# **Old South Haven Presbyterian Church**

Open Hearts, Open Minds, Anchored in Christ's Love 2015 Winter



## Pastor's Corner:

# A Great Time to Be Alive

#### **Pastor Tom Philipp**

I never had a great interest in Science when I was in high school or college. I loved History and Literature and Political Science much more than Biology, Chemistry, or Physics. (I apologize to the three men in our



choir with their PhD's in Physics!) Though I still have the same priorities, nonetheless, I have found in recent years that advances in the Sciences and the questions and issues these advances raise, force me to pay attention to these advances because the questions and issues raised have ethical and religious implications.

On October 27 I attended the Annual Fall Luncheon of Planned Parenthood of Nassau County, Before coming to Brookhaven I served for twenty-five years on the Board of Directors of PPNC and at one time chaired its Ethics Committee. This year's luncheon featured as speaker Jonathan Eig bestselling author of "The Birth of the Pill." The "pill" gave women the ability to regulate and make choices as to when and under what conditions they would bring an offspring into this world. Mr. Eig's remarks caused me later that day to reflect on a three day seminar I had the opportunity to attend in Utah on behalf of PPNC in June 2003, titled "Critical Bio-ethical Issues in Reproductive Health for the 21st Century". The information presented by the scientists present was mind boggling, providing additional choices and opportunities. Now couples unable to conceive may consider artificial insemination. Now genetic testing can inform individuals whether a fetus is healthy. The bio-science that enabled genetic testing has made bone marrow transplants possible. Future possibilities could include so called "designer children" as well as cloning. With each of these advances in the bio-medical field comes also profound ethical and religious questions.

My definition of what it is to be a human being is that a human being is that member of the animal kingdom who has the ability to choose and then must bear responsibility for, and the consequences of, those choices. There is more opportunity today to be human than in any previous period of history. It is A Great Time to Be Alive for it is a time that gives us the opportunity to use our God given freedom to choose; it is a time to exercise our God given humanity.

The ethicists talk of the importance of balancing the needs of the individual against the needs of the greater society. For my part, I tend toward respecting an individual's capacities to make that calculation in the absence of coercion and in the possession of the relevant facts to decide for oneself. For if we change the world, it will be by millions of people deciding for themselves in the context of the greater society.

It is A Great Time to Be Alive!

#### REFLECTIONS

#### Caroline Hammell Asselta

It is a lovely spring morning as I drive along Yaphank Road on my way to work. A half hour ago, the sun had risen and turned the sky a pretty pink. My thoughts are on my laundry hanging on the line and I wonder if that pink sky is a sign of rain later in the day.

I smell the turning of fresh earth though my opened car window and as I round the bend in the road, I see the newly plowed field and my mind drifts back to a distant time.

"Little I am, perhaps 4 or 5. We are on a large field, this lady and I. I am holding onto her long black skirt with my right hand. She has on a white blouse with long sleeves and a big white apron. Hanging from her waist are long strings of brown twine all cut the same length.

I peek past her, never letting go of my grip on her skirt, and see several women and girls down on their haunches, pulling out red radishes from the long row. The field is tremendous and way down at the end of the row are men with crates, packing the radish bunches and piling the crates on the bed of an old truck. There's little talking as the ladies work. Only the occasional sound of the men as they count the crates.

I am a little cold, for it is damp from the morning dew and I edge closer to the lady to feel her warmth. Just then she draws a string from her waist and deftly bunches together 10 radishes, then drops the little bunches down on the ground.

I watched how fast her hands move. Bend, pick up and count, 5-6-10 radishes, pull the string round and round, tie and drop. Another bundle, another few cents. We move further down the line. The row seems to go on forever.

I want to go back to bed – but the lady says something I don't quite hear and everyone moves another few steps. My feet are cold. I have no shoes on. I stand one foot on top of the other to warm them. My dress is long but I cannot stand on the hem of my skirt. Maybe if I squat a little!! Just as I get the foot covered, we all move again. The sun is a little higher in the sky now, and you can see the fields are starting to dry. I shiver, and the lady puts her arm around me. I snuggle closer. She smells so nice, like fresh soap and radishes ".

Where was this place, I wonder? Try as I might, I never remember just where this is. Another time – another world perhaps? All too soon I arrive at my destination. Sadly I park my car. I hate to give up that beautiful memory. I can still smell the fresh earth and those wonderful radishes. I remember rubbing the dirt from the radish and not the flavor as I crunch it with my teeth. Never really got all the grains of sand off. "Never mind, can't hurt you", says the lady.

Bend, pick up, 8-9-10 round and round – drop, another few cents.  $\,$ 

The cry of the bird in the distance slowly brings me back to now.

#### **BOARD OF DEACONS**

#### Judith Bird, Chair

The Deacons are pleased to report that a church directory including members and non-members has been compiled as of October 2015. The directory has been



distributed in church; however, a mailing is also planned. If there are additions/corrections, an addendum will be printed. Thanks to John Deitz and Nancy Best for their help.

On Saturday, October 10, the Deacons participated in the church fair with yard sale and baked/food items for sale. A raffle for two mums was held with Darcy Stevens and Joann Neal

 $$\operatorname{as}$  the winners. The proceeds from the sale went to the 2015 Capital Fund Campaign.

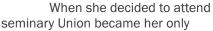
A Thanksgiving potluck supper was held on Sunday, November 15. Pastor Tom spoke about his experience at Union Theological Seminary and read an inspiring letter from a student presently attending.

A Christmas Fair is planned for Saturday, December 12. The Deacons will be meeting to discuss the details. Proceeds will go to the 2015 Capital Fund.

# Union Student "Speaks" to Us at Thanksgiving Potluck Supper

Suzanne Campise could not be with us but sent an email. She is in her first year at Union Theological Seminary and is interested in pursuing ordained ministry in the ELCA Lutheran Church. She attended Hunter college

with a double major in Women and Gender Studies and Political Science. A few years later she became interested in food and the way it affects our bodies and souls. She pursued a Certification as a practitioner of Holistic Nutrition. "To me, spiritual food is just as important as physical nourishment."



choice. She said she knew some students from Union, "There was a certain quality about them: they were people who were spiritually grounded, their ideas were thoughprovoking, and they took concrete steps to create a better world." She speaks of Union with these words: "Union is a pretty amazing school, and I am so grateful to be here to take classes with professors who are leaders in their field. Academically, it has lived up to its reputation. It has been pretty cool to have discussions and worship alongside classmates from different denominations, religions and stages of life." As she looks to her future she says: "I would

### **Music Department**

#### Sandy Asselta Organist/ChoirDirector



Beautiful fall colors are all around us, as happens each year as summer changes to fall in preparation for winter. Admittedly, sometimes I wish I could just sit back and watch it all happen. But then I realize that without care, effort and dedication to my little piece of God's earth, I'd be very disappointed in the view outside my window. Similarly, the sounds of music we hear in our worship services at Old South Haven require care, effort and dedication as well. Over the last year our

choir has enjoyed not only a few new voices, but also renewed joy and laughter as we rehearse together. Those rehearsals are held in the choir loft at 9:30 am and following fellowship after worship each Sunday.

As the Advent and Christmas seasons come upon us, I again invite all to join as you feel able, even if participation is limited. We are not a "member only" choir; rather a "make a joyful noise" gathering of voices raised in praise to God. I look forward to a season of smiling faces, congregational singing, special instrumental offerings and most of all, a feeling of peace and goodwill.

I would like to share a portion of an article forwarded by an individual in our choir, with my thanks...

"When you sing, musical vibrations move through you, altering your physical and emotional landscape. Group singing, for those who have done it, is the most exhilarating and transformative of all. It takes something incredibly intimate, a sound that begins inside you, shares it with a roomful of people and it comes back as something even more thrilling: harmony. Group singing has such a calming yet energizing effect on people. What researchers are beginning to discover is that singing is like an infusion of the perfect tranquilizer, the kind that both soothes your nerves and elevates your spirits. Study after study has found that singing relieves anxiety and contributes to quality of life. Group singing is cheaper than therapy, healthier than drinking, and certainly more fun than working out. It is the one thing in life where feeling better is pretty much guaranteed. Even if you walked into rehearsal exhausted and depressed, by the end of the night you'll walk out high as a kite on endorphins and good will."

Come, participate, give it a try ... Old South Haven's Choir and congregation welcomes you!!

like to combine the sacred elements of food, faith, spirituality and community in a new way to help others connect to God and their own sense of purpose. I see these kinds of conversations, community building and meaning-making happening around the table, much like the one you are sharing together tonight. One day I see myself leading Dinner Churches around the country."

#### PROPERTY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

#### Kappy Tilney, Chair

The Property & Finance Committee members are

Kappy Tilney, Chair; Richard Thomas, Church Treasurer; John Deitz, Financial Secretary; Sean Moran, Clerk; and Pastor Tom Philipp. The committee is responsible for maintaining day-to-day oversight of the church's property and finances. In that capacity, the committee reports to the Session and makes pertinent recommendations.



As noted elsewhere, the church repaving project has been partially completed. At the time the committee made its recommendation regarding the church lot and driveway, it also recommended repaving the manse driveway. After Session approval, it was repaved this past summer.

#### **CAPITAL CAMPAIGN FUND REPORT**

#### Nancy Best, Campaign Committee

As you have probably all seen, our enlarged and improved parking lot is on its way. It is nicely paved with



marked spaces, and provides more parking spaces for all who use it! The committee is happy (and grateful) to announce that we have received \$34,189.00 – or 77% of our goal – in gifts already received and pledges made. Thank you to all.

We will be having a special "Christmas Boutique" in our Carriage House on Saturday, December 12, 2015. There will be gift items, "goodies" from our

food table and much more. There will be more information coming up about what kinds of things you can do/donate to help. All proceeds will go to the Capital Campaign Fund.

#### **Christian Education**

### Jason Neal, Chair



The Presbyterian
Church (USA) is guided by three
books, the Bible, the Book of
Confessions, and the Book of
Order. While everyone in the
congregation is familiar with the
Bible, the other two books,
which serve as the basis of our
form of church government,
provide an understanding of
what makes Presbyterianism
unique. Among the various and

numerous denominations, Presbyterians have one of the most democratic governing systems. James W. Angell, in How to Spell Presbyterian, offers this:

"Presbyterian recognizes three ordained offices: ministers, elders, and deacons. All have a Biblical basis; all take similar vows. Ruling elders and ministers (often called teaching elders), acting together as the session, oversee the total good of the church, receive and dismiss members, provide opportunities for spiritual nurture, control the use of physical properties, and represent the congregation in the upper judicatories. Ruling elders also often serve simultaneously as trustees of the church. Deacons lead the ministries of compassion... Ordination is symbolized by prayers and a laying on of hands. Election and ordination represent not so much the granting of honor as the assumption of responsibility. It has been said that ordination does not mean so much the laying on of hands as the raising of hands."

Sunday school started up again in October and continues to take place on the second and fourth Sundays of each month during our 10:00am worship service. The annual Christmas pageant will be presented as part of the worship service on Sunday, December 20th. For more information, please contact our awesome Sunday school teacher, Darcy Stevens.

### **HEIFER PROJECT**

Last month the Presbytery of Long Island sponsored what was named the Heifer Ark Project as a mission endeavor. The goal was to raise \$5,000 from the churches of the Presbytery to supply two of every animal to poor areas, leading them to become sustainable: chickens, goats, cows, pigs, oxen, rabbits, water buffalo etc.

Heifer International began in 1944. The first cows were named "Faith", "Hope" and "Charity." The recipient families had to promise they would donate the first female calf to another poor family. Over the years Heifer International grew to a budget of over \$100 million. In 2008, the



Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation awarded Heifer International a \$42.5 million grant to help poor rural families in East Africa double their incomes by increasing their production of high quality raw milk to sell to dairies. In their long history Heifer International has now distributed to 20.7 million families, or more than 105.1 million people in more than 125 countries including our own.

Many people have replaced giving Christmas presents to their families and instead have given to Heifer International in their name. Old South Haven participated in the Presbytery project and the Presbytery Goal of \$5,000 was reached and exceeded.

#### THANKSGIVING SERVICES

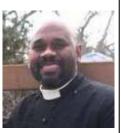
# Sunday, November 22 Thanksgiving Sunday/Christ the King Sunday

#### 10:00am Morning Worship

Sermon: "Fruition"

#### 4:00pm Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service

Old South Haven Church
Preacher: Rev. Hickman
Alexandre, St, James
Episcopal Church.
Ecumenical Choir:
Anthem: "Prayer of
Thanksgiving"



# WINTER WORDS JANUARY CONCERT

Old South Haven's next musical event will be on Saturday, January 16. The concert will feature Leslie Valentine, mezzo-soprano, and Christopher Reames, tenor.



Daniel Ragone serving again as artistic director and pianist. All three have appeared at our church previously and have been warmly received. The

program is titled "Winter Words" the title of a

selection of songs by Benjamin Britten. The program is designed to lift us out of any January doldrums.



#### **MORNING WORSHIP ASSIGNMENTS**

2016 MORNING WORSHIP ASSIGNMENTS JANUARY - MARCH

DATE	GREETER	LAY READER	COFFEE HOUR
Jan 3	K. Tilney	J. Barry	Hall/Mayo
Jan 10	S. Moran	Jason Neal	Schuhmann/Tilney
Jan 17	Joann Neal	B. Mullahy	Barry/Brown
Jan 24	J. Bird	N. Best	Fuka/Tilney
Jan 31	J/K Barry	K. Asselta	Hofmann/Stevens
Feb 7	K. Tilney	L. Majowka	Gallo/Heiliaenstadt
Feb 14	E. Fuka	F. Decker	Laface/Scott
Feb 21	L. Gallo	S. Moran	Frankie/Majowka/Neal
Feb 28	M. Unny	D. Mayo	Best/Bird
Mar 6	K. Tilney	K. Barry	Moran/Neal
Mar 13	S. Moran	N. Best	Hall/Mayo
Mar 20	Joann Neal	A. Stevens	Schuhmann/Tilnev
Mar 27/EAS	STER J. Bird	J. Neal	R. Thomas

# ADVENT SERMON SERIES Theme: The Active Verbs of Advent

Nov. 29 First Sunday of Advent "Expecting"

Light the Candle of Hope

Dec. 6 Second Sunday of Advent

"Waiting"

Light the Candle of Peace

Dec. 13 Third Sunday of Advent

"Anticipating "

Light the Candle of Joy

Dec. 20 Fourth Sunday of Advent

"Receiving"

Light the Candle of Love

Dec. 24 CHRISTMAS EVE

Light the Christ Candle

Traditional Service of Lessons and

Carols



Rev. Thomas J. Philipp, Minister Sandy Asselta, organist & choir director

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