



The Carriage Stone

December 2018

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



“The Carriage Stone” is the Newsletter of
The New Hempstead Presbyterian Church

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Advent

It's here again—the first season of the Christian year. Advent, or the time of waiting for the birth of the Christ has come round yet again. We both look back to His first coming and look ahead to his return, when the reign of God comes in its fullness among us.

This year, my sermons will look at Advent through the traditional categories of Hope, Faith, Joy, Peace, and Love. We will move into these categories through the less traditional lenses of the women mentioned in Jesus's genealogy in Matthew chapter one. I like to think of it as a matriarchal, woman-centered Ancestry.com for Jesus. We will spend time with Rahab, Ruth, and Mary on our way to the stable on Christmas Eve. As usual, I will take a preaching break on "Gaudete Sunday", the third Sunday of Advent, and we will have a service of Lessons and Carols. (Christmas carols? Before Christmas? Clutch my pearls!!! Yes, some Christmas Carols, some Advent Carols, and Scripture and prayers.)

In this season, when the world around us is thinking in terms of "the run-up" to Christmas, we have the opportunity to slow down and prepare for the birth of Jesus. It's a great time of year to ask a friend to join you for Sunday Service—to remind folks who may not think about it that we are in fact preparing for a life-changing event. New folks will also see what a warm, loving bunch of Jesus-followers we are.

May we all keep a holy Advent, and may We draw near to God, as God draws near to us (cf: James 4:8)



Toys for Tots

The Board of Deacons will be collecting toys, during the Christmas season, for the annual Marine Corps Reserve's "Toys for Tots" drive. Toys do not have

to be gift-wrapped; however, they must be new and in their original packaging. The toys are distributed to needy children between the ages of newborn through 15 years of age. A collection box is located in the Colonial Room until mid-December.

Cookie Swap

The Deacons will host a "Cookie Swap" on December 16 during the Fellowship Hour. Those who wish to participate should bring two dozen of your favorite Christmas cookies to share. Containers will be provided so that one may select an assortment of cookies to take home.



Hanging of the Greens

The first Sunday in Advent is December 2 and as is the tradition here, we will be **decorating** the church for the Christmas Season after Worship that day. 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.

Hanging of the Greens



Rockland Warming Center

As in past years, our Mission Committee has signed New Hempstead up to volunteer at the Warming Center for the Homeless. Our first shift is December 10, 11, and 12, a Monday, Tuesday and a Wednesday and we are looking for six volunteers each evening. Arrive at 6 PM and expect to be done around 9:30 to 10 PM. The venue is the Robert Yeager Health Center in Pomona.

Prior to last year, each volunteer organization was required to provide a place to sleep and a dinner meal. Now that the program is government supported, all that we need to provide are people to serve and clean up afterward.

Please consider offering one evening of your time to help. We are blessed to have a roof over our heads and a warm place to sleep each night. These people are not so lucky, many through circumstances beyond their control, and they deserve our support.

There is a sign-up sheet on the Colonial Room bulletin board. Please contact Pam Fink for more details.



Photo from Helping Hands Gala

Messiah Sing-Along

Nancy Jacobs

Last year, I attended a Messiah sing-along in Mountain Lakes, NJ. I enjoyed immensely. Here is the announcement for the 2018 opportunity. The event is in a place that is just under an hour away. I plan to go to it again. I sing Soprano.

The annual Masterwork Chorus Messiah sing-along will be on Sunday, December 9, at 2 PM. At St. Peter's Episcopal Church 215 Boulevard, Mountain Lakes.

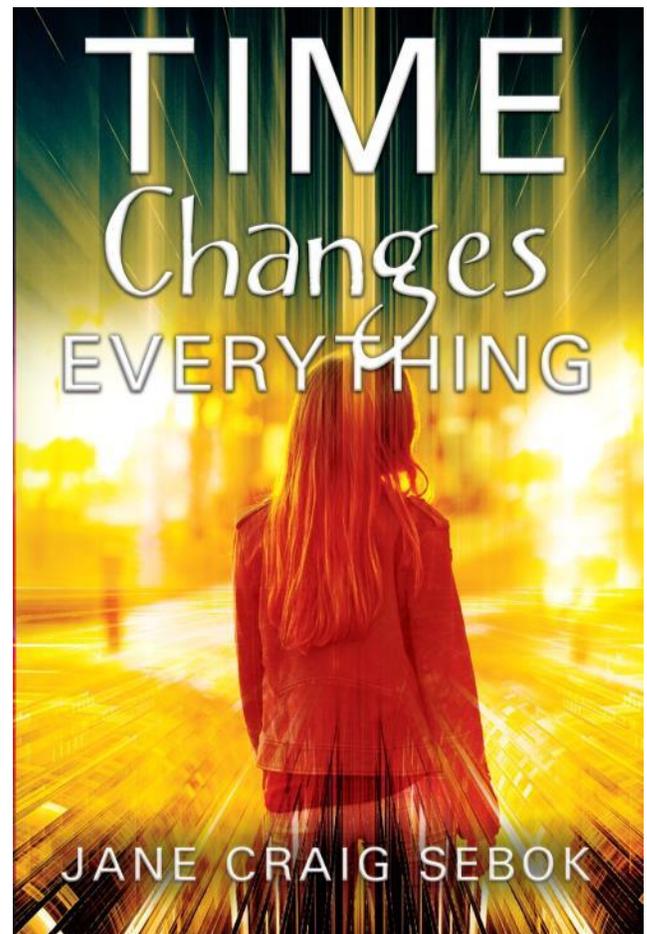
There is not a fee, but they request donations.



Thanksgiving Baskets

Many thanks to all who contributed to the Thanksgiving Baskets this year. We were able to provide thirty-five baskets this year to help feed those less fortunate. The need in this county is great and perhaps we can do even more next year.

Thanks to Carmen Bermudez for coordinating with the Martin Luther King Jr center (and others) to find recipients for our baskets. And thanks to the many folks who helped with the shopping, the assembling, and distributing. Thanks to Lona Asher, Joe Bermudez, Kellie Anne Pomavilla, Patty Coar, Pat Crockett, Percy Crockett, Christina Ernest, Pamela Fink, Robin Lucas, Sylvia Miller, Susan Rentz, Jane Sebok, Doris Simone, Mary Ann Witte, Barbara Zacheis, Mark Zacheis and anyone else who I may have missed here—my apologies. Many hands make light work.



Jane's Book Signing

New Hempstead Presbyterian will be hosting a book reading and signing for Jane Craig Sebok's new book *TIME CHANGES EVERYTHING*. This event will be held on a Saturday afternoon in January (TBD) and will include refreshments. The book tells the story of Caitlin, a troubled young girl who travels into the past and meets her mother as a college student. Appropriate for both teens and adults, the book explores the issue of how things have changed and how they have stayed the same. A sign-up sheet is posted in the Colonial Room for those who wish to order books. A few are already available for anyone who would like to purchase a book before Christmas.



Our Talented Congregation

Jane Craig Sebok
Talented Congregant

For the months of December and January, we have four 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 and January:

December 1, 2018, 2 PM Jane Craig Sebok

Rockland County Concert Band.
Central Presbyterian Church,
66 New Main Street, Haverstraw, NY.
Free refreshments after the concert.

December 9, 2018, 3 PM Jane Craig Sebok

Rockland County Concert Band.
Pearl River Library,
80 Franklin Avenue, Pearl River, NY.

December 9, 2018, 4 PM Barbara Zacheis

Hudson Valley Symphonic Wind Ensemble.
Tarrytown House Estate and Conference Center,
49 East Sunnyside Lane, Tarrytown, NY.
Holidays in Tarrytown.

January 20, 2019, 3 PM Sue Rentz

Rockland Camerata.
Threefold Auditorium,
260 Hungry Hollow Road, Spring Valley, NY.

OUR HISTORIC CHURCH.

From Bob Greenhalgh

Our English Church played a part in the earliest days of the American Revolution. British Major John André stayed overnight at our church on his way to trial as a spy in Tappan. André had conspired with the American general Benedict Arnold, in a plot to take the vital fort at West Point.

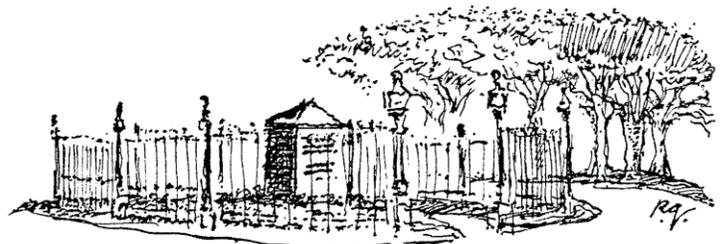
On the top of a hill, just west of the old railroad station in Tappan stood gallows where they hung André. You can read these interesting words engraved on the stone marking the place:

“He was more unfortunate than criminal, an accomplished man and a gallant officer.”
—George Washington

...His death, though according to the stern code of war, moved even his enemies to pity.

In 1821, his remains were moved to Westminster Abbey a hundred years after his execution.

This stone was placed on the spot where he lay by a citizen of the state against which he fought. Not to perpetuate the record of strife, but in token of those better feelings which have since united two nations. One in race, in language and in religion. With the warmest hope that this friendly union will never be broken.



Major John Andre's Monument, Tappan, N.Y.
Where he was hung as a spy Oct. 2, 1780.



Thanks from Raoul Cansino

Dear Helping Hands
Benefit Committee,
Board and Volunteers,

The changes in my life of the past half year have been both exhilarating and deeply distressing. After many years of teaching at Green Meadow Waldorf School, inextricably bound up with my work with the homeless with Helping Hands and Midnight Run, my position at Green Meadow was eliminated, and Helping Hands entered into what is perhaps the greatest crisis in its short life as an organization, with the loss of our Executive Director and the canceling of our Warming Center contract. These were, of course, the distressing developments.

It was exciting, on the other hand, to return to my roots in Los Angeles, to secure a German position in a school that is familiar to me from many years hence and, especially, to move near our children, who all live in LA, after years of separation. Despite all these good things, it was a great shock to leave all my friends, students, colleagues and comrades-in-mission in New York—people who have become very dear to me.

All the good wishes and wonderful gestures of thanks and affection that were showered on me during the summer and at the Helping Hands gala have gone a long way toward healing me from that shock. Thank you all for your support and expressions of love and gratitude. They have lifted my spirits!

I owe a debt of gratitude that I will never be able to repay to so many amazing people for years and years (and years) of sharing with me the heavy burden of trying to fight Rockland County's negligence in the face of homelessness. Here are a few thanks:

- To the thousands of volunteers and supporters who have given so selflessly of their time, labor and treasure

- To the many board members, activists and key volunteers who have taken on the task of growing Helping Hands into the resilient and effective advocate and helper of the homeless that it has become
- To our few, but far-sighted, representatives in local and state government who recognized and supported our mission
- To our all-volunteer development effort for many magnificent fund-raising efforts, and a special thank you to the Benefit Committee and its chair, Kathy Lathrop, for this year's honoring
- To the many houses of worship in our network, which drew from a deep well of faith in the dignity of humankind to join us in our work
- To the community (parents, children, teachers and staff) of the Green Meadow Waldorf School, which, for many years, supported and encouraged my work with the homeless.

Thank you all!

The day after the gala, a number of board members were kind enough to meet with me to talk about recent developments and the future of Helping Hands. I found it deeply reassuring that they are all determined to carry on our mission of serving our homeless neighbors in Rockland County. I wish them and all of you strength and luck in your endeavors. You'll need both.

Peace and joy with justice,

Raoul Cansino
Founder and President Emeritus