses of worship. With room for up to 75 guests, the new Safe Haven will be able to help even more individuals in need, and will be expanding its outreach to Haverstraw and Nyack, as well as Spring Valley.

New Hempstead Presbyterian Church will be welcoming guests and serving dinner at the Safe Haven on **December 13-15**. We're looking for at least six volunteers to serve dinner and spend time with our guests. Contact Pam Fink or Laura Metallo-Bidon for details.





New Bible Study Series

Bible Study Begins in January

We will begin a new Bible study Sunday, January 7, after coffee hour. We will gather with our coffee in the

sanctuary and spend an hour or so in Holy Conversation around the Gospel of Mark. This is not instead of Ed Garcia's study in his home; it is in addition to it!

Mark's Gospel is the shortest, and it would be great (though not necessary) if we all read through it before January 7. Be welcome to use your favorite translation or paraphrase of Scripture. EVERYONE is welcome!!!!

If you have any questions, please ask Pastor Lori.

A Note from the Young Adult Volunteers

Dear New Hempstead Presbyterian,

Thank you so much for your loving hospitality and your willingness to welcome us into your church for the day. Thank you for participating so fully at our time here in New York. We loved your beautiful and historical church. As well as all the lovely conversations we had. We would also like to send a special thanks to Karen for being present with us and for us the whole day.

God Bless,

Jessica & Kristen



Next issue is the combined January/February one. Deadline is January 14.



Christmas Joy OFFERING

Please give generously this December

By giving to the Christmas Joy Offering, you help provide critical financial assistance for Presbyterian church workers in their time of need, and make it possible for students to learn and grow in faith at Presbyterian racial/ethnic schools.



In 2014, tragedy struck Rev. John Scotland's family when his daughter, Elisabeth, suffered a severe brain injury. John was granted leave from his church in New Jersey so he

and his wife could be by their daughter's side in Boston during her recovery. This meant finding someone to cover pastoral duties during his absence as well as additional living expenses.

With gifts from the Christmas Joy Offering, a shared grant was provided to Rev. Scotland and his wife, who were able to remain with their daughter while she underwent surgery and intense two-month rehabilitation.



Jasiel Hernandez is another example of your gifts at work. Jasiel states, "My family is from humble origins, so money was tight. I appreciate those who gave money, because scholarships

made it possible for me to go to the Presbyterian Pan American School."

Today, Jasiel is a senior at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary where he plans to be ordained in the PC (USA), thanks in part to your gifts to the Christmas Joy Offering.

Save the Date!

From Pastor Lori

Last month, in *The Carriage Stone*, Shama Omer wrote “We have a responsibility to stand up for those who made sure there would be grass and soil for us to walk on. What an honor it is to live on this land, we must acknowledge that privilege and those who are paying dearly for us to have it.” As a form of solidarity and aid for the Ramapough, the Session is sponsoring a showing of the Film, *Mann vs. Ford* on **January 20 at 6:30 PM** in Murchison Hall. This film documents The Ramapough Indians of New Jersey as they battle the toxic legacy of the Ford Motor Company in Ringwood.

The Facebook page for Mann v. Ford says,

The Ramapough Mountain Indians have lived in the hills and forests of northern New Jersey, less than 40 miles from midtown Manhattan, for hundreds of years. In the 1960s, their neighbor in nearby Mahwah, the Ford Motor Company, bought their land and began dumping toxic waste in the woods and abandoned iron mines surrounding their homes.

Ford has acknowledged the dumping. In the 1980s, the Ramapough’s homeland was placed on the Environmental Protection Agency’s list of federally monitored Superfund sites – and supposedly cleaned up by Ford. However, thousands of tons of toxic waste were left behind.

In 2006, the residents of Upper Ringwood, after suffering for years from a range of mysterious ailments, including deadly cancers, skin rashes and high rates of miscarriage, filed a mass action lawsuit seeking millions of dollars from Ford as compensation for their suffering. Ford denied all responsibility for the illnesses devastating the community and

claimed its flawed cleanup had fully complied with all EPA rules.

MANN v. FORD tells the story of a small community’s epic battle against two American giants: the Ford Motor Company and the Environmental Protection Agency, which failed to ensure that Ford cleaned the land of deadly toxins and erroneously declared the community safe and clean of toxic waste.

Please make plans to attend. A donation will be taken up to support the Ramapough and the legal defense fund in their recent court case with the City of Mahwah, NJ. More information will be coming closer to the date.



Upcoming Advent Dates

The first Sunday in Advent, December 3, is the Hanging of the Greens after Worship. We will be decorating the church for the Christmas Season. Bring in prunings of your evergreens. 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.

Coffee hour after Worship on the third Sunday in Advent, December 17, will feature a cookie exchange. Bring cookies to share and get cookies from your friends.





Tag Sale Puts the "FUN" in Fundraising!

From Barbara Zacheis, Chair,
Fundraising

Many thanks to
the 32 people
who helped
make the Fall

Tag Sale a Fellowship event as well as a fundraiser. We had ten people who worked on both Friday and Saturday. The tag sale netted the church \$1382, not bad for a day that started with questionable weather. And those of us wearing the church t-shirt helped our shoppers know where to look for answers to their questions! We even had a bird shopping (see picture - look closely at shoulder of man perusing the table). Thanks to the cleanup crew for making it look like it never happened! (Second picture)

Don't worry if you missed your chance to help. Karen will call on you next tag sale to put in an hour and join in on the fun!

There are still four t-shirts in size large for sale - \$10 each - just see Barbara Zacheis if interested.

Thanks again!



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OUR HISTORIC CHURCH.

Showing the Use of a Carriage Stone

By Bob Greenhalgh

In the old days, you needed something to step on to get into your carriage. You needed a **Carriage Stone!**

That's the name of the big stone you walk by on your way to the church front door on Sunday morning. There's another one like it at the side door of the Manse, only not quite as large. They're made of Red Stone or Sand Stone.

Around here, the early Dutch Settlers built their houses out of Red Stone. Most of our very old frame houses stand on foundations of Red Stone.

We can only guess that our Carriage Stone was put there in 1827. That was the year the church was built, and the sixth President of the USA was John Quincy Adams.

Just before the new Millennium began, I saw a lady step off our Carriage Stone and into a horseless carriage, which in this case was a large SUV.

