

The Carriage Stone

May 2007

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

Newsletter of the English Church



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"The Carriage Stone" is the Newsletter of

The New Hempstead Presbyterian Church

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Next Deadline: Sunday, May 20

Submissions: in my mailbox or to carriagestone@nhpchurch.org

The Earth is the Lord's and the Fullness thereof; the World and they That Dwell Therein

I write this on Earth Day, 2007, a Sunday that was eclipsed liturgically by the tragedy at Virginia Tech. But I confess to a feeling of helplessness about the fate of the Earth that God has given us: Is it too late to do anything to halt the effects of climate change? Are we doomed to be one of the last generations of humans on the planet?

The Christian understanding is that it is never too late to repent, to turn *from* ways of destruction and harm and to turn *to* God and seek God's will. Seeking God's will is not an easy task, particularly when we have built a way of life around an oil-based economy and all the economic, political, and environmental issues that come from that way of life. Many scholars in the last half-century have contended that inappropriate and human-centered readings of Genesis 1:28-31a have resulted in the crises (ecological, political, economic and health-related) which face the world today. This text reads:

God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." God said, "See, I am giving you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. God saw



everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good.

God entrusts God's "very good" creation to the human creatures, to be caretakers and nurturers. Unfortunately, the emphasis in the industrialized world has been on the commands of dominion and rule.

The Hebrew word כבש (cabash) to subdue is indeed a fairly violent verb and there is no way to get a softer reading from the Hebrew language. On the other hand, the verb רדו (rido) can mean to have dominion over/ to rule, and the Hebrew bible itself speaks repeatedly of what right rule looks like: it is not violent. God's rule, as expressed in Isaiah, is a rule of peace and justice, where lions and wolves have radically restructured digestive systems, enabling lambs and kids to lie down and dwell with ex-carnivores in peace. Justice and righteousness, in God's reign, "pour down like waters, an ever flowing stream" (Amos 5:24). This is a radically different way of viewing God's command to rule over the earth: no exploitation is intended in a world of God's willed justice and righteousness.





As Christians, we are called to re-examine the ways Scripture in general (and the Genesis text in particular) have been used to justify a way of life that feels good to us, but brings damage upon God's good creation.

Of course, we can't save the earth alone. But with God's help, and pressure on our leaders, we can make a difference. There are also many things we can do as individuals, families and communities. I would love to see some of your suggestions from "treading more lightly" upon the earth: what are you and your family doing to help the planet? Please send your list to *Carriage Stone* editor Bob Philhower for inclusion in next month's newsletter.

I close with the prayer of an eleven-year-old child on hearing of fighting on the border between India and China:

"Lord, make this world to last as long as possible."

Blessings,



From the Deacons

Thank you to everyone who participated in the silent quilt auction at the Palm Sunday brunch — we raised \$475 for the Rockland Family Shelter! The Shelter will also be receiving over 50 quilts for Mother's Day. Wendy Keryk donated all of the beautiful quilts through her company.

Our next fundraiser will be the sale of New Hempstead Presbyterian Church ornaments for Christmas. You'll hear more about that soon.

We are truly grateful for members of the congregation who help us with the weekly coffee hour. It is a big job, and we can really use your help! If you can bring the food to a coffee hour (perhaps you'd like to team up with someone and share your favorite recipes!), please let sign up on the bulleting board in the Colonial Room. We'll take care of the coffee setup.

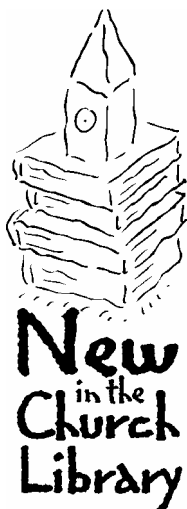
Finally, if you have any needs — no matter how small — we are here to help. Please call one of us or speak to us at church.



Thank you from the Deacons,

Carmen Bermudez
Marc Biden
Donna Butson
Percy Crockett

Wendy Keryk
Teri Lowinger
Marian Maroney
Karen Martin



Thank You for Updating the Church Library

We give a special THANK YOU to Joe Bermudez, Dan Rosco and Bill Young for all of their hard work in cleaning up the Church Library in the Colonial Room. We appreciate your care in making our library more organized.

NHPC 'Appreciated' By Habitat

New Hempstead Presbyterian Church (NHPC) was one of 22 area churches and religious organizations to be recognized by Habitat for Humanity of Rockland (HFHR) for its financial support over the last three years that made the building of two new homes in Hillburn possible.

NHPC was given a Certificate of Appreciation at a recognition ceremony held at the Nyack Senior Center. The certificate is on display in the church office. NHPC contributed more than \$1,000 to HFHR during construction of the homes. The first home was completed last October. It was purchased from HFHR by Tom and Regina Scott who, with their five children, now live in the first home they can call their own in 23 years.

Habitat for Humanity not only plans and builds the homes, but also gives needy families low-cost mortgages. Families must also put a minimum of 200 hours 'sweat equity' into the building of their home. The second home in Hillburn will be completed next month with occupancy scheduled for sometime in June.

NHPC has a long history of providing volunteers as well as financial support for HFHR. Congregants Percy Crockett, Lois Schmidt and Tim Maroney are active volunteers with HFHR.

IN RECOGNITION OF YOUR KINDNESS, COMPASSION, GENEROSITY AND HARD WORK,
HABITAT FOR HUMANITY OF ROCKLAND COUNTY
IS HONORED TO PRESENT THIS

Certificate of Appreciation

to

New Hempstead Presbyterian Church

 **Habitat for Humanity**
of Rockland County, NY

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY SEEKS TO ELIMINATE POVERTY HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS
FROM THE WORLD, AND TO MAKE DECENT SHELTER A MATTER OF CONSCIENCE AND ACTION
...AND WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR EFFORTS IN HELPING US TO ACHIEVE THAT GOAL.

Percy has given many hours of construction help on-site during the building of the two Hillburn houses. Lois volunteers at the HFHR office located in Murchison Hall every Tuesday, and Tim has served on the HFHR Board of Director for the last 2 years.

A third home on the Hillburn property that was donated to HFHR by the Community Development Corporation (CDC) will be started sometime next year. In the meantime, HFHR construction crews are available to provide minor reconstruction and renovation assistance to shut-ins and other people in need. If you know someone who needs help and cannot afford to have the work done, please call the HFHR office at (845) 353-5625.

Habitat For Humanity works in partnership with God and people everywhere, from all walks of life, to help people in need by building and renovating houses so that there are decent houses in decent communities in which every person can experience God's love and can live and grow into all that God intends.

Pentecost Offering

for Children at Risk, Youth, and Young Adults

Through the Pentecost Offering, the church expresses a common commitment to provide hope for children at risk, opportunities for youth and young adults to grow in their faith, and short-term mission service options for young adults.

Please give generously.





Pentecost Offering

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Pentecost is an amazing, life-giving day in the community of faith. At Pentecost, we celebrate the coming of the

Holy Spirit to transform human life and all of creation. Through our participation in the Pentecost Offering, we will be helping to bring the transforming love of God to children at risk, youth and young adults.

This year's Offering theme, "That very Spirit!" is from Romans 8:16. The passage describes the Spirit of God's persistent proclamation to us that we are God's children. With that assurance, we can know that God's love and care for us know no bounds. How freeing! What enthusiasm this gives us for life! What confidence this gives us to risk on behalf of others!

The Pentecost Offering is a tangible way to demonstrate that Spirit within us! It gives us the opportunity to use 40 percent of the amount we receive to minister in our own community on behalf of children at risk. Through General Assembly ministries, the Pentecost Offering also makes an astonishing impact as it guides and nurtures the faith of Presbyterian young people, calls forth a new generation of church leadership and advocates for children at risk on a national level.

Thank you for your support of the Pentecost Offering on May 27. Your gifts will have an impact now and in the generations to come!

Yours in Christ,
Janine Kallé

Special Music at NHPC



Barbara Zacheis will give a French Horn Recital on May 19 at 7 PM in the Sanctuary. A free-will collection will be taken to benefit the New Hempstead Presbyterian Church. All are invited! She will perform Richard Strauss' *Second Horn Concerto* and Reinhold Gliere's *Concerto for Horn*.



Some at New Hempstead Church remember Charley Klein. Charley now resides in a North Carolina nursing home after suffering a stroke a few years back. His community in Wilkesboro has a *Make a Wish* foundation and he wrote in that being a pilot during World War 2; he would love to fly once more. A Mr. Ed McCollum answered his wish and took him up in a single engine, single wing plane. He was so delighted!

Charley can be reached at

Senior Village of Wilkes
PO Box 1247
North Wilkesboro, NC 28659

Church World Service Issues Plea for Kids' School Kits

The demands of disasters like Hurricane Katrina, the Pakistan earthquake and more recent events including floods in Jakarta, Indonesia, and spring storms and flooding in the U.S. are taking a toll on inventories of one of the staples of relief aid-emergency kits.

The drain is prompting international humanitarian agency Church World Service (CWS) to issue a call nationally, specifically for contributions of children's school kits.

The school kits — colorful tote bags holding basic school supplies such as notebooks, pencils, blunt scissors, crayons and rulers — are contributed by individuals and groups around the U.S., then shipped in quantity by CWS to schoolchildren in need domestically and worldwide.

"We're urgently appealing for donations of school kits now, to be received in time for our spring kit collection schedule throughout the Northeastern states and, nationally for collections later in the year," says William Wildey, CWS' director of resource development.

Last year, CWS distributed more than 77,800 school kits in ten countries and eleven states across the US.

But the agency's Emergency Response Program Associate Director Linda Reed Brown says, "World needs have been extreme the past couple of years consuming a great deal of our inventory. Some weeks ago, we could have shipped 300 school kits to tornado-ravaged Dumas, Arkansas, but the low reserve wouldn't allow us to do so."

CWS kit collection projects are a grassroots phenomenon across the U.S., spearheaded by church and other volunteer groups throughout the year and particularly following disasters. CWS requests kits designed to fill very specific needs in an emergency, including school kits, baby kits, health or personal hygiene kits and emergency cleanup kits.

And, while the personal-sized kits are a relatively small part of the emergency relief, sustainable development and refugee services that the sixty-year-old agency provides worldwide, the small packages are a boon to people caught in the throes of disaster.

"Some church groups have year-long Church World Service kit projects that have been going on for years," says Wildey.

"We're inviting groups that have participated in kit collections in the past to get together again and join us in responding to this immediate need," he said, "and we're inviting churches, temples, school or youth organizations who'd like to engage in kits projects for the first time to hop on the bandwagon now."

Practical kit gifts meant a lot to the self-esteem of Louisiana's Katrina kids:

At Abbeville, Louisiana's Forked Island-East Broussard School, principal Chris St. Romain said that even five months after Katrina hit, colorful bags filled with school supplies for his students — more than half of whom were qualifying for free lunches even before the hurricane — were "a practical and welcome treat. The school kits from Church World Service meant a lot to our kids' sense of self-esteem," he said.

Each CWS school kit is a \$13 value, and the agency asks that contributors separately send to Church World Service \$2 per kit for processing and shipping.

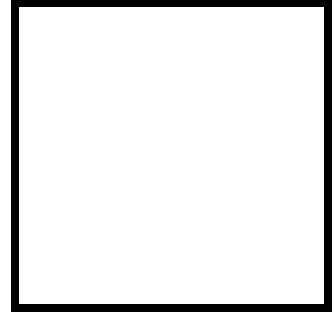
Individuals and groups wanting to find out about possible CWS kit drop-off locations and collection schedule deadlines in their area can call Church World Service (toll free) at (888) 297-2767.

Individuals or families wishing to contribute and ship school kit materials or other Church World Service kits directly to the agency can find more information on the CWS website: www.churchworldservice.org.

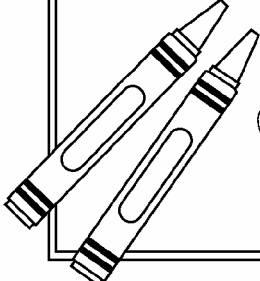


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DATED MATERIAL
MAY 2007

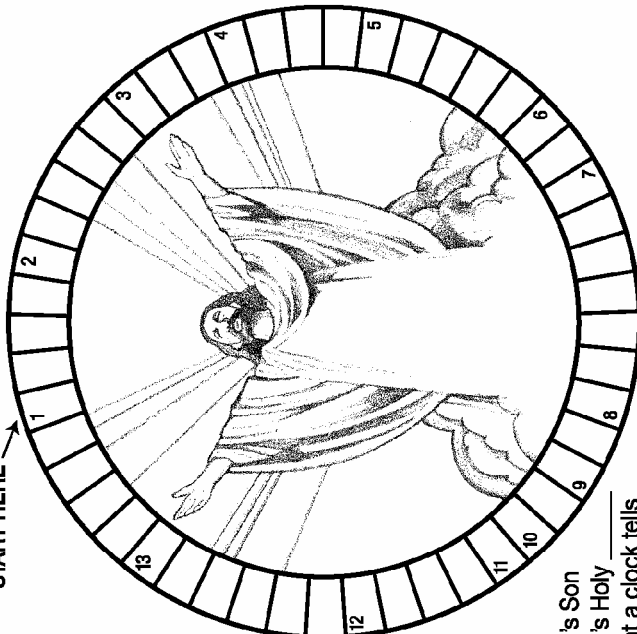


Just for KIDS

Ascension of the Lord

On the day Jesus left his disciples and went up in a cloud to heaven, he said to them, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." (John 14:18, KJV).

Read the clues below. The last letter of each word is the beginning of the next word.



START HERE →

1. God's Son
2. God's Holy _____
3. What a clock tells
4. Our planet
5. Where Jesus is now
6. Opposite of Old Testament
7. An onlooker
8. Place to see clouds
9. Modern word for thee
10. Opposite of down
11. Authority or strength
12. Comes back
13. Searches for

Answers:
 1) Jesus; 2) Spirit; 3) time; 4) Earth; 5) heaven; 6) new; 7) witness; 8) sky;
 9) you; 10) up; 11) power; 12) returns; 13) seeks