



The Carriage Stone

February 2024

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



Congregational Meeting

Sunday, February 11
immediately following Worship



“The Carriage Stone” is the Newsletter of

The New Hempstead Presbyterian Church

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FROM THE PASTOR

“Christian faith for me is no longer a static location but a great spiritual journey. And that changes everything. As I see it, religion is at its best when it leads us forward, when it guides us in our spiritual growth and in our cultural evolution as a species.”

—Brian McLaren, *The Great Spiritual Migration: How the World’s Largest Religion is Seeking a Better Way to be Christian*

We’ve barely put away the Christmas decorations and already it’s time to think about Easter. Of course, first there is Valentine’s Day, which is remarkable this year for the fact that it falls on Ash Wednesday, which is the first day of Lent.

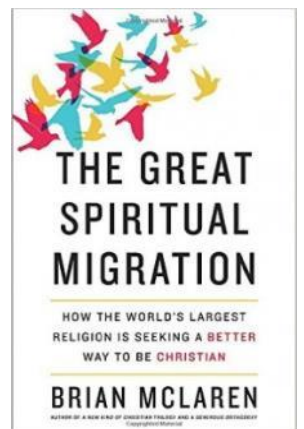
Not that Lent means much to anyone these days. Traditionally it is a time of fasting and repentance. Six weeks of doing without, giving up something to prepare for Easter. Growing up in a Catholic family in the 1960s also meant, for me, no meat on Wednesdays and Friday. In reality, Protestants don’t put a lot of emphasis on Lent, so the fact that Ash Wednesday falls on Valentine’s Day won’t matter much, but I lament this. I believe Lent has its merits and its place in the liturgical year and in our spiritual journeys.

It’s not that I enjoy doing without or repenting. It’s not that I like giving up computer games (giving up chocolate, though difficult is not what I use to avoid God). This is not really what Lent is about. For me it’s taking time to make one small change to free up more space for God. This, is worth the sacrifice. It is challenging at first, but by the end of the six weeks, I don’t miss it. I find I have more time for prayer, more time for reading and more time for healing. So, I hope you will think about giving up one thing this Lent. It does not need to be big but it needs to be significant; something you use to avoid being with yourself or God.

Lent is also a time for reflecting on the life of the church itself. And so, this year, during Lent I will be preaching from the Gospel through the lens of Brian McLaren’s book, *The Great Spiritual Migration*. Whether it’s giving up something, or to put it in a more positive light, doing something for Lent, I hope it is a meaningful time for spiritual growth and joy.

Blessings,

Angela





Annual Meeting, February 11

The Session has voted to hold the annual meeting of the congregation and corporation of the New Hempstead Presbyterian Church on Sunday, February 11 immediately following Worship. We will receive annual reports from various committees, review the 2023 financial results, vote on officers and handle other business as comes up.

The entire congregation is invited to attend. Only members may vote.



Ash Wednesday, February 14

Wednesday, February 14 marks the beginning of Lent.

Isn't this early? Ash Wednesday can be as early as February 4, but that was last in 1818 and next in 2285, so not in my lifetime.

Warm up the Winter

From the Mission Committee

New Hempstead Presbyterian Church is collecting Hats, Gloves, and Socks for our Neighbors in Need

A little warmth can go a long way...

New Hempstead Presbyterian Church is collecting winter hats, gloves, and socks for homeless and marginally housed individuals in Rockland County. We need items for men, women, and children.



Bring purchased items to Church. The Collection Bin is located in the Colonial Room.

Can't shop? Monetary donations are gratefully accepted, and we'll do the shopping for you! (Be sure to indicate hats/gloves/socks on your check).



Donated items will be distributed to individuals in Rockland County, in partnership with the Salvation Army Food truck in Spring Valley and other local programs.



Remember our neighbors in need throughout the winter months.

A little warmth can go a long way....



Per Capita

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From Mark Zacheis,
Treasurer

Per Capita is the money that our church pays to help support the greater Presbyterian Church in the US. Our funds go to support our Hudson River Presbytery, our Synod of the Northeast, and the General Assembly. Similar to our individual pledging to NHPC, per capita is the way that our church pledges to the Presbyterian Church. It is our way of saying, "We're in, we're part of this denomination and we intend to support it."

The first envelope in your box is the blue one, marked Per Capita. We encourage you to submit **\$40** for each church member in your family.



Movie Event February 10

From the Fellowship Committee

Attention all movie buffs! The Fellowship Committee is having a matinee movie event on Saturday, February 10 from 2-4 pm in the Colonial Room. We will be viewing the movie "A Man Called Otto" starring Tom Hanks, with a discussion of the movie themes following the presentation.



Snacks and the fan-favorite ice cream will be available before/during the movie, so plan to get there early - or at least on time! Put the date on your calendar and feel free to invite your friends, neighbors

and relatives. All are welcome!

Fellowship Breakfast

The next fellowship breakfast for 2024 will be Saturday, February 24 at 8:30 AM at the Main Street Café in New City. Everyone is welcome to attend, enjoy a great breakfast and conversation.

Who's that Baby?

From the Fellowship Committee

If you missed the "Who's that Baby?" contest on January 20, you missed a great time! Twenty-four adorable baby pictures and fun facts about the person in each picture were displayed around the Colonial Room. In some cases, the person today looks a lot like their baby picture, but in other cases, only the fun facts gave a clue as to who the baby had grown up into.

As we enjoyed ice cream, chips, popcorn, pretzels, and caramel brownies, we wandered around the room examining the pictures, pondering the clues, and then recording our guesses on our answer sheets. Fortunately, the contest was made a little easier when we were given a "cheat sheet" listing all the possible people represented in the pictures. At the end of the afternoon, when all the babies were identified by Karen Martin, Pam Fink had matched the most, correctly guessing 20 of the 24.

Many thanks to Karen for making prints of the pictures, organizing the fun facts, and displaying everything so attractively. And a big thanks to Nancy Jacobs for the fun decorations decking out the Colonial Room. Finally, thanks to the Fellowship Committee members for providing the ice cream and snackies.

This event was such fun that we will be doing it (or something like it) again. Stay tuned for future announcements!

