



The Carriage Stone

November 2020

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



Thanksgiving
Food Baskets



“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 Philhower

Next Deadline:

Sunday, November 15

Submissions: in my mailbox
or e-mail to

carriagestone@nhpchurch.org



We're Open for Worship— on a Limited Seating Basis

This past Sunday, October 25, we moved back into the sanctuary for worship.

Unfortunately, we are limited to 25 people. Fortunately, we are continuing to live-stream on [YouTube](#).

Our [return to the sanctuary safely](#) was made possible by the Committee for Reopening Safely* and by the hard work of Mark Zacheis, Barbara Zacheis, and Pam Fink. The large acrylic “sneeze guards” in the Sanctuary are Mark and Pam’s work. We now have a ventilation fan in an upper window to draw out air from the sanctuary, helping to keep the air circulating at a safe rate.

Barbara continues to hone her skills as a videographer, and we are so grateful for her labor. Lois and the choir are working hard to produce some virtual music for upcoming services and Christmas Eve.

Speaking of which, the Session has decided that our Christmas Eve service will be virtual this year. It seems unfair to the congregation to limit that special service to 25 folks in the sanctuary. We’ve never turned away a worshiper, and we don’t want to start now if we can at all avoid it. Christmas Eve, like Easter, is the time when we are packed to the rafters. A two-service solution would have exposed Lois and myself twice, which I was not willing to do. Putting overflow in Murchison hall would have created a “two-tiered” worship service, with some enjoying our beautiful sanctuary in person, with others gathered in the fellowship hall watching. I liken that to watching a party with my face pressed against a window—not really allowed in. If everyone is watching from home, there is a level playing (praying?) field.

So, we will pre-recorded a service and Barbara will have it set to go live on our YouTube channel at 8 PM Christmas Eve. We can all watch by the light of our Christmas Trees, sing the carols, and know that God’s Holy Spirit connects us on one of the holiest feasts of the Christian year.

There will still be carols. The [chancel area will be decorated](#). We will still sing Silent Night at the end (have your own candles ready!) There will be Eucharist. And, most importantly, we will still be together in the Body of Christ.

I think it is safe to say none of us has lived through anything like this before. But our faith in God is strong. We are a resurrection people, who know that the night will not have the last word. As Anne Lamott, quoting the poet Wendell Berry says, “It gets darker and darker, and then Jesus is born. That line came back to me, from out of nowhere, and I decided to practice radical hope...”

Radical Hope. What a way to enter the darkness of winter. May it be so for us all.

*consisting of myself, Dr. Pam Fink, Lois Andersen, Sue Rentz and Jane Craig Sebok.
Pam is our resident microbiologist.

Thanksgiving Baskets

Thanksgiving Day is fast approaching, and you know what that means; it means that it is time for the Thanksgiving baskets food drive. In a tradition dating back decades our church family shares the bounty that is theirs with others not quite so fortunate. We intend to put together baskets of food, each of which is sufficient to feed a family a Thanksgiving dinner with all of the trimmings. Our goal this year is to provide forty baskets for local families that otherwise might go without on Thanksgiving Day.

Attached in here is the shopping list of what goes into a Thanksgiving basket. We ask that you take the list with you so you will have it during your next visit to the grocery store, pick up everything on the list, put it in one bag, and bring it with you the next time that you come to church. **The final collection day is Sunday, November 15, and you can bring your baskets in sooner if you like; but no later than the church service that day.** Note that this is a week earlier than usual; we do not want to have to send people to the grocery store the Sunday afternoon before Thanksgiving. Bringing them a week earlier means we have the week to shop at odd hours.

Do save your turkeys and loaves of bread to bring for the following Sunday, November 22 and please not before.

If you would like to contribute but cannot or do not wish to do your own shopping, you may donate the cost of a Thanksgiving basket and we will go shopping for you. We suggest a donation of \$40 for each basket. Mark your check or envelope Thanksgiving Baskets and place it in the collection plate or mail it to the church.

If you are unable to provide a full basket then contribute what you can from the list. All contributions are welcome. And if you know of a family that is in need of a Thanksgiving basket, please contact Mark so that we can get these folks on our list.

There will be a signup sheet with the greeters each Sunday. Kindly sign up with them so that we can get a sense of the number of baskets we will be receiving and how much shopping we will have to be doing.

Thank you.



Recipe for a Happy Thanksgiving Meal:

- Turkey
- Stuffing mix
- Boxed potatoes
- Gravy
- Canned vegetables (2-4 cans)
- Canned sweet potatoes/yams
- Corn bread mix
- Cake/brownie mix
- Cake frosting
- Applesauce
- Canned cranberry sauce
- Soup (2 cans)
- Loaf of bread

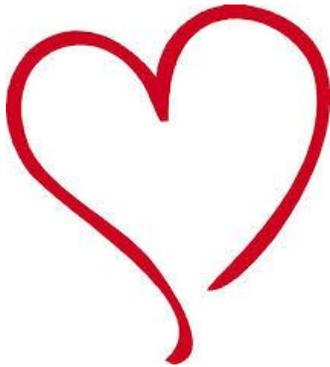
Be sure to bring your “baskets” to church on Sunday, November 15 so that we can distribute them before Thanksgiving.

THANK YOU!

Peacemaking Offering

From Mark Zacheis

Each year on the first Sunday of October, we collect the Peacemaking Offering and dedicate it to a local organization that in our estimate is doing good work toward making peace in the world. Last year we dedicated the offering to [Habitat for Humanity](#); this year we are sending it to the [Martin Luther King Jr Center](#) in Spring Valley. We collected a total of \$1,500. Thank you to all who contributed.



From the Deacons...

If you're reading this, you're a part of our church family! And families take care of one another. Please feel free to reach out to a Deacon if you are having any challenges during these stressful times, if you need a listening ear or any other resources we can help you with. Don't be shy...we are family!

Your Deacons are:

Lona Asher
Sumitati Amat
Christina Bermudez
Laura Metallo-Bidon
Percy Crockett
Christiana Ernest
Syenni Lucas
Mary Ann Witte

Millennial Corner

From Nora Asamoah

"...pray at all times"
1 Thessalonians 5:17

As a millennial who grew up in the church, I remember my Sunday School teacher, telling me praying was like having a conversation with God. I can talk to Him whenever, wherever and, however. And that was just how I have been talking to God. However, as 2020 has taught us, everything seems doom and gloom and I must admit, there have been times, when I just felt God was just not listening to me. How many of you have felt that way? I recently read a devotional on how to effectively pray and thought to share it. PRAY was broken down as

Praise (Psalm 100:1-4)

Repent (Psalm 19:12-13)

Ask (John 3:21-22)

Yield (Psalm 37:4)

As we continue to talk to God for whatever reason, don't forget to praise Him, repent from our sins, ask for what we want and yield for that request. We are very blessed as we have a father, who listens to us every time, even when we think He is not. As the year comes to an end, there is a lot to pray for especially in a pandemic and election season. As we continue to rely on God, let us not forget to take care of each other.

P.R.A.Y.
Pray Repent Ask Yield
& Rejoice

Gardens Committee

From Nancy Jacobs

In the October Carriage Stone, you read about the new subcommittee of the Building and Grounds Committee of our congregation. I plan to begin letting you know more about the gardens on the "Grounds".

There are eight "gardens", plus other planting areas (pots). I will tell you about three of them.

1. There is (was) a garden along the south wall of Murchison Hall. It contained irises, catnip, allium, and milkweed. Because of the construction intended for that area (to provide a handicapped accessible ramp to the second floor of the building), that garden is being dismantled. The milkweed plants were moved to a garden of their own, and the irises are being housed in my own yard, until a more suitable location is found. Some of the allium was moved to the cutting garden, though I don't consider them to be "cutting flowers". If anyone in the congregation would like a pot of catnip or a pot of allium (white, 15" tall, Sept. bloom), they should contact me ASAP. (Nancy Jacobs)

2. The Monarch Butterfly Garden and chrysalisary. This is located just north of the middle parking lot. Its plants were moved to this

new garden from the south wall garden (Murchison), from the dismantled garden, in #1. There is another article, in [October The Carriage Stone](#), which provided more information. This garden consists of plants from the "Milkweed" family. They have in

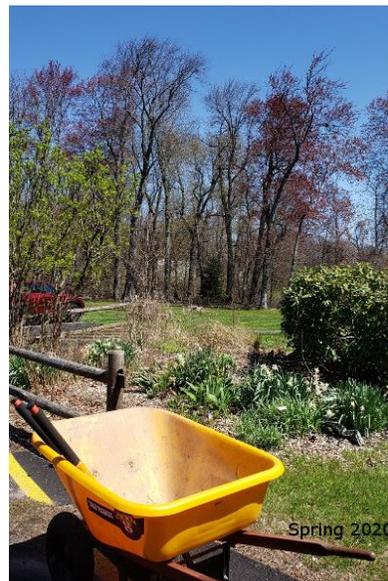


common a milky-looking substance inside of them. Common Milkweed is found in fields, Rose (or Swamp) Milkweed is sometimes found in wetter areas of nature, and Butterfly Milkweed (which has orange flowers) is sometimes found in dry fields, or planted in gardens.



3. The "pots": there are a number of plant pots on the grounds. They generally contain annuals, that is, plants that do not live through our winters and must be replaced each spring. They are currently located at the entrances to the Colonial Room and to Murchison Hall. Once the memorial seating area (across the church driveway from the memorial brick walk to the front of the sanctuary) is built, it is likely to have potted plants as well.

You can assist in caring for either of these two last "gardens". Generally, wintertime is a dormant time. The Monarch Garden plants are dying back for the winter, and seeds have been planted for next year. The potted gardens — specifically the one at the entrance of Murchison Hall — could be decorated for the winter. If anyone is inclined to do that, please contact me, so I can coordinate among interested parties.



Transition at Stony Point Center

As you have heard by now, Stony Point Conference Center is transitioning. This special place is entering into new season. As a part of the Hudson River Presbytery family, we are committed to walking this journey with them. The folks at Stony Point have released a transition plan, which I share with you below. Please keep these changes in mind as you plan possible small gatherings and strive to visit Stony Point during this important time of discernment.

– Deborah Milcarek, General Presbyter

From Stony Point Conference Center Website:

“We have appreciated your well wishes, thoughts and prayers for Stony Point Center (SPC) to rebound during the COVID pandemic. We wanted to see each and every one of you again!

Our faith and hope led us to action over the summer. We supported our two farmers working to grow vegetables on Tuesday mornings. On Thursday afternoons, we operated a weekly farmstand to share the bounty of our harvest and Donna’s delicious homemade baked goods with our neighbors. Together and with contractors, we took on campus beautification projects and completed major renovations for the Gilmore Sloane House. We also began designs on a new website to reflect our hopeful new future.



Despite our positive outlook, COVID continued to rise throughout the summer with soaring numbers into the fall. We have not been able to re-open in the way we envisioned with small groups and well thought out COVID safety measures in place. As with other retreat and conference centers, indeed, the entire hospitality and travel industry, we struggled to bring in revenue. Stony Point Center is owned by the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA). The PMA has suffered a substantial financial setback because of how hard the COVID pandemic hit our conference and retreat center. The PMA, our leadership and staff are heartbroken that further operational cuts will ensue. Although some unknowns remain, the next steps are clear to share.

This November, we will winterize all of our lodges and reduce our hospitality to a much smaller retreat operation. Only the Gilmore Sloane House and the Allison House will be open to small groups beginning January 2021. Sadly, this is an end to a season of large groups and gatherings. Stony Point Center will transition into a time of prayerful discernment by the PMA. The hope is with reduced expenses, the PMA will be able to build a new future for the Center in a Post COVID era. Here are the most important implications of our new reality:

- All of us who remained as the staff will be laid off. This includes our co-directors, Rick and Kitty Ufford-Chase. As was the case with our colleagues who lost their positions in June, we will receive standard separation packages from the PMA.
- The volunteer relationship with members of the Community of Living Traditions (CLT) has ended. We supported them through a process to form their own 501(c)3, nonprofit organization. They will continue to work for justice, full-inclusion, care for the earth and we hope they will thrive and be successful in their newly created structure.

- The CLT members have the option to live on the campus until March 2021.
- The PMA will conduct a search for a retreat manager who will live on campus and host a smaller guest program starting in January 2021.
- All of the main lodges and Evergreen, our main meeting spaces, dining room and staff offices, will be closed for the foreseeable future.
- The Gilmore Sloane and Allison House will be open January 2021 to guest groups of 20 or less under the new leadership of the PMA and new retreat manager.
- The open spaces, the Labyrinth, Art Space and Meditation Space, that help to define Stony Point Center, will be open January 2021 for guests to use.

We are proud of what we have accomplished at Stony Point Center. With God's unwavering grace and guidance, we created a welcoming space of radical hospitality for guests of all backgrounds and religions. We imagined a multifaith community and brought it into fruition. We transformed the campus; we renovated buildings long neglected. We broke down walls of mistrust and built up relationships of confidence across lines of religious division. We nurtured the broader social justice movement and served as an open space for the unimaginable and good take shape. We enjoyed precious moments and memories with you, our guests. It was fascinating to watch how you became a part of our beloved community! We are grateful that you will be able to once again stay in Allison House, Gilmore Sloane and use our open spaces to do your important work – repair the world!

This transition and change are immensely hard on each one of us. We ask that you continue to hold us in your thoughts and prayers, as we will do the same for you and your organizations during this time of COVID. This too will pass; it is just a season.

We encourage you to have faith and hope for what Stony Point Center can become in a post COVID era. We ask that you watch what unfolds in the weeks and months to come by checking your inbox for Stony Point Center emails, engaging with Stony Point Center social media and looking out for the launch of the new website.

We do and will miss all of you! Be well, stay safe and may God bless you!

Sincerely and Fondly,

The Stony Point Center staff“

Soup Angels Newsletter

The Soup Angels team has started putting out a [newsletter](#) with the first issue having come out November 3. It explains how the program has adapted to COVID-19 and the expanded ministry that has been made possible by generous donations from the public and from food reclaiming organizations.

There also is a request for mission giving of various toiletries and winter items. Anyone wanting more information can contact Bob Philhower.

