

Pastor's Corner

Insensifivity



Since moving to Brookhaven I have had the wonderful opportunity to meet many new people and establish new friendships. One of my morning coffee break friends is Malcolm Morley the internationally known artist. Since first meeting him and then getting to know him in our 'coffee chats,' I have hoped for the opportunity to visit his studio, which is located just across the road from OSHPC in the building that was once our Church. Last week he extended the invitation and I quickly accepted.

I felt I should do some homework before keeping my appointment with him. I did a little research so that I knew a bit more about his life and his work. I had to discover what was meant by neo-expressionism and photorealism. That prepared me somewhat for the walk around his studio and my viewing his work. I very much appreciated his response to questions I asked, and how he would point certain things out in his works. Then he drew my attention to one of his most recent pieces.

The piece was that of a TV set on a stand, both probably made out of papier-mâché or some other such material, with the entire piece, except for the 'tv screen,' painted to look like Army green camouflage uniform, and down at the base was inscribed "US Army." I looked at what Malcolm had painted to be the picture on the TV screen. It was of several naked bodies entwined with each other. He asked me what I saw and I told him it appeared to be a sexual orgy. He was shocked with my response, and told me that a couple of people in looking at his work could not face it and deliberately looked away. He asked me if the camouflage and the inscription did not convey what this was. I was sorry to say that it did not. With disappointment (perhaps with astonishment) he said "Abu Ghabi prison."

Reflections from a Member

An Amazing Story

Joann Neal

My 82 year old mother had been reminiscing about not ever getting to meet her extended family in Dominica and Grenada, where her Father and Mother had come from. She asked if Bill and I could plan a trip to visit these Islands, especially Dominica. She had an address there that she had been carrying around in her pocketbook for 40 years.

40 years ago my Grandfather had gone back to Dominica to visit his two sisters and sign over to them the property he owned there. One of the sisters wrote my Mother a letter of thanks after my Grandfather passed away.

Well, we booked a cruise stopping in Dominica and how did we know it would stop right in Rouseau, the small town where my Grandfather grew up.

My Mother was able to meet two of her cousins and view the house where her Father grew up. The house is now a small school. A relative runs the school and was very gracious in giving us a tour and sending us to meet the cousins.

My Mother was very happy and calls me daily to thank me for making her dream come true. Next year, God willing, we plan to visit Grenada and Trinidad, where my Father's family was from.



In the picture is my mother and her new found cousin Albert -- known in the Islands as "Pan Man"

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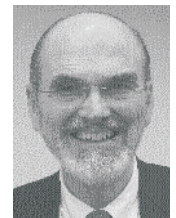
Honoring All Voices Conference – October 21st

"Peace, Unity and Purity: Where is Justice?"

Controversy and confusion have emerged among Presbyterians, in light of the recommendation of the most recent General Assembly, concerning ordination standards and the conscience when candidates declare disagreement with doctrine or polity or practice. Honoring All Voices, of which OSHPC is a member, has invited the Rev. Jack Rogers, Professor Emeritus of San Francisco Theological Seminary, to speak to this matter at its Saturday morning conference on October 21st at the Bethany Presbyterian Church, 425 Maplewood Rd., in Huntington Station. Brochures are available at the back of the Church.

The meeting time is from 9:00 am to 12:30 pm and there is no charge. The Steel Drum Band, directed by Joann Neal, will play at the opening worship service.

Those wishing to attend should contact Pastor Tom for transportation arrangements.



Pastor's Corner

Continued from Page 1

How could I be so insensitive to one of the most tragic episodes regarding the prisons in Iraq. Quickly in my mind I saw again those pictures that had appeared in the papers and on TV: the hooded and wired Iraqi prisoner standing on a box and told that he would be electrocuted if he fell off the box; the female US soldier with rifle in hand aimed at naked



Iraqi; and then that most poignant picture of naked bodies lying atop one another in a heap (this being the picture Malcolm Morley captured in his work.) I was truly embarrassed, more than that, I was humiliated.

For the next two days I thought often of my experience in Malcolm's studio. I recalled an earlier conversation I had with him

about the war in Vietnam and how the constant pictures that appeared on our TV sets in 'vivid color' tended to make stunning if not beautiful the scenes of death and destruction of that war. I could not wait to speak to Malcolm again, which was three days later, to tell him what I had been experiencing since that afternoon in his studio and my concern that I had not felt the outrage and the shame and the desire to right the wrong. I shared with him a conversation I had several months ago with a group of fellow clergy who were peace activists during the Vietnam days and who had made our marches on Washington and had demonstrated in the streets and had preached our sermons with some risk (at the time I was Protestant Chaplain at SUNY Oswego and my anti-war protests led to some parents of students as well as community people asking for my dismissal). We indicated to one another that none of us were taking those kinds of steps today regarding US action in Iraq though the death toll of both Americans and Iraqi continue to climb each day, and though we have become familiar with such atrocities as Abu Ghabi. Have we lost our sensitivity? Have we lost our moral outrage? Have we lost our sense of Christian discipleship with the radical demands it places on people to seek peace and justice?

Malcolm listened. Perhaps his work did have its desired affects on his new friend, his neighbor, the interim pastor at OSHPC.

Clergy Retreat

Our Pastor will be attending the annual clergy retreat of the Presbytery held at the Centacle in Ronkonkoma from noon Wednesday, October 25 to noon Thursday, October 16.



From The Music Department

Peg Angus

At a recent American Guild of Organists Symposium on Music in Worship, Anton Armstrong, professor at St. Olaf's College was quoted as saying, "Worship is a conversation with God and a dialogue with each other. The faith is passed on through the songs of the people."

It is this inspiration which guides me to choose the choir and instrumental music for worship. People enjoy hearing familiar hymns and so most of my selections are based on melodies we all know. If you have a request for a favorite hymn, please let me know.

Progress on our pipe organ is going very well. Ed Odell informs me that we are ahead of schedule. A collection of pictures of the disassembling of the organ are on display in the gallery. Also if you have internet access, you may log on to www.odellorgans.com to see pictures of the work in progress at the shop.

The choir has been hard at work (and a bit of play as well) preparing anthems for Sunday services. However, presently our numbers are small which can hinder our singing on Sunday mornings.

Help us to pass on God's message of love through our music. Please join us on choir so we can sing Alleluia with boldness! Please join us on Thursday evenings from 7:30 - 8:45 pm. Ability to read music is not a requirement.

"Sing to God, make melody to his name"
Ps.68: 4



Buildings and Grounds

Helen Altomare



We have completed the electrical work at the church. The parking lot now has lighting for evening activities.

You will also notice the chandelier is lit for a couple of hours as you drive by to enhance the beauty of our church.

Work has begun in preparation for our organ's return. The plasterer came to evaluate to give us an estimate. Other areas of repair include windows, sheet rocking the ceiling and painting.

Fall clean up is scheduled for October 28. All hands are welcome! Most of the clean up will be inside the church and carriage house. Time to be announced. Please come and help!



Pastor Tom at Union Seminary

Pastor Tom will be in New York City Thursday - Saturday (October 12 - 14) for Union Theological Seminary's Alumni/ae Days. The feature speaker will be Professor Marcus Borg, Professor of Religion and Culture at Oregon State University and author of "Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time." Tom is a member of the Alumni/ae Council of the Seminary and chair of the committee on alumni/ae special events. He will retrieve any emergency messages from his telephone answering machine during the period.

A Message from Jason

Jason Neal frequently sends emails to Pastor Tom and other members of the church family. While it is not possible to include them all, the following is an excerpt from one of his more recent. More extensive excerpts may be found on the OSHPC web site – <http://OldSouthHavenChurch.org>

I have been blessed to be a member of Old South Haven all these years. The congregation has given me so much. They have been there to support me during my college years, my travels for the church, my scary days as an armored car messenger and process server, and my military service. They answered my call to help the victims of Hurricanes Rita and Katrina, and they have shown love and support to me and my fellow soldiers during our deployment to Afghanistan. I could not ask to have a better church home.

As the Pastor of OSH, you are my pastor too, just from a distance. I appreciate your prayers, and I am thankful that you pray for me and my fellow soldiers. We are all just trying to make it home, though we don't know when that will be. We also pray for all the folks back home, on Sundays and at midweek bible studies. I have led that bible study on several occasions, usually when the Chaplain is unavailable. Soon we will have another pancake breakfast at the chapel, and I'm sure it will be a big hit again.

Well, the workday is beginning. Stay blessed.

Peace always,

Jason

PS - I consider my time in Afghanistan to be another part of my own ministry and faith journey, and don't mind sharing it. Pax Vobiscum. -JAN

YADs ...

The following is excerpts from a flyer distributed at a recent Presbytery of Long Island meeting.

“Jason A. Neal, shown here with a group of Afghani children, is a member of Old South Haven Church in our Presbytery of Long Island. He is a native Long Islander from Bellport and an infantry soldier in the United States Army, currently deployed in Afghanistan



with Task Force Warrior as part of Operation Enduring Freedom VII. He is active in his unit chaplain's programs, including Sunday services, mid-week bible studies, and pancake/prayer breakfasts.

“Jason has served as a Sunday school teacher at OSH, as an Elder, and an Elder Commissioner to the Presbytery of Long Island. He was our Youth Advisory Delegate (YAD) to the 205th General Assembly in Wichita, Kansas, where he participated as Youth Leader in the installation of the Moderator, the Rev. Bob Bohl. He then went on to represent the Presbyterian Church (USA) as a Steward to the 8th Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Harare, Zimbabwe in 1998. During his college years, he taught Sunday school at First Presbyterian Church of Lake Forest, IL, served as the student coordinator of the Interfaith Center at Lake Forest College in Illinois, completed an internship with the Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions, and was also a member of the national-level Presbyterian Student Strategy Team, helping organize and coordinate the “Celebrate III” ecumenical conference in 1999.

“Jason's unit, 2nd Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, is based out of Fort Polk, Louisiana, and when Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans, Jason went to work with the Sheriff's Department in that city, providing assistance with basic life services as needs developed. Now, consistent with his sense of call to service in the name of Christ, Jason is trying to help his fellow soldiers acquire some comforts that may be lacking far from home by receiving care packages containing items from what he calls “A Soldier's Wish List.” Sent to his overseas address, he will see that the items are distributed to his unit and other soldiers in need. Your church may wish to join the efforts already underway at the Old South Haven Church by sending your own care package.”

*Keep your thoughts positive because your thoughts become your words.
Keep your words positive because your words become your behaviors.
Keep your behaviors positive because your behaviors become your habits.
Keep your habits positive because your habits become your values.
Keep your values positive because your values become your destiny.*

- Gandhi



Deacons

Kappy Tilney

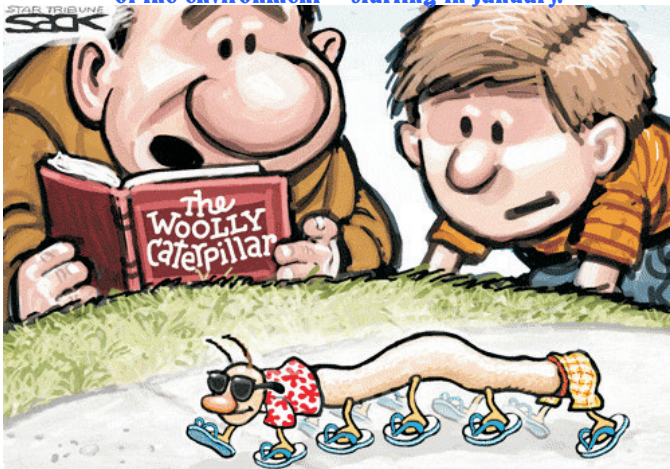
As we enter the season of giving, let us remember our food shelf to help those less fortunate. Please bring non-perishable food items on Communion Sunday, the first Sunday of each month. Your donations will be brought to the community food shelf at St. Joseph the Worker in East Patchogue.

As we near Thanksgiving and Christmas, the Deacons will be supplying families with meal baskets. If you would like to donate the gift of food or time, please contact Kappy Tilney at 286-0024.

The Deacons, as their first concern, minister to those in need, to the sick, to the friendless, and to any who may be in distress. We ask all members and friends to call us as they may become aware of needs within the church and community.



Watch for the next adult study class – our stewardship of the environment – starting in January.



‘IT’S EITHER A HOPEFUL SIGN OF A MILD WINTER, OR MORE BAD NEWS ON GLOBAL WARMING.’

The following poem was read by Rev. Philipp as part of the mediation that was the beginning of September’s Session meeting.

*i am a little church
e.e. cummings*

*i am a little church (no great cathedral)
far from the splendor and squalor of hurrying cities
-i do not worry if briefer days grow briefest,
i am not sorry when sun and rain make april*

*my life is the life of the reaper and the sower;
my prayers are prayers of earth’s own clumsily
striving
(finding and losing and laughing and crying) children
whose any sadness or joy is my grief or my gladness*

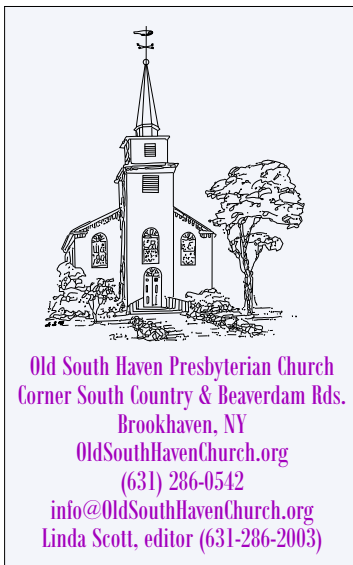
*around me surges a miracle of unceasing
birth and glory and death and resurrection:
over my sleeping self float flaming symbols
of hope, and i wake to a perfect patience of mountains*

*i am a little church (far from the frantic
world with its rapture and anguish) at peace with
nature*

*-i do not worry if longer nights grow longest;
i am not sorry when silence becomes singing*

*winter by spring, i lift my diminutive spire to
merciful Him Whose only now is forever:
standing erect in the deathless truth of His presence
(welcoming humbly His light and proudly His
darkness)*

4



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