

Pastor's Corner

Across and Down

Pastor Tom Philipp



I confess. One of my obsessions every morning is to pick up my newspapers, Newsday and the New York Times, tear out the crossword puzzle from Newsday and work on it while I eat breakfast. Monday and Tuesday I usually complete it while I am eating. Wednesday and Thursday I carry the uncompleted puzzle with me and work on it whenever I take a break from the routine of that day. I do not try to do it on Friday and Saturday! (No, I don't attempt the Times crossword. It is beyond my ability).

I love the challenge of discovering a word that fits either across or down, then makes possible another word that fits the other dimension. I bet you think I find a lesson here regarding our spiritual lives. (Of course, your Pastor would find a lesson here!) I have discovered as I make my pilgrimage of faith through life, that I am constantly challenged to find answers or solutions that need to be judged by more than one perspective. A solution for a situation from one dimension, may be wanting from a second. That's why finding answers to life's problems is not simple. Simple answers don't stand the test of life's complexities.

As I write this article I am ready once again to participate in the World Peace Vigil, held in Bellport each year on Hiroshima Day. The day calls us to remember the dropping of the atomic bomb on that city in Japan and the heavy loss of life that resulted. The United States remains the only nation to drop an atomic bomb. Many of us feel it was the wrong decision. At the same time, I need to appreciate the argument of others who feel it saved lives by bringing the war to a close much sooner. An answer needs to fit both dimensions.

There is turmoil over the plans of the Islamic Community to build a mosque just a short distance from where 9/11 occurred. For some, such a building would be a sacred remembrance on the part of Muslims of that tragedy and the involvement of Muslim extremists. For others, it desecrates the memory of those who died there. An answer needs to fit both dimensions.

In my ministry, both in congregations and with students on campus, it is simple answers to life's complexities that I find disturbing. Jesus challenged his followers to go beyond simple answers. His parables were offered so that life could be looked at from more than one dimension. For instance, 'love God with all your strength and soul and mind'....but that's a one dimensional

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Taylor Drenzyk's Essay

Taylor Drenzyk is the winner of our 2010 Peacemaking Essay Contest. A word about Taylor follows in Nancy Best's report.

Peace is generally defined as "a state of tranquility or quiet freedom from disquieting or oppressive thoughts or emotions; harmony in personal relations; a state or period of mutual concord between governments." This peace acts in a transcending manner. After obtaining one level of the peace, only then does the next level become possible, and once the top is reached it cycles back to the bottom as the individual must be at peace in order for the greater body to be. However, this peace is not my peace.



My peace finds itself in a biblical context. Specifically through the Hebrew word shalom. Shalom has been found to mean contentment, completeness, soundness, wholeness, health, welfare, safety, prosperity, rest, harmony, safety, tranquility, as well as the absence of discord and chaos. The 'peace' found in the bible is a multifaceted concept that can be seen in every aspect of life. Peace is not simply a state of mind or being but rather the overall fulfillment and harmony of life. Peace is just not with you and another being or deity but something found in every second and moment of life. For me, peace as dictated by Merriam-Webster has been easier to obtain than that of biblical proportions.

Since my earliest days it has been a struggle for me to maintain peace and an even greater battle to achieve shalom. In my life, the experience of obtaining my peace has been about scaling the mountains set before me, and resting on the mountain tops after conquering the pinnacle... only to find an even bigger mountain laying

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About Peace Contest Essay Winner

Nancy Best

Elder for Social Education and Action

On Sunday, June 13, 2010, Pastor Tom and I presented a \$200 U.S. Savings Bond to Taylor Drenzyk, who was the winner of our Peace Essay Contest.

We were delighted to have Taylor and his family attend our morning service and church picnic that day. Taylor read his winning essay to the congregation during the service. His essay was about how he was able to achieve inner peace following a serious car accident in which he and his younger brother were seriously hurt.

Taylor will be a senior at Bellport High School this year, and is active in running, music and is part of the high school newspaper staff. He was the winner of a Martin Luther King, Jr. essay contest when he was still in middle school. He's very interested in music and would like to attend Concordia College after high school graduation.

Property and Finance Committee

The Property and Finance committee of the Session is responsible for oversight, management and review of the church's physical property and finances. It consists of the chairperson of the Buildings and Grounds committee (Helen Altomare), the Treasurer (Richard Thomas), the Financial Secretary and chairperson of the Stewardship Committee (John Deitz), Pastor Tom, and Ann Wiswall, the convener, who also has lead responsibility for liaison with the Post Carriage House tenants.

Since the congregation does not have a separate board of trustees (the Session and Trustees were merged half a century ago), the Property and Finance committee performs many of the day-to-day functions performed by traditional trustees. It meets monthly.

The committee has been responsible for negotiating with the Town of Brookhaven for the use of Caithness Community Development funds, and met several times over the last few months with town representatives. At our most recent meeting, the committee spent considerable time reviewing the revised proposed Agreement with the Town for the use of Caithness Funds and recommended to the Session its approval. They also reviewed the seven-month financial reports; and agreed to seek proposals for the installation of new energy saving storm windows for the carriage house and Gallery.



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answer....AND 'love your neighbor as you love yourself'.... fulfills another dimension. Is your life lived in such a fashion that both the vertical and horizontal dimensions are satisfied?

Does saying, "God willed it" leave out the horizontal dimension of human responsibility? Does saying, "I am the captain of my fate" seem trite because it is a one-sided dimensional approach? I pray at the hospital bedside for God's healing, but I am concerned that good medical and nursing practices are followed as well. I seek God's counsel when making important decisions. I seek also the advice of competent friends or advisors. I work hard at certain things while at the same time asking that God's will be done. Yes, life for me is constantly the interviewing of the vertical and the horizontal; the interviewing of various dimensions and perspectives for life is a crossword puzzle, demanding no simple one dimensional answer.

Taylor Drenzyk's Essay,

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before me. Three weeks into my freshmen year of high school, my life changed forever. While on my way to church for a drama practice one Monday night, with my mother and brother, our car got into an accident crossing Sills road. Our 1998 Ford Explorer had been t-boned in the side causing us to spin out and land on our side next to the curb. The initial accident only took two minutes to occur had taken my life which I had viewed as complete and shattered it like a Ming vase.

My Merriam-Webster peace was gone and shalom was nowhere within arm's reach. From that moment at 6:46pm on September 24 2007 for the next three months I watched my life unfold before me. My home which consisted of my parents, my two brothers, and myself was shattered. My younger brother was in the hospital for the first month, and my mom there with him the entire time. My older brother just started college, taking the time out to drive me every couple days to visit our younger brother and mother in Stony Brook Hospital. My father working, parenting, caring for his family, and being our everything took its toll on us as a family. The unison within ourselves and the harmony we usually held as a family was gone. We were all in different places physically, and stuck in different areas of the accident mentally as well as emotionally. This new found battle for peace was fought by each of us differently in our individual circumstances at the time. My personal battle had multiple fronts to fight.

The injuries I sustained included a grade four concussion and a lumbar strain. These physical injuries may have done their damage to me, but that was not what really hurt me. The moment my peace was lost on that day, I changed. I was no longer the person I was the day or even the minute before the accident. In my mind, everything I had worked for had failed and all my accomplishments to the date meant nothing. I had put myself in a state that contrasted every ideal of shalom. I was not content, healthy, sound, whole, safe, prosperous, restful, at harmony, tranquility, or completeness. These ideals which covered every aspect of life were not found in me and thus caused the opposite of peace; discord and chaos.

Having become restless, and out of touch with reality, it took me roughly two years before I could come to terms with reality and begin to deal with everything. My ideal conclusion of peace at the time was to be at ease with my problems, I was intent on having them just fade away. This, however, was not making peace but trying to keep the peace. I had learned that the peace I was seeking out was not the right peace, not my peace. The peace and harmony I needed was shalom. This peace, is the state that passes all understanding. It is a multifaceted concept that brings balance to our lives and seals us up in complete wholeness. Peace, or rather shalom, is always trying to come into your life, but itTs up to you to reach out and grab it.



Highlights of the General Assembly

The Middle East

The General Assembly met for its biannual meeting for eight days in July in Minneapolis. One of the controversial issues was a 170 page report titled "Breaking Down the Walls". The report was produced by a special committee that had spent two years visiting the Middle East and studying the issue. Various items in the report were amended before the delegates were ready to pass it. Included was a calling to halt US aid to Israel until Israel ends expansion of settlements in occupied Palestinian lands. Amendments to the report sought to find common ground on the Middle East. A broad consensus was reached and the report was passed by 558 to 119. The revised report made a strong statement about Israel's right to exist as a sovereign nation "within secure and internationally recognized borders." The report also contained a long awaited recognition of the suffering of the Palestinian people, particularly our Christian brothers and sisters.

Immigration

The General Assembly voted to refuse holding national meetings in Arizona and any states that adopt strict immigration laws such as Arizona has done. "Our work will always be to stand with those who are the most marginalized," said Rick Ufford-Chase, a former moderator of the General Assembly (who for years worked with immigrants in Tucson, Arizona).



Partnered Gay Clergy

By a vote of 373 to 323 the assembly again approved lifting the ban on partnered gay clergy, sending the proposed change for the fourth time in nearly a dozen years to the 173 presbyteries for ratification. In a separate debate the voting commissioners turned down a bid to expand the denominations definition of marriage to include same-sex



MESSAGE FROM THE DEACONS

Kappy Tilney

Notes and cards continue to be sent to visitors and Old South Haven members. Hospital and home visits have been made as the occasion warrants.

The Deacons are planning a Harvest Potluck in October (the date still to be determined). We hope you will bring one of your "cookbook" recipes.

The cookbook discussion continues and more delicious-sounding recipes have been submitted. The deadline for any more recipes is September 1st. Information from a cookbook publisher has been received and various options are being examined. More anon!

Food continues to be delivered from donations brought to the Narthex. As mentioned previously, the volunteers at St. Joseph are so appreciative. On average, 25 items are delivered per month. When shopping for your household, please keep the food pantry in mind.

COFFEE HOUR

Gathering after worship enables us to come together as a church family. Many thanks for the delicious provisions provided for this important time of fellowship.



From the Past

Oct 10, 1874

O.H.P. and W.E. Robinson of Bellport are now erecting a steeple on the Presbyterian church at South Haven, and are also making a number of other improvements.

17 July 1880

Some rich New Yorker is to give the South Haven church a fine bell.

September 9, 1928

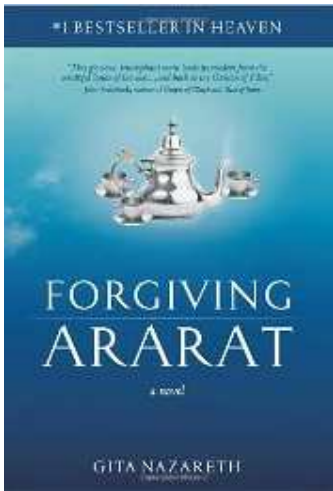
The cost for painting the exterior of the church, repair of the interior cornice and ceiling, and painting the ceiling was \$350. Two windows on either side of the present pulpit were enclosed [which can be seen in old pictures before the rear gallery addition was built], and repairs to the windows was done for an additional \$75.



couples. However, it directed the Board of Pensions to "provide equal benefits to PSUSA employee's same-sex partners and their children for the first time ever.

Afghanistan

The Assembly approved by a show of hands a measure calling on the US to end direct combat operations in Afghanistan. This is the denomination's first such statement since the war began in 2001. Their action also asks the government to increase humanitarian and economic development assistance to Afghanistan.



BOOK DISCUSSION: AUGUST 29

This summer fifteen of our members and friends have been reading the novel “**Forgiving Ararat**” by Gita Nazareth. We are one of about 300 congregations participating in a national program known as *One Book+One Parish+One Summer 2010*. On Sunday, August 29 at 7:30pm our group will meet in the Gallery to discuss the book. Several

of our members have indicated they are enjoying this novel, but at least one has decided not to finish it. A few weeks ago a list of discussion questions was distributed and more recently a printed conversation of the author with the publisher. In the conversation the author focused on various symbols in the book as well as “the message.” The story of the novel is about a young lawyer who dies unexpectedly. Arriving in heaven, she learns she has been chosen to join the elite lawyers who prosecute and defend souls at the Final Judgment. Pastor Tom indicates that you must read through to the final chapter to understand the significance and the meaning of the novel. Don't miss out on the discussion on the 29th.

Discussion questions for “Forgiving Ararat” have been posted on the Church's web-site blog—[click here*](http://oldsouthhavenpresbyterianchurch.blogspot.com/2010/07/nearly-twenty-members-of-old-south.html)—or are available in the Church Gallery. A commentary on some of the imagery is also found on the web—[click here**](http://oldsouthhavenpresbyterianchurch.blogspot.com/2010/08/this-week-at-old-south-haven.html)—or in the Church Gallery.

* <http://oldsouthhavenpresbyterianchurch.blogspot.com/2010/07/nearly-twenty-members-of-old-south.html>

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Antique Harmonium (or Melodeon)

The antique harmonium that graces the front vestibule of the church is said to be the first musical instrument ever used in the church. It originally belonged to the old Homan family of South Haven (they had the large farm immediately to the west of the old Robinson duck farm, now the Suffolk Co. dog park; the farmstead itself is now part of the Wertheim refuge). It eventually came into the possession of the Desmond Nelson family of Brookhaven who gifted it to the church sometime before 1961. It was known to have been playable in 1940.

Church Supper on September 19th

Joseph Vione has been invited to speak at our September Potluck Supper about his recent experience working with Habitat for Humanity in New Orleans. A high school senior this September, Joey has participated two summers in a program called People to People. It is an ambassador program started by President Eisenhower that sends students around the world as ambassadors from the U.S. He was chosen by his teachers to participate last year in a program that sent him to Europe and this year to New Orleans in what was called a “Leadership Summit”. The program focused on how the city is being rebuilt after Katrina. Not only did he have the opportunity to hear different speakers (Spike Lee, Condoleezza Rice, Eli and Payton Manning, and others) share their stories about what they did to help in the aftermath, his group worked at building homes, remodeling schools and other projects. Joey, after participating in this summer's project, sees himself as an ambassador for the people of New Orleans so that others will be reminded of their story.

Joey is the son of Joe and Rachel Vione and the grand nephew of Pastor Tom.

The supper will begin at 6:00pm and will be followed by Joseph's account of his work in New Orleans.

Morning Worship Assignments

Date	Greeter	Lay Leader	Coffee Hour
22-Aug	K. Tilney	F. Decker	G. Laface
29-Aug	Morgans	K. Y.Tolney	Bird/Scott
05-Sep	W. Scott	L. Scott	H. Altomare
12-Sep	S. Moran	B. Mullahy	S. MacKay
19-Sep	K. Tilney	J. Deitz	N. Best
26-Sep	Morgans	L. Majowka	Frankie/Kellogg
03-Oct	W. Scott	L. Scott	H. Altomare
10-Oct	S. Moran	J. Neal	Angusd/Tilney
17-Oct	K. Barry	J. Barry	Morgan/Wiswall
24-Oct	H. Altomare	K. Tilney	K. Tilney
31-Oct	Morgans	F. Decker	G. Laface
07-Nov	W. Scott	L. Scott	P. Kight
14-Nov	S. Moran	A. Stevens	D. Stevens
21-Nov	K. Tilney	D. Mayo	Bird/Scott
28-Nov	Morgans	L. Majowka	L. Majowka
05-Dec	W. Scott	N. Best	S. MacKay
12-Dec	K. Tilney	S. Welgoss	H. Altomare
19-Dec	H. Altomare	S. Moran	HK. Tilney
24-Dec	J. Neal	J. Deitz	J. Deitz
Xmas Eve	J. Neal	J. Deitz	J. Deitz
26-Dec	Morgans	J. Neal	D. Mayo

If you have a conflict with your schedule, please call
Kappy Tilney at 286-0024



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