



# The Carriage Stone

*April 2020*

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



# EASTER



“The Carriage Stone” is the Newsletter of

**The New Hempstead Presbyterian Church**

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## **A Very Different Lent**

To paraphrase William Shakespeare, some are born to Lent, some achieve Lent, and some have Lent thrust upon them. Even though I keep Lent every year, this year, it feels it has been thrust upon me this year. Mandated social distancing, even isolation, is no fun, (even for an introvert like me!)

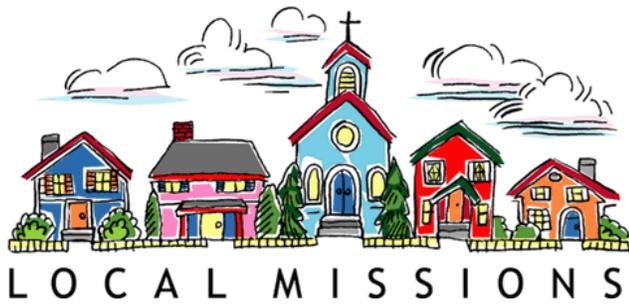
I really miss our shared time together—worship, Bible Study, coffee hour, even Session meetings in person! But this is a time for finding solidarity with one another, not through direct physical contact, but through our connection with Our Lord Jesus Christ.

This is our primary connection—our baptismal connection in Christ, and to one another. Remembering that we are already connected to Christ, and to one another, is the foundation from which we reach out to one another and our neighbors via media that may be unfamiliar to us: the YouTube channel (New Hempstead Presbyterian Church) for Sunday Worship; Zoom meetings via computer for Bible Studies; e-mail; telephone, and good-old fashioned snail mail.

As always, I am available to you by phone. As long as Grocery stores are still open, I can always pick up a few things for you, and leave them on your porch (if you have one!)

This is a difficult time for us, for our nation, and our world. It's way too easy to spend too much time on Facebook, watching TV news and letting all the fear trend in our heads.

And it is not the time to let fear take over our lives. Rather, it's a time to make prayer and scripture study more habitual. (Parents, it's a great time to read those Children's Bibles the Christian Worship and Spiritual Nurture committee gave you to you kids. Great bedtime reading for the little ones!) It's also a time to reach out to our neighbors (In safe, socially distancing ways) and show them what we already know. We are connected in Christ Jesus. God will not let us go. And Easter WILL come! Thanks be to God.



## Cruising with the Salvation Army

From Nora Asamoah

*And whatever you do, in word or deed,  
do everything in the name of the Lord  
Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father  
through him*

—Colossians 3:17 ESV

On Saturday February 22, I joined Laura Bidon in distributing the socks, hats and gloves donated by our congregation to our less fortunate brothers and sisters in Spring Valley. What an experience!



Laura Bidon with a trunk load of socks, hats and gloves donated by NHPC

Jim Waters, Coordinator of the Salvation Army Food Canteen Program, was very welcoming and humble: he really exemplifies what it means to go out there and serve. The entire Salvation Army crew, from the volunteers to the pastors-in-training, to the Latter-Day Saints sisters, was

amazing. All told, over 150 people were fed that morning, and received socks, hats and gloves from New Hempstead Presbyterian Church.



Nora Asamoah stirring up some yummy hot chocolate!

The two hours spent driving around Spring Valley, serving the homeless and less fortunate, was a humbling experience for me.



The Joy of Giving!

Watching people be grateful for the simplest things in life, things that I take for granted (hot food, hot drink and socks) was the reality check I needed. I realized I am rich in so many ways: a roof over my head, clothes on my back, hot showers, never having to go hungry, a car and family that loves me. Most of these individuals are here looking for jobs, others battling addictions, etc.



Thank you to our Salvation Army partners!

This is an experience everyone should have at least once in a lifetime. It will remind you how fortunate you are. Not only being blessed with worldly possessions but how blessed we are to be called children of God.

*... give thanks in all circumstances; for this the will of God in Christ Jesus for you —1 Thessalonians 5:18 ESV*

### Supporting People-to-People

During this time of physical distancing, it is not possible to keep up our normal food donation to people-to-people, but with a widespread loss of jobs, the need is increasing. You can visit their website: <https://www.peopletopeopleinc.org/> or mail a check to:

People to People  
121 West Nyack Road  
Nanuet NY 10954

### The Great American Cleanup

From Pam Fink



May 2 - save the date! New Hempstead will again participate in a cleanup of the roadways near the church. Our cleanup is part of the Great American Cleanup effort, coordinated by Keep Rockland Beautiful, which runs through April and May. Volunteers will meet in the church parking lot at 9 AM to receive materials and work until about noon, picking up trash and recyclables.

To register for the New Hempstead team, please visit the Keep Rockland Beautiful website (<http://www.keeprocklandbeautiful.org>) and click on the "REGISTER NOW" button. Select "Join a Community Cleanup Event or Group Cleanup", and then scroll down to May 2 events and select "New Hempstead Group Cleanup". A form will pop up – please fill it in to register. It's important to register so that we have enough supplies on hand for all participants.

We're hoping for a sunny spring day on May 2, but if we have bad weather, we have scheduled May 9 as a rain date. Please join us as we make our little corner of the world a bit more beautiful!



Back in the "before" time, this photo from last year was in heavy rotation on the video boards in the Palisades Mall.



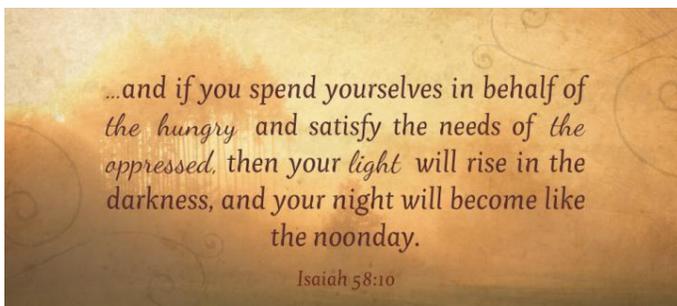
## One Great Hour of Sharing

From Mark Zacheis

Isaiah 58 ---  
*You shall be called repairers of the breach.*

One Great Hour of Sharing, the first of four special offerings taken each year supports three major programs of the Presbyterian Church (USA). Those programs are the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and the Self-Development of People. These three work in different ways at home and around the world to serve individuals and communities in need, in response to natural and man-made disasters. From initial disaster relief to on-going community development, their work fits together to provide people with safety, substance, and hope.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance is the emergency and refugee program of the PC (USA). It supports communities affected by crisis and catastrophic events. Funds distributed include response to natural disasters like hurricanes (PDA was a big presence following the hurricane that struck Puerto Rico). Funds were also distributed to support programs offering assistance to refugees, asylum seekers, and internally displaced persons. Two articles about PDA's responses during the pandemic are later in the newsletter.



Presbyterian Hunger Program works to alleviate hunger and eliminate its root causes. This is the most traditional of the three programs, providing direct food relief but also seed, solar driers, beehives and bee suits, live animals and farm equipment in places like Kenya, Palestine, Cameroon, Uganda, Niger, Sri Lanka, and South Sudan.

The Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People works with low-income communities across our country on projects focused on advocacy, youth-led initiatives, skills development, farming, workers' rights, and immigration/refugee issues. Over 5,000 programs in the U.S. and around the world have received support. Some examples include the Training Leadership Development Project in Yonkers, NY, New Hope for Families project in Duluth MN, Stock the Pantry Mission in Charleston SC, and Small Scale Sustainable Development in Sierra Leone.

One Great Hour of Sharing is the single, biggest way that Presbyterians come together each year to work for a better world. Please consider contributing. Envelopes are in the pew racks but you can also contribute by marking your check or envelope OGH. Donations can be made right away, leading up to Easter Sunday.

Thank you.

## Reaching Out

As we have been physically distancing from one another, it is important that we keep in touch as best we can.

Church leadership is intentionally contacting members and church friends, just to keep in touch. All of us should reach out to keep these friendships vital and to support each other.

In addition to making calls and praying for each of us, Pastor Lori has started posting messages to the church website on the Pastor's page: [http://nhpchurch.org/info/?page\\_id=697](http://nhpchurch.org/info/?page_id=697)

## From the Treasurer

Mark Zacheis, church treasurer

As we enter into a time of self-quarantine, our church is like most other places, all but closed down. All of the groups that use Murchison Hall have either stopped meeting or are functioning by social media. Church services have moved to YouTube. And like many other places (think restaurants and shops), money has stopped coming in as well. Despite this the bills are still coming in and need to be paid. Payroll and payroll taxes, utilities, garbage, the copy machine - they all need to be paid. The church fully intends to meet all of its financial obligations despite the challenges it may face with cash flow. It would be a great help if you were able to continue to submit your offering. Options include mailing a check (or arranging for your bank to mail a check), sticking it in the mail slot in the Colonial Room door on your way to the grocery store, and using the electronic option on our website.

Thank you for your consideration.

## Millennial Corner

Nora Asamoah

*"Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing."*

— 1 Thessalonians 5:11

Covid-19 has really shaken up our world. Each and every one of us is being affected one way or another by this pandemic. Whether it is lost wages, been sick, worried about being part of the vulnerable population, what to do with your children, etc. We all have our concerns. We have never experienced anything like this, but we do not have to fear because our Father in heaven got us! During these hard times, let us not forget about each other. Let's encourage one another! For some of us, during isolation, all we need is a

friend to call to check up on us, lend a helping hand or simply to let us know all is going to be ok.

It is not easy, especially watching the news and seeing the numbers increase. Nonetheless, as Christians, we have each other, we must continue to pray for our world and each other.

*"In every crisis, doubt or confusion, take the higher path - the path of compassion, courage, understanding and love."*

—Amit Ray

## A note from your AV non-professional!!

From Barbara Zacheis

Thank you all for tuning in to our YouTube Channel, especially for the last two (first two) Virtual Worship Services, which were led by a small number during our regular church service hour! We had 122 views of the service on March 15, and so far on March 22 (as of 4 PM) we have had 69 views of the March 22 service, proof that we have need to worship God together as his Family of Believers. If you haven't been able to participate, or if you wish you had more opportunities to worship with us mid-week, check out the other services posted on [our YouTube Channel](#) or find the link on our website under Worship. I would especially recommend the December 15 service (also a Taizé Service similar to March 15) and our pre-Lent service on February 23, both with some interesting musical offerings. If you click on the Videos tab in our YouTube channel, you can access any of our Worship services all the way back to last April. Although the audio is not the best, we are working on improving it, so please continue to join us on Sundays while we cannot be together due to the dangers of Covid-19. Please be safe while you hunker down and know that we are linked by God to one-another.

Peace.

## **How does PDA respond to a disaster during a pandemic?**

Presbyterian News Service

### **With travel and contact restricted, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance turns to virtual response to disasters.**

Somewhat submerged in the barrage of headlines about COVID-19 is news that Mother Nature is still doing her thing.

Middle Tennessee is reeling from a severe storm outbreak at the beginning of this month, an earthquake struck Utah last Wednesday, and spring springing usually comes with tornadoes and harrowing storms, including ones that hit the Southeast Tuesday.

As always, [Presbyterian Disaster Assistance \(PDA\)](#) plans to respond to calls for help, though in a somewhat altered way, given the limitations of a churchwide domestic travel ban and social distancing necessary to stop the spread of the coronavirus.

“Disasters aren’t stopping just because we can’t travel,” says David Rauer, a New Jersey-based National Response Team volunteer for PDA.

As a National Response Team member, Rauer regularly travels to places where disasters strike and helps coordinate a response with local Presbyterian leaders. His deployments can last from days to months.

During the last couple of weeks, however, he has been virtually deployed to Cookeville, Tennessee, which was hit hard by severe storms March 2, while staying in his New Jersey home.

“Although it doesn’t happen frequently, PDA has engaged in virtual deployments,” said the Rev. Jim Kirk, Associate for Disaster Response (U.S.). “When the people we needed were not available to travel, we would have to find other ways to respond, sometimes in consulting with leadership in discerning response.”

## **How is PDA responding to COVID-19?**

Presbyterian News Service

PDA is drawing 2.7 million dollars from reserves to seed the COVID-19 ongoing response both in the United States and internationally. These are funds that have been given by donors to PDA’s general fund, meant to meet the response needs of disasters small or large that cannot be funded by special appeals. Although money is not the only thing communities need in this moment, it is one resource, alongside many others, that can be helpful. We are incredibly grateful to donors, past and continuing, who trusted PDA enough to designate their funds to the PDA general disaster account. This is where the bulk of our reserve for COVID-19 is being drawn from. We are also incredibly grateful to the churches and individuals who support One Great Hour of Sharing, the church-wide offering collected during Easter, which not only provides our core funding, but also supports two sibling programs, the Presbyterian Hunger Program and Self Development of People, two programs whose work in addressing systemic poverty, hunger and centering the needs of communities historically marginalized is as critical in the face of COVID-19 as it is to our global human flourishing every day. Churches and communities wishing to think about how best to allocate mission resources during this pandemic can gain insight and support from all of us.

In addition to making these grant funds available, PDA is ramping up our Emotional and Spiritual Care programs, including Compassion Fatigue and Resiliency workshops, and we will be making them broadly available. We are working with the Mental Health Ministries office and the community Mental Health Network established after our last General Assembly. We will also work with Stony Point Center in New York, looking toward some virtual and (in time) actual gatherings for pastoral respite and reflection.