

Pastor's Corner

The Art of Cultivating

Pastor Tom Philipp



I have been waiting patiently, and finally it happened. Finally the tulips by the side door of the manse bloomed. Each year I await them as a sign that spring has really come. I had tulips at the manse in Merrick as well. There they faced two yearly enemies.

Enemy number one was the squirrels. They loved to eat the tulip petals. At the suggestion of a friend, I even put moth balls around the tulips – to no avail.

Then there was enemy number two. The gardening service for the church and the manse was staffed by several young men who loved digging around the plants in the flower beds and making everything neat and tidy. Their cultivating often led to the destruction of the more fragile plants. Certainly cultivating is necessary, and not just for looks. It loosens the soil and makes it more porous, encouraging growth as well as deeper rooting. It must be done, however, with care.

I have come to realize how important cultivating is in our spiritual lives as well. Furthermore, I have come to realize that one aspect of my ministry is cultivating. But it must be done with care. The dictionary offers several meanings for the word 'cultivate' and I feel each is appropriate to spiritual growth.

First of all, to cultivate is to loosen the soil and kill weeds. For many of us the Christian Faith was planted in us a long time ago, maybe even back in the days of childhood. The ground at that time was cultivated in a manner in which the Faith could take root. But for that Faith to flourish consistently and continually as we mature there is the need to dig up the ground around that plant. To such a task I feel called as your pastor, and to such a task I felt called in my years as a campus minister. In my preaching, in my teaching, in my pastoral counseling, I seek to cultivate the soil, stir up your thinking, question the old and encourage one to be open to the new. But this needs to be done with a great deal of caution. I must not injure the plant. I must not cut off its roots. Yes, cultivate the soil. Yes, prune and remove that which is dead, all done to permit the plant to bloom.

The word 'cultivate' means also to "foster the growth of." We speak of cultivating one's musical taste (I am being stretched by the music of Philip Glass) or art appreciation (I am grateful for Malcolm Morley's patience with me). We speak of cultivating our taste buds. To such a task I feel called: to expose you to new ways of looking at the Christian faith; to assist in allowing your personal faith to grow deeper, constantly being enriched.

I am well aware this task of cultivating is not limited to your pastor and other 'men and women of the cloth.' YOU can play that role in someone else's life as well as in your own. I am sure friends and others have done the same for you. It is a rewarding job; it is a necessary job; but it is one that needs to be done carefully and with a great deal of respect. You and I are called to cultivate but not destroy another's faith.

Reflections of a Member

Ann Wiswall

Our family moved to Brookhaven from Mount Sinai in 1957. After visiting several churches in the area, we joined Old South Haven Church. Charles Kellogg was the minister and the congregation was friendly and welcoming. I remember Edna Tooker and Pam's parents, Sue and Earl Light, as active members when we joined.

Besides Charles' and the church's emphasis on the Arts, Peace and Civil Rights, which my husband and I heartily supported, I also found the adult study group, led by Charles, to be a stimulating experience. The books we read and discussed were by contemporary writers about their faith. I continue to find the writings of contemporary as well as early religious thinkers interesting and thought-provoking.

Since I joined Old South Haven, I have become more and more appreciative of the friendship and support of this church family. I am thankful for Tom Philipp's sermons and leadership and for the companionship and strength of our church members as we seek to be guided by the Holy Spirit and to witness to God's love in the way we live our lives.

Greening of the Church

Catherine Kellogg

On April 16, Pastor Tom and Catherine Kellogg attended a 3-hour program at Molloy College in Farmingdale entitled "Energy Efficiency for Religious Congregations."

It was sponsored by the L.I. Interfaith Environmental Network which is made up of various faith organizations, including the L.I. Council of Churches.

Attending were representations of Christians, Jews, Unitarians, adherents of Islam and other faith groups. In response to Global warming, its mission is to promote stewardship of the earth through energy conservation and use of renewable energy.

A panel of speakers from NY Interfaith Power and Light, LIPA, National GRID and the Solar Center described how their respective companies can provide ways and means and incentives for church congregations to conserve energy and reduce costs. It concluded with an inspiring talk by Reverend Fletcher Harper of GREENFAITH, NJ. He explained that GREENFAITH has figured out a way to finance these projects so that congregations can "Go Green" without an initial outlay of money. Inefficient heating systems are replaced with fuel-efficient models and they are paid for out of cost savings, through a system of rebates over time.

Each participant was given a Green Canvas Carry-All bag to hold the dozens of giveaway fliers and pamphlets, books and magazines. This literature describes the breath of options available to churches for "Going Green" and the rich diversity of resources. Anyone interested to see this material can ask Pastor Tom or Catherine.

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Robert Sterling's Photographs to be Featured During June

The Old South Haven Church is pleased to have the photographs by Robert Stirling on display in our church gallery during the month of June.

We will host a reception for this exhibit on June 1st from 3:30 to 5:30 pm. Everyone in the church and in the larger community is invited to attend. The photographs will be exhibited during June every Sunday after Worship service from 12:00 -1:00 pm.



May Film: Rabbit Proof Fence Monday, May 12, 7 pm

"Rabbit Proof Fence" (Western Australia, 1931) Government policy includes taking half-caste children from their Aboriginal mothers and sending them a thousand miles away to what amounts to indentured servitude, "to save them from themselves."

Molly, Daisy, and Grace (two sisters and a cousin who are 14, 10, and 8) arrive at their Gulag and promptly escape, under Molly's lead. For days they walk north, following a fence that keeps rabbits from settlements, eluding a native tracker and the regional constabulary. Their pursuers take orders from the government's "chief protector of Aborigines," A.O. Neville, blinded by Anglo-Christian certainty, evolutionary world view and conventional wisdom. Can the girls survive?

Congratulations to Graduates!

John Morgan from Bellport High School, June 28. John will be attending Suffolk County Community College.

Andy Corral from Bucknell University, May 18. Andy is hoping to work for an environmental non-profit organization.

Sunday School

Darcy Stevens

Our class has taken a break from study of the Parables to study Holy Week in March and the Creation Story for Earth Day in April. We will finish up with another parable – The Lost Sheep/Son in May and June.

We hope everyone will join us in celebrating the end of Sunday school at an outdoor service and picnic brunch on Sunday, June 22. Good food and games for all!!

I am looking for a substitute to teach our lovely children on Sunday, May 18. I will be away. If you are able to volunteer, please call me at 286-9278.

Save Darfur

Sudan is the largest country in Africa, located just south of Egypt on the eastern edge of the Sahara desert. The country's major economic resource is oil, but this resource is not being developed for the benefit of the Sudanese people. As much as 70 percent of Sudan's oil export revenues are used to finance the country's military.

Darfur lies in western Sudan and is about the size of Texas. The approximately 6 million inhabitants of Darfur are among the poorest in Africa. The current crisis in Darfur began in 2003. Two rebel groups mounted an insurgency against the central government. President al-Bashir's response was brutal. Arms have been given to local tribal and other militia. Entire villages have been wiped out. These attacks often receive the support of the Government of Sudan's armed forces.

The human suffering in Darfur continues despite the fact the United States Congress, President Bush, and two US Secretaries of State have all labeled the conflict Genocide.

St. Ann's Episcopal Church, 268 Middle Road, Sayville, will host an interfaith rally for Darfur on Friday, May 9, at 10:30 am. Congressman Steve Israel and various clergy will speak. To RSVP or for more information contact Erin Murphy at 631-951-2210 or erin.murphy3@mail.house.gov.

Tom Philipp



Board of Deacons

Kappy Tilney

Easter flowers and cards were delivered and sent to several people. The Deacons also responded to a request from The Long Island Council of Churches for monetary donations to their Food Program. Due to the congregation's generosity, the deacons were able to donate \$100.

On Saturday, April 12, a potluck supper brought the congregation together for food and fellowship. The food was delicious, and hopefully, the fellowship provided nourishment, as well. There was a varied assortment of food and many thanks are extended to all the provision providers!

In June the new worship assignments list will be posted. If there is any part of Sunday worship (i.e. greeter, lay reader or coffee hour provider) in which you wish to participate, please contact Kappy Tilney at 286-0024.

Defensive Driving Course

Driver Education Consultants will be conducting a DMV-Approved Defensive Driving Course on Saturday, June 21 in the Post Carriage House, beginning at 8:30 am. Upon completion of the six-hour course, a certificate will be issued that reduces auto insurance/points for three-years. The cost of the course is \$45. If you have any questions, please contact the consultants at (631)360-9720. Bring a sandwich to enjoy during the break.

THANK YOU!

It is through the congregation's generous contributions that the Deacons are able to continue their outreach within and beyond the church community. Thank you for your continued support.



Pentecost Sunday – Confirmation Sunday – Mothers' Day

On May 11 our Sunday morning worship will bring together three events.

It is Pentecost Sunday, the celebration of the coming of the Holy Spirit to that group of early followers of Jesus. This is the day which we observe as the 'birthday' of the Church. The theme this year is based on Psalm 104:30: "When you send forth your spirit".

Often, as part of this celebration we welcome into church membership those young people who have been in a confirmation class to study the history of our faith and the particular organization of the Presbyterian Church USA. They are now ready to become voting members of the Congregation. This year Erik Morgan will be confirmed.

In addition we will pray tribute to mothers as we observe Mothers' Day.

Presbyterian Heritage Sunday, May 25

Presbyterian Heritage Sunday has been set aside by the General Assembly of our denomination as an annual day to celebrate, reflect upon, and learn more about the long and rich history of Presbyterianism in America. It falls on the Sunday closest to May 21, the date of the opening of the first General Assembly in 1789. The theme this year is: "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

South Haven Church Way Back Then, June 8

On Sunday, June 8, long ago members of the South Haven Presbyterian Church (way back when it was still in South Haven) will be revisiting us. John Deitz will be leading worship – joined by Floyds, "Tangier" Smiths, Carmans, Millers, Hawkins and others who would have been sitting in our pews in 1828 when the present "meeting house" was built. They will recall the early days of the church established in 1740 as an outpost of the Town church in Setauket. We hope to have available objects used by the congregation now on loan to the Bellport-Brookhaven Historical Society.



Dear friends of Old South Haven Church,



Today I am writing to you about a cause that is important to me and a cause I know you will want to support. I have decided to take steps in the fight against multiple sclerosis (MS) by joining the 2008 Bike MS Ride and I am asking you to join me in this important fight by

sponsoring me.

Why I am Riding? In November 2007, my best friend Donna was diagnosed with MS. A beautiful Mother of two young children with her whole life of adventures ahead of her. I am so inspired by Donna as I see her fight past the challenges of everyday life. She always puts the needs of others before her own, with a most gracious and hopeful heart. As a symbol of her courage, strength and dedication to the cause, Donna will be riding beside me in the 75 mile ride. I have made a commitment to finish this quest for her and all those with MS that may not be able to.

Your support will mean so much to me and the over 400,000 Americans living with MS. Additional information on my fund-raising goal will be posted in the Gallery.

Thank you all in advance,
Tammy Skelly
(Daughter of Linda and Bill Scott)

More Light Sunday, June 1

As a More Light Congregation of the Presbyterian Church(USA) we, together with other Presbyterian congregations who have joined this movement, will express in our worship service what it means to take a stand for the full inclusion of all into the membership and leadership capacities in our denomination. More Light Sunday comes three weeks before the meeting of the General Assembly. At this Assembly, once again, there will be overtures that address issues of discrimination and injustice for gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender individuals. The theme of this year's Assembly, to be held in San Joes, California, is "Do Justice, Love Kindness, Walk Humbly with your God". Printed below is a statement released by More Light Presbyterians.

It's About Time

It's about time for all disciples of Jesus Christ to take a stand for those who are still denied full participation in our church - lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender sisters and brothers, whom God loves and calls to faith and ministry.

It's about time to end
the task forces, studies, judicial cases, interpretations,
and other abuses

that continue the unconscionable discriminatory policies of our church.

It's about time to lay aside our fears:

Fear of the unknown - fear of schism,
Fear of those who are different.

"God is love... there is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear."

1 John, 4:16, 18

It's about time to do the right thing,
to delete G-6.0106b which has created so much strife in our beloved church.

It's about time to trust in God's wildly inclusive love,
and remove the boundaries we have set
around God's free, unmerited grace.

It's about time to make our church a welcoming community,
where everyone has an equal place at God's table.

It's about time!

Adopted by the National More Light Presbyterians Board of Directors, Feb. 18, 2008

*Boy Scout Troop 47
requests the honor of our presence at the
Eagle Court of Honor for
John Erik Morgan
Saturday, May 31, 2008 - 1:00 pm
Old South Haven Presbyterian Church
Coffee & Cake Immediately following
RSVP by May 16, 2008
The Morgan Family - 286-0694*



Greening of the Churches

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Ten years ago, or even five, a program like this would not have taken place. Awareness that environmental deterioration, primarily global warming, which is a moral and spiritual issue, has swept through the religious communities rapidly. People of all faith groups are awakening to the realization that God's creation is under threat and that the life support systems of the planet are being compromised by excessive use of fossil fuel, consumerism and all forms of industrialization.

Although the Environmental movement on the secular level is at least 30 years old, the religious communities are at last assuming a leadership role in addressing the 21st century's greatest threat.

Music Department

Danny Corneliussen

Sing to the Lord a New Song

I am lucky to have the opportunity to be the choir director at our church. There are a lot of exciting possibilities in this role, and I get to discover them because of my job at Old South Haven.

I had a few voice lessons this semester with a singer and opera student up at Stony Brook. The most important practice tip I got (aside from the more specific technical advice) was this: Smile when you are singing! Be happy about the music you are creating. What a wonderful thing to remember.

This point can not be over emphasized. People often forget to praise themselves for the nice things they do. They fail to recognize their gifts and the good things they contribute to those around them.

For a musician, the work involved in practicing can often be difficult. It is easy to be caught up in this long process. Making music is not usually an easy thing. But musicians, like anyone else, should hold up a mirror to what they are doing well. For singers, this often means literally looking in a mirror and seeing oneself clearly in the act of performing.

I have been trying to come up with a list of things that singers might say to themselves in the mirror.




Here is what I have so far:
"I am so excellent right now!"
"I am fierce!" (In a good way.)
"I am just so pretty today!"
*For guys, replace the word "pretty" with "handsome." (Or not, if you'd rather.)
"Gee, maybe I should shave more often!" (That one I guess is just for guys.)

And more to come. I will keep thinking on this subject.

As summer looms ahead, I am in the process of selecting service music for the season. Also, it would be a nice time to have a church picnic for everyone. Kappy mentioned that sometime in June would be a good time.

Another thing to look forward to is our new Brookhaven Recorder Ensemble! A few of us have now started rehearsing after church on Sundays. Many thanks to Ann Wiswall for her help in initiating this. I'll tell more about this endeavor at another time. It brings up another good point though: singing isn't the only kind of music, instruments are good too! (I guess this article was mostly about singing...) We are hoping to provide some lovely recorder music, in addition to the organ playing, some Sunday morning in the future.

That is all for now. I hope everyone is well. Thanks and see you Sunday.



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Reflections on Conference at Villanova University

On May 13 Israel will celebrate sixty years of independence in a homeland that provided a refuge for persecution and mass murder in Europe. Palestinians recall the events of 1948 as a catastrophic dispossession and the beginning of a long exile from their homeland that continues to this day. Both communities regard the Holy Land as a "homeland"

On April 25-26 I attended a conference at Villanova University sponsored by Friends of Sabeel – North America, of which I am a member. Sabeel, which is the Arabic word for "the way" is a Palestinian liberation theology center based in Jerusalem. The conference was titled: "The Quest for Place and Peace in the Middle East." In his keynote address, Rev. Naim Ateek, the founder of Sabeel, urged that a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict must be grounded on principles of nonviolence: "nonviolence is not one option out of many. For us Palestinian Christians it is the only option and the only strategy. We cannot call ourselves followers of Jesus Christ and believe in or condone the use of violence and terrorism. We are looking forward for the time when the Israeli occupation of Palestine will end. Without this kind of justice there cannot be peace."

A recurrent question at the conference was "whose homeland is Israel/Palestine?" I believe it is important that Christians challenge the powerful political role and theology of what is known as Christian Zionism. Such spokespersons as Pat Robertson and the late Jerry Falwell and John Hagee (who recently pledged support to John McCain) claim that Israel must remain in complete control of the territory, of the land promised to Abraham. Approximately 20 million adherents to their apocalyptic theology believe that the Bible mandates uncritical support for an expansionist Israel state as a necessary prelude for the second coming of Christ. In their view, when Jesus returns to Jerusalem, some Jews will acknowledge him as the Messiah. Those who don't will be slaughtered in the final battle just before history's final end. Israeli officials are willing to accept the political and financial support of Christian Zionists while ignoring their anti-Jewish theology.

I am becoming more and more convinced that the present conflict in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the ongoing hatred of many Middle Easterners toward America will not reach a plausible solution until the Israel/Palestine issue is solved. And for Christians this entails also the rejection of the theology of Christian Zionism.

Tom Philipp



Morning Worship Assignments

Date	Greeter	Lay Leader	Coffee Hour
May 11	S. Moran	F. Decker	G. Decker
May 18	C. Kellogg	K. Tilney	K. Tilney
May 25	K. Morgan	L. Majowka	L. Majowka
June 1	W. Scott	L. Scott	P. Light
June 8	S. Moran	A. Stevens	D. Stevens
June 15	C. Kellogg	J. Deitz	A. Wiswall
June 22	K. Barry	J. Barry	N. Best
June 29	K. Morgan	S. Welgoss	H. Altomare

Assignments are also posted on the church's web site:
http://oldsouthhavenchurch.org