



The Carriage Stone

New Hempstead Presbyterian Church, New City, N.Y.

The English Church

October 2025



**PURSUE
WHAT
MAKES
FOR
PEACE.**

ROMANS 14:19

THE PEACE & GLOBAL WITNESS SPECIAL OFFERING



SEPTEMBER 7-OCTOBER 5, 2025



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

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“Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’”

—Matthew 25: 37-40

“(8) Putting into practice the General Assembly directives to build an intercultural church where justice and equity prevail.”

—Anti-racism policy, New Hempstead Presbyterian Church

At the September presbytery meeting, we heard from David La Mott. David is an author and singer songwriter who gives public talks about life in community. He told a story about the small town he lived in for 25 years just outside of Asheville, North Carolina. David’s house was at the corner of a busy intersection with no sidewalks. This changed one year when the town decided to invest in sidewalks.

Overtime, he said the sidewalks had a transformative effect on the neighborhood. People were walking to the park, walking their dogs, pushing baby strollers and surprise, surprise, talking to each other. As he put it: “Exposure led to recognition and small talk and small talk sometimes led to friendship...Before the sidewalk, it was hard to know the people beyond our immediate neighbors, Afterward, it became a bit more of a community.” Despite the diversity of race, gender, age, politics, religion and sexual orientation and more, David said, for the most part it worked pretty well.

And then, and then, the 2016 election happened and “it felt as if the town had ripped the sidewalks out.” He shared his heartbreak at watching the fabric of his community torn in two.

One night he was talking with his wife and then seven-year-old son about his frustration: “I just want to hang a sign outside that says ‘If your car battery is dead you can knock on my door. No matter who you voted for, I will give you a jump.’” Although said in jest, he realized he could make a sign and that’s what he did.

It went like this: “You are our neighbors, No matter who you vote for, your skin color, where you are from, your faith, or who you love, we will try to be here for you. That’s what community means. Let’s be neighbors.”

Over time, people would stop and talk with him about the sign. Not everyone agreed but that was not the point. He believes “Transformation happens most often in the context of relationship...people he believed are healed by love.”

I don’t think we can authentically serve the least of our sisters and brothers without knowing them and finding common ground. This was the reason our session adopted an anti-racism policy and why over the next year we will be holding events at the church to bridge the gap between people who are different from different faiths. Hopefully, we will be able to celebrate the wisdom from each other’s traditions.

Our first event will be on Saturday, October 11 from 3-5 PM. We will learn about the Hindu festival of Diwali. Led by Dr. Nomita Verma Pfaff it will be an afternoon of lively conversation and a sampling of food from Indian cuisine.

I hope you will join us and bring a friend.

Blessings and Love,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Angela". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'A' and a trailing flourish.



Diwali **October 21, 2025**

Diwali, the festival of lights, is the most celebrated festivals of India. This year it begins on October 21. Everywhere in India people welcome the festival with enthusiastic gestures.

This festival is over five days.

As part of NHPC's commitment to honor our anti-racism policy ((8) *Putting into practice the General Assembly directives to build an intercultural church where justice and equity prevail*), the fellowship committee will be holding an intercultural event on Saturday, October 11 from 3–5 PM, to learn about Diwali.

Our guest, Dr. Nomita Verma Pfaff, who is Hindu, will teach us about the festival. Married to a Presbyterian she embraces the wisdom of both faiths, often attending services with her husband.

We will have refreshments from the Indian cuisine. Please let us know if you are coming and feel free to bring a friend! There is a sign-up sheet in the Colonial Room.

Introduction

The Diwali festival is over five days.

On the third day of the celebratory occasion, the key rituals of the Diwali festival take place.

Lighting of Diyas and candles all around the house, worshipping the Laxmi Ganesha to

summon health and wealth and bursting crackers. The exchange of heartfelt gifts and special and grand feasts with delicious food that includes different varieties of sweets is the special attraction of the occasion.

The five days of Diwali

The first day of Diwali is called Dhanvantari Triodasi or Dhanwantari Triodasi also called Dhan Theras.

The second day of Diwali is called Narak Chaturdasi. It is the fourteenth lunar day (thithi) of the dark fortnight of the month of Kartik and the eve of Diwali. On this day Lord Krishna destroyed the demon Narakasur and made the world free from fear.

The third day of Diwali is the actual Diwali. This is the day when worship for Mother Lakshmi is performed.

On the fourth day of Diwali, Goverdhan Pooja is performed.

The fifth day of the Diwali is called Bhratri Dooj. It is a day dedicated to sisters.

On Diwali night, little clay lamps are lit in Hindus homes. It is believed that through the light the beauty of this world is revealed or experienced.

In the midst of today's busy lifestyle, Diwali gives an opportunity to pause and be grateful for what we have, to make special memories with family and friends, to laugh and enjoy what life offers us. For more information visit:

<https://www.diwalifestival.org/>



Special Delivery to Summit Park Elementary School

From the Mission Committee

Wow! Our Backpack & School Supply Drive was a spectacular success! We surpassed our goal and were able to deliver 90 backpacks and hundreds of school supplies to Summit Park Elementary School, in time for the start of the new school year.

School staff was so appreciative, including new Principal Barbara Abbey, Assistant Principal Raisha Sandford and custodial staff who helped with the heavy lifting!

Thank you to everyone who contributed. Your donations will help Summit Park students have a successful school year.

Keep Summit Park and all local school children in your prayers for a healthy, safe, and educationally outstanding year ahead!





The Blessing of the Pets

On a pleasant Saturday afternoon at 1 PM, a group of congregants, neighbors and friends gathered outside the church for the annual Blessing of the Pets. Pastor Angela welcomed us (or was it Rambo who welcomed everyone to his church?) After lots of sniffing and petting, there was a brief service of blessing and singing, followed by treats.

Everyone got along, even a very mellow cat amongst all the dogs.

Peace and Global Witness Offering

The Peace and Global Witness Offering is taken every fall on World Communion Sunday (October 5 this year).

The Peace & Global Witness Offering enables the church to promote the Peace of Christ by addressing systems of conflict and injustice across the world. Through the Peace & Global Witness Offering, congregations are encouraged and equipped to find and address the anxiety and discord that is prevalent throughout this broken and sinful world.

This year, funds raised by our church will help Soup Angels of Nyack where many of our congregation volunteer regularly.

Soup Angels of Nyack's mission is to offer hot, nutritious, freshly prepared meals in a dignified and caring environment to anyone in need of a meal and companionship in our community, no questions asked.

Soup Angels envisions a community where everyone has reliable access to healthy food and strives to strengthen and enhance our community connections to encourage healthy lives.

