

## Pastor's Corner

### We're Only At Step One



The August meeting of the Session was last Monday. I feel very good about the meeting. I believe we accomplished a great deal, and made positive decisions about the life and mission of Old South Haven Presbyterian Church.

We looked at our committee structure and made some changes which will reclaim our heritage of being concerned for education, local mission support, and addressing the social/political/economic issues before us in the community in which we live. We want to continually improve our image as a witness to being a voice for a Progressive Christianity, open to the challenges of our day both theologically and socially. That has been our heritage at Old South Haven and that is a needed voice within the Presbytery and within the Brookhaven/Bellport community. With a new chair of worship we can once again look seriously at our worship life and assure that both our Sunday morning worship and other worship experiences reflect both the best in our Reformed heritage as well as current with new styles and emphases in contemporary expressions of the spiritual life.

I left the Session meeting last Monday night feeling we "are on our way."

One item on the docket, however, members wanted to put on hold...but... we cannot ignore it, and, therefore, the Session plans to have a special meeting soon too address it. That is the matter of developing a Mission Study that speaks to what we see to be our future in the next span of years. This is a necessary step to be taken during my Interim Period with you which will shape the next chapter in this Congregation's ministry and that of the person who will succeed me.

## REFLECTIONS FROM A MEMBER

By Catherine Kellogg

I came to Brookhaven in 1957 as a new bride, my husband, Charles having been installed several months earlier as pastor of Old South Haven Church. At that time, this historic church building languished unused beside a duck farm in South Haven, while the congregation worshiped in the former Methodist sanctuary.

When Charles learned that the congregation owned two churches, and that the one in South Haven had twice the seating capacity and was a historic, beautiful edifice, he determined, with the approval of the congregation, to raise the necessary funds to purchase land and have the beautiful old church moved into the heart of Brookhaven Hamlet.

An appeal went out to the wider communities of Bellport and beyond for funds. A generous donor, who had great interest in antiquities, came forward in the person of Helen Sperry Lea, to spark the start of the campaign with a gift of \$5,000.

Eventually, the goal of \$60,000 was reached and the 132 year old church made its' 4 mile move down Montauk Highway to its present site on December 28, 1960. The most difficult part of the trip was the start, since the church had to be lowered to the highway at a 15 degree angle.

Mrs. Lea, affluent daughter of Elmer Sperry, inventor of the Sperry gyroscope, took an enormous interest in the restoration. She personally donated all the initial landscaping and had her private gardener care for it for a number of years. She commissioned the painting of the interior and had it completely re-painted 3 times until she was satisfied with the shade of "off-white". I understand the care of the grounds still is paid for from her bequest.

Charles' ministry historically coincided with the tumultuous decades of the 1960's and 1970's when the U.S. was mired tragically in the Vietnam War and was polarized by the Civil Rights movement. Believing that the Church could only be relevant if it addressed the moral issues of the times, Charles became an outspoken and courageous voice in the community against



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A few months before my arrival, and during the closing days of Jeannie Baum's ministry here, a series of three meetings were conducted by Johanna Johns Jung, as a first step in this Mission Study. I have read the reports from those meetings, and will summarize them for the Session prior to its Special Meeting. Those reports contain what you people see as the most significant contributions of this Congregation in the past and in the present, and contains, also, hopes for the future. It will be up to the Session to now shape that into a "blueprint" (so to speak) for what is a Christ centered, community oriented, realistic ministry, for the next span of years, which can be financially sustained and which receives this Congregation's full support. Once that is done, (and we need to celebrate when it is done!!) a committee can be formed to look for my successor.

It is important that we do this business carefully. We will not rush the process. The work of the Session at its last meeting to redesign its committee structure and committee responsibilities will greatly help us in this endeavor. I will be meeting with the Board of Deacons soon to help them look at their work and where it can be enhanced, with some suggestions coming from the Session. This also will help shape that Mission Study.

Yes we (your Interim Pastor and your Session) have a big task before us but it is one to which I have been called and your Session has been called as present leaders for this Congregation. What a challenge! What an opportunity! May we accept both the challenge and the opportunity with commitment and a sense of optimism.



Elder Joann Neal discusses a point at the August Session Meeting



The Session of the Old South Haven Church at their August 2006 Meeting.

Front: Helen Altomare. From Left: Linda Majowka, Linda Scott, Darcy Stevens, Rev. Tom Philipp, Clerk Sean Moran, Ann Wiswall, John Deitz. Missing for picture: Joann Neal.

## Reflections of a Member

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the undeclared and illegal war in Vietnam and the unjust attempt to deny black citizens their civil rights.

In June of 1963, a week-long Peace Seminar was held at the Church, to which notable speakers came to address the community. The keynote speaker was Norman Thomas, former Presbyterian minister and 6-time candidate for President. As is true today, the country was divided and this Peace Seminar drew both enormous support and a vicious backlash. My keenest memory of that time was fear for our two little children because of threatening phone calls throughout one night.

Perhaps the most distinctive characteristic of those 20 years as a pastors' wife at Old South Haven was the so-called "Arts Ministry". Charles' vision was to re-unite religion and art which had been "divorced" after the Reformation. He believed Protestant Reformation Churches became impoverished by the loss of much of the aesthetic dimension paintings, statuary, stained glass windows and much sacred music, in its' reaction against Rome. He believed that churches lost magic and power, and that Arts lost motive and content. The Arts Ministry was his attempt to heal this schism.

So the church began to hold regular art exhibits in the "gallery" a new exhibit each month for many years, drawing upon the large presence of artists in the community. A harpsichord was build from a kit and placed in the sanctuary. It was performed on by organist Guy Fein often with other instrumentalists, and sometimes a small orchestra.

In 1970 both Poet's Repertory Theatre and Cabaret Theatre were established, Cabaret Theatre continuing uninterrupted for 11 years. Each month in the Carriage House, events featuring excellent performers in Drama, Music, Poetry and Dance entertained the community. Wine and cheese were served in a "cabaret" atmosphere with red and white checkered tablecloths and candlelight.

These events were immensely popular in the community, drawing capacity crowds for 11 years. After Charles sudden death in 1976, I continued Cabaret Theatre for 5 more years, booking the artists, doing the publicity and set-up. Those were rich, action-filled years and I felt privileged to be part of it.

After a 25 year absence, it was a great joy to re-unit with the congregation at Old South Haven last June, 2005. I have returned to my spiritual home and to the church family. I believe that the vitality of this faith community, so enriched by its' heritage, will flourish far into the future. And I believe the beauty of this sanctuary and this place will be cherished by all future pilgrims who will call it home.

### CABARET THEATRE



One of many Cabaret Theatre performing groups



## From The Music Department

By Peg Angus

The crew from Odell Organ Shop arrived August 7 to begin dismantling the organ for shipment. Ed Ordell was there early to greet the crew and review specific instructions. Joining the crew, were John, an engineering student and Richard, who worked on building organs in Germany and Spain, as well as here in the States. Tom White came in from Bridgehampton to help with the process, as everything needs to be done in a very particular order and removed piece by piece.

By noon on Tuesday, take-down was complete and transferring parts to the truck began.

All the packable parts, smaller pipes, for example, get packed into large wooded trays which can then be stacked. Everything is done in a particular order to assure it all fits in the truck and to prevent damage.

By 5:30PM that evening, they were done and on their way to catch the ferry to Connecticut.

Ann Wiswall provided accommodations at her home for the crew. They greatly appreciated that...thank you Ann!

As mentioned in the last newsletter, we did not have sufficient funds to restore the façade pipes of the organ. John Deitz has now contributed a special gift for the painting and stenciling of the façade pipes...thank you John!

### Organ Parts All Laid Out on the Pews



### Upcoming ...

- The first **Fellowship Potluck Supper** of the Fall will be held Sunday evening, September 10th at 6 p.m.
- **Annual Fall Yard Sale** Saturday, September 16, 9 am - 3 pm.

## Presbyterian Disaster Assistance : An Update

An update on the use of funds going to meet the disasters as a result of Katrina, Rita, and Wilma indicates that the funds are being released there under the strategy and response plans of the affected presbyteries. Presbyterians have provided more than \$20 million in response to this disaster, with just over \$16 million available for long-term recovery. These funds will support work in five presbyteries over seven years.



First Presbyterian Church in Ocean Springs, MS.

In Mississippi, homeowners are only beginning to settle insurance issues and determine their options.

In Louisiana, basic governmental decisions about how and where rebuilding will happen and under what conditions have yet to be made. The funds are being invested with all of the interest being used exclusively for this response. None of these funds will be used for other disasters in the US or even subsequent disasters in the same region.

There are Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Volunteer Villages located in the area which house volunteers from churches and colleges. The success of these has led to developing the Volunteer Village into a national ministry model for the Presbyterian Church USA.

The needs are so enormous in this area that finding sufficient building materials for the recovery has turned out to be a monumental task. PCUSA is working ecumenically to identify sources of funds for large purchases of construction materials.

Let us be thankful that Presbyterians have responded with such generosity and with such careful planning and strategy in meeting this disaster.

More information on the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance program may be found by visiting their web site at <http://www.pcusa.org/pda/index.htm>

### Electrical Work Begins

The Session has approved significant electrical work to repair deteriorating wiring in the attic of the church, ready the organ chamber for the return of the organ, improve lighting of the parking lot and walkways, and other needed electrical repairs. Our electrician, Michael McGuinness, Empire Electrical Contracting, will begin the work this week.

Thanks to Philip Altomare and Sacred Gardens for the cleanup of the grounds and garden accomplished last week.

Helen Altomare

**Choir Rehearsals Resume** Thursday, September 14th, 7:30 pm after the Summer hiatus.

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## CHURCH SCHOOL, ADULT STUDY STARTS SEPTEMBER

By Darcy Stevens

Pastor Tom will be leading us in a series on **"The Life....or Many Lives....of Jesus"**.

CHRISTIAN  
EDUCATION

The series will begin on **September 12th at 7:30PM** in the Gallery and continue on September 19, September 26 and October 3.

We'll start by considering various pictures (paintings) of Jesus asking ourselves which do we relate to and why?

I got a quick preview of the series and found it immediately challenging, thought provoking and faith-focusing. Pastor Tom has a wealth of knowledge and insight on Jesus as He is portrayed (differently) in each Gospel and by various writers through out history.

If transportation or night driving is a problem, call me and we'll arrange a driving buddy.

Please join us even if you can not attend all the sessions.

A second series is planned for later in the Fall/Winter entitled: "Our Christian Faith and the natural environment", ideas for that or future topics are very welcome.

### Rev. Philipp will be delivering three sermons in September relating to the adult study class:

September 10<sup>th</sup> "The Man Christ Jesus: He Is Remembered."  
September 17<sup>th</sup> "The Man Christ Jesus: He is Experienced"  
September 24<sup>th</sup> "The Man Christ Jesus: He is Interpreted"

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## Session Assignments

At the August Session meeting changes were made in our Committee structure and Elder responsibilities which we feel will enhance the life and ministry of this Congregation.

### Moderator & Pastor

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#### *Carriage House Tenants*

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