



236 West 73rd Street  
New York, NY 10023

Phone: (212) 877-8227  
Fax: (212) 721-9154

Web: [www.rutgerschurch.com](http://www.rutgerschurch.com)

### What Do You Think?

1. Do the rats in New York City have a pro-life advocate?
2. If you are humming a hymn, does it really matter which verse you hum?
3. Have you done the same thing that annoys you to someone else?
4. Are parents responsible for teenage suicides?
5. Can filing bankruptcy make you a thief?
6. How many ways have you told a lie today?
7. One day at a time is all you can do.
8. What do you do when the go-to-person checks out/disappears/is gone?
9. Don't carry-on luggage that you can't lift to put in the overhead compartment.
10. Do you over sleep or not want to get up?

'Til next time,  
Jacquelyn M. Carpenter

### One Stop Senior Services By Elder Charles Platt

ONE STOP SENIOR SERVICES is one of the recent additions to the list of organizations your Benevolence Committee contributes to. Their idea, as the name says, is to provide help with many problems seniors may have so they do not have to run all over the city.

Among their programs are:

Case Assistance providing supportive counseling, education, guidance, applications for Medicare, Medicaid, food stamps or rent increase exemption, the filing of personal tax returns and access to other social services.

Care Management Programs providing in home care management including assessment, care plan development, referrals for appropriate services and ongoing monitoring.

One Stop Support Program which deals with elder abuse prevention and intervention.

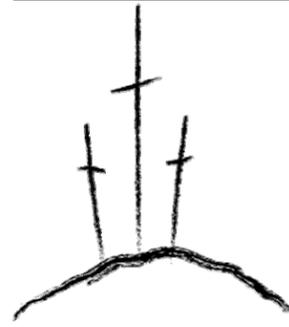
AARP Volunteer bill-paying assistance program to help with money management.

The group was founded in 1981 as a unique walk-in agency for New Yorkers over 60 where compassionate professionals go the extra mile to help older persons solve their problems. Their central goal is to enable seniors to continue living safely, independently and with dignity in their own homes as long as possible.

For more information go to [www.onestopseniorservices.org](http://www.onestopseniorservices.org) or call (212) 864-7900.ω

**MISSION STATEMENT** "As followers of Jesus Christ, we rejoice in God's plan for a just, loving, and peaceful world, and we commit ourselves to making it a reality for all people everywhere."

**Lent 2009**  
Volume 26, Issue 2



### From the Interim Pastor

The Reverend David D. Prince

We are in the season of Lent, the six-and-a-half week period between Ash Wednesday and Easter. In our fast-moving culture, we easily fall into the mode of asking, "Are we there yet?" Are we at the point of celebrating the Easter Good News that God's love has the last word on everything, even death? Not yet. Week after week in our worship services we affirm our trust in the God of love, and we seek to live as people shaped and nourished by the power of that love made real for us by God's Holy Spirit. But what we celebrate weekly finds a crucial focus in the Good Friday-Easter Sunday events.

There is value in going through the Lenten process of honest self-examination. For me that process means asking myself, "Am I listening to inner or outer voices that contradict or weaken the message that I am loved by God just as I am?"

Do I take positive action to strengthen my confidence in God's love and to let that love flow through me so that I make conscious decisions to love other people as well as myself?"

There are spiritual benefits in making the weeks-long Lenten journey, so that we arrive at Easter "by way of the Cross." I invite you to read and re-read chapters 11 through 16 of Mark's Gospel as we move toward Holy Week and Easter (April 5-12). It's about an hour's worth of reading, and it will add meaning and depth to our celebration of Love's great Easter victory.

I continue to be grateful for the privilege of serving as your Interim Pastor.

Dave Prince

RUTGERS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

# Renewal

### Pastoral Nominating Committee Update

By Elder Nora Lidell, chair

Greetings from your PNC! We hear you asking over and over again, "When will you be done?" I am here to assure you that we are hard at work on your behalf. We meet weekly and when we are not meeting, we are reading or listening to sermons. But I know you are getting anxious and wish we were just about done.

Why, you ask, does it take so long? It's a good and fair question. The answer is because we are Presbyterians. Presbyterians like process and we do not believe in shortcuts. Everything we do gets documented and categorized. Not only do we need to find candidates, read resumes, and listen to sermons, we also need to keep statistics on the process. How many men, how many women, what racial/ethnic backgrounds, age of candidates, and so on, have we interviewed? All of this is time-consuming. We are at the point where we are getting ready to hit the road and make "church visits" to the candidates on our ever-shortening list. And please remember that one year or so of this process was spent on doing our Mission Review for Presbytery. That too is part of the work that must get done before a new pastor can be called.

The good news is that we have put tech-

nology to good use. We received the bulk of the resumes (PIFs) via e-mail which made distributing and tracking them easier. We listen to sermons over the internet or watch DVD's of candidates preaching. All of our tracking is done by Bob Shelton, who has created a masterful spreadsheet that contains every piece of the work we have done to date. It is efficient and keeps us very organized. Lisa Pinto sees that each and every one of the candidates that we have been working with gets e-mails letting them know where they and we are in the process at each step along the way.

It really is a lot of work and we are mindful that you are wishing it would go faster. The truth is that we can't go any faster than the process allows. I can assure you that each member of the PNC is dedicated to getting Rutgers the very best pastor we can.

Oh, there is one other factor that can't be forgotten – the Holy Spirit. I can tell you for a fact that there is no hurrying it. It works in its own way and time and we can do nothing but follow, which we do quite willingly. Together, we will get the job done. Amen to that.ω

## EXTRAORDINARY MID-YEAR STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN A NECESSITY THIS YEAR

By Elder Joy Wyatt, *chair, Stewardship Committee*

This year, for the first time in recent memory, Rutgers is launching a mid-year Stewardship Campaign. Our goal is to increase current-year pledges by 10-25% in order to help offset a shortfall in our revenues due to the uncertainty in the commercial rental market. As you probably are aware, much of our annual budget is supported by rental revenues, and this year we have a vacancy in one of our largest rental spaces, on Broadway. Moving a new tenant into the space will take time and is not yet a certainty for this budget year. Therefore, because this situation has a measurable impact on revenues, the Session has concluded that the congregation should be made aware of our financial situation and asked to reconsider their annual pledge amount for 2009.

**So, why do we need to raise additional pledges beyond what is already pledged for this year?** The increase in pledges is required, due to shortfalls in planned revenue, due to the non-renewal of lease by a major street-level tenant. Because we rely on rental revenues to fund the annual budget, this shortfall requires that we either raise additional funds outside of rental income, or we reduce expenditures (and may require us to do both).

**We have an endowment – can we use it now?** These invested funds are used in lieu of borrowing from outside sources to self-fund periodic essential capital improvements, such as the renovation of the Sanctuary in 1997, the refurbishing of our Southfield Organ in 2004, major roof repairs, and recently, the window and masonry repair, with funds paid back to the endowment from the real estate income. We don't rely on the endowment to shore up the annual budget and we plan to avoid doing so in the future.

**In the absence of additional funding and revenue, what areas in our annual budget provide opportunities for cost-cutting?** In order to

manage the budget responsibly, costs may be cut in any area in which we have discretion. These areas include staff salaries, property maintenance and capital improvement, programs and benevolence. We have reviewed salaries and have concluded that these are at a level that will not allow for further reductions. Non-essential capital improvements, such as planning and executing a project to install air conditioning, have been put on hold indefinitely. Program budgets are typically no more than a few hundred to a thousand dollars, with a very few exceptions, and these have all been managed to the lowest possible levels. Committee chairs are aware of the need to avoid spending their entire budget, if possible, in order to help manage costs. However, some program expenditures are necessary in order to continue our outreach to the community. Benevolence is an area in which we have discretion but we are loathe to decrease our commitment to aiding outside organizations whose programs are consistent with our own mission focus.

**How much of our budget would normally go to benevolence?** In this year's budget, we currently funded benevolence at 20% of the annual budget, and we have committed to increasing this percentage over time

**This year, due to the shortfall, how much of this benevolence funding is at risk?** If we do not increase available revenues, based on current financial projections, benevolence funding will need to be reduced to 18% of the annual budget for 2009 to cover the financial deficit. Financial projections, expenditures, and commitments are reviewed by the Session monthly.

**So, if I increase my pledge, I am really increasing our support for Rutgers' benevolence this year.** Yes, in a year that is already proving to be difficult for non-profits due to the loss of funding and in-kind support, by retaining our ability to fund benevolence

at the planned level, the Rutgers community will be able to help shore up non-profits that are performing critical work, such as food banks and other social services that aid the poor. Daily we read and hear reports of people who are relying upon these services for the first time in their working lives, and this trend is expected to continue as unemployment increases. If at all possible, Rutgers would like to continue to send the message to these non-profits and others that we can be relied upon to help in difficult times as well as good times.

We hope these questions and answers help to increase your understanding of the situation our congregation faces today. These words are written in full understanding that just as circumstances have become difficult for people throughout our city and nation, people within our own Rutgers community have likewise lost jobs, have watched retirement and other investments decline in value, and are feeling the stresses of decreased economic security. So, the Session hopes that everyone hears what we are conveying here in the spirit in which it is intended – look upon this request to reconsider your annual pledge for this year as an opportunity to recommit to Rutgers' mission in the community during the toughest times many of us have ever witnessed. It's a good time to remind ourselves that much has been given to us, and therefore much is expected of us.

A formal letter, in which some of these messages may be repeated and enhanced, will be sent to all church members and correspondents after Easter – but **if you want to act now, don't wait.** Give Jeremiah a call in the church office and let him know what you think you can do to help. Following Easter, we will also hold some after-church meetings in which you will have the opportunity to ask questions and learn more about our financial options and plans for this year. *ω*

## Do Justice, Love Kindness, Walk Humbly with your God

By Elder Jeremiah

The above words from Micah 6:8 was the theme of the 218th General Assembly (GA) last summer held in San Jose, California, and rang prophetic in the minds and hearts of all those who attended this assembly. I arrived into San Francisco the Friday morning of June 20th and was hit by a wall heat, I knew it was going to be an intense week. As I drove down to San Jose along I-280, that beautiful stretch of road with the majestic scenery of San Andreas Lake, the temperature continued to climb to an oppressive 103°F.

That evening, at a dinner hosted by the Covenant Network, I heard experiences of individuals who had attended GAs before, and individuals, like myself, for whom this was our first GA, expressed our hopes and concerns for the week ahead. The question frequently asked was "What can we expect?" The key note speaker was the Reverend Susan Andrews, Executive Presbyter of the Hudson River Presbytery. We also heard from the four candidates vying for GA Moderator, the Reverend D. Carl Mazza, the Reverend William Teng, Elder Roger Shoemaker, and the Reverend Bruce Reyes-Chow (later elected the 218<sup>th</sup> Moderator). The dinner was held at the City Hall Rotunda, where just hours earlier, a number of same-sex couples had made a public declaration of their love for each other, through the ceremony of marriage.

The Exhibition Hall at the San Jose Convention Center was strewn with booths of Presbyterian organizations. For months leading up to GA, the Reverend Janet Edward of More Light Presbyterians, had organized *Knitting Our Way to San Jose*. Volunteers were asked to knit and crochet stoles in rainbow colors to be distributed, free of charge, at GA. Over 900 stoles were distributed by Wednesday, representing almost 1/3 of the nearly 3,000 attendees at GA. At the Sunday morning service, my heart was warmed by the sight of worshipers adorned with the rainbow stoles throughout sections the auditorium. The wind of change was blowing and we were cautiously optimistic. At a vote the previous night, the Reverend Bruce Reyes-Chow had been elected as Moderator. His frank manner and mat-

ter of fact statements to questions had won over the delegates. When the question of ordination was asked of the candidates, Reverend Reyes-Chow answered, in paraphrase, that there is an elephant in the room and it needs to be addressed; that he was for full ordination of all individuals that God calls to ministry, without exception.

As the assembly broke into committees to deliberate the overtures submitted by presbyteries, the hounds named restlessness, irritability and discontent circled the conference rooms and howled in loud voices. I had the privilege of observing a newly formed committee on Worship & Spiritual Renewal. The committee was charged, unbeknown to the commissioners, with using a Communal Discernment process to reach a consensus, as apposed to Roberts Rules of Order used other committees and at plenary, and was given two overtures that seemed innocuous. The result was a political science project gone amiss. The committee descended into disarray and anarchy as frustration mounted, tempers flared, harsh words were exchanged and two commissioners resigned from the committee. Change can strike fear in our hearts, threaten us in ways we thought unimaginable, shake the foundations that we thought were solid and secure, causing us to react without thought or consideration to others, and evaluating the consequences to ourselves that ensue. Even Presbyterians are not immune. Change, especially when needed most, takes a lot of courage, a leap of faith, not disavowing the fear and doubts that arise, but leaping despite of them.

The shining light of the conference were the Youth Advisory Delegates, (YADs), ranging in age from 17-24. Every committee was assigned YADs, who had voice and vote in committee, but only voice and an advisory vote at plenary. Their fervent commitment to PC (U.S.A.), and their determination to complete the work that was assigned to them in committees was admirable and gave hope to the whole assembly. With a typical day starting at 8:30 a.m. with meetings, these YADs stayed with their committees till the wee hours of the morning, only to start the

day again a few hours later. On issues of inclusivity: the rewording of G-6.0106b and new Authoritative Interpretation; returning the Heidelberg Catechism to its original translation—deleting language that was added in the 1962 translation, the reclassification of marriage to include same sex couples (which did not pass GA), to name a few, the YADs voted between 70% and 80% in the affirmative.

Other overtures that were passed at GA were a new Authoritative Interpretation (AI took effect immediately and does not require Presbytery approval) of G-6.0106b, resources for adolescent on human development that would explore all facets of adolescent development including human sexuality, and call for tolerance and peaceful relations between Christians and Muslims and foster dialogue between the Christian, Jewish and Muslim communities, just to name a few.

My overall impression of the 218th General Assembly was that of hope. Though the hours were long, the days were hot, the food varied, I remain hopeful for the future of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Growing up in Pentecostal church (Assemblies of God) has given me an enormous appreciation for the Presbyterian Church and its government. We, as Presbyterians, are unique in our form of government in Christendom, where the laity is recognized as being called to ministry through the ordained offices of Deacons and Elders. Ministers, along with elders, share responsibility for the life and direction of the Church: locally, regionally and nationally. This form of government allots us a great amount of freedom, and also a great amount of responsibility. We all must learn, study, devote our time to prayer and meditation, listen to the leading of the Holy Spirit, and be humble and malleable enough to follow when what we think is best is not what the Spirit presents to us. The 219th General Assembly will be held on July 3-10, 2010 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Let us pray that the hope expressed at the 218th General Assembly will be closer to realization. *ω*

# April 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 6:00 p.m. AA Meeting <i>Every Wednesday</i>	2 6:00 p.m. Meal Program 7:00 p.m. Movie Series <i>Every Thursday</i>	3 10:30 a.m. Mothers' Bible Study 6:00 p.m. Men's Shelter <i>Every Friday</i>	4 1:00 p.m. Opera Rehearsal 4:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal 6:00 p.m. AA Meeting Men's Shelter <i>Every Saturday</i>
5 12:45 p.m. Board of Deacons Meeting 5:00 p.m. PNC 6:00 p.m. Men's Shelter <i>Every Sunday</i>	6 12:15 p.m. Al-Anon <i>Every Monday</i> 3:30 p.m. Worship Committee	7 12:15 p.m. Al-Anon 6:00 p.m. Men's Support Group (HIV+/PLWA) Cub Scouts 6:30 p.m. Benevolence Committee 8:00 p.m. Men's Al-Anon <i>Every Tuesday</i>	8	9 7:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday Service	10 12:00 noon Good Friday Service	11 7:00 p.m. Easter Vigil
12 Easter Sunday	13 Easter Monday Church & Office Building Closed	14 6:30 p.m. Session Meeting	<b>April Birthdays!</b> 1 Hayden Coudal-Jones    16 Khitan Galper & Gladys Morris 2 Laurel Brevoort, Nicole Byrns, Lily & Trey Santiago    17 Jennifer Finn 4 Mary Beth Coudal    18 Cherise Ou Yang 5 Massimo Maglione    23 Sophia Graham-Kay 6 Muriel Knight    24 Austin Simpson 9 Sean Nelson    27 Charles Platt 10 Joan Keener			
19 12:45 p.m. Peace & Social Justice Network 5:00 p.m. PNC	<b>Preaching Schedule</b> April 5 ___ Palm Sunday; David D. Prince preaching April 12 ___ Easter Sunday; David D. Prince preaching April 19 ___ 2nd Sunday of Easter; David D. Prince preaching April 26 ___ 3rd Sunday of Easter; Jacqui Van Vliet preaching			24 3:30 p.m. Child's Play Chinese Cultural Event	25	
26 12:45 p.m. Board of Trustees				<b>Sundays</b> 9:45 a.m. Adult Sunday School 10:00 Adult Choir Rehearsal 10:45 Infant & Child Care 11:00 Worship Service 11:15 Sunday School (ages 3-12) 12:15 p.m. Coffee Hour 12:30 Choir Rehearsal 6:00 Men's Shelter		

## April 2009 at Rutgers Church, and Beyond

**HOLY WEEK** offers multiple opportunities for meaningful worship:

**Maundy Thursday, April 9 at 7:00 p.m.** is a service of the Last Supper, with foot-washing and readings that trace Jesus' journey to the cross;

**Good Friday, April 10, at 12 noon - 2:30 p.m.** is a series of meditations on the Seven Last Sayings of Jesus by various ministers, interspersed with music from the Rutgers Church Choir;

**The Vigil of Easter, Saturday, April 11, at 7 p.m.** is a service of spiritual preparation for celebrating Jesus' resurrection on Easter Sunday. Renewal of baptismal vows is part of the service; and

**Easter Sunday, April 12,** there will be an early communion service on the church steps (9:00 a.m.) followed by breakfast on the fifth floor. The festival service of worship at 11:00 a.m. includes brass, the sacrament of Holy Communion, and an atmosphere of grateful praise. *Anticipated service time is approximately 1 hr., 15 min. Childcare provided at all services.*

### Get Out The Vote

**Saturday, March 28, Calvary Presbyterian Church, SI**

This Saturday, March 28, the Presbytery of New York City will hold its stated meeting at Calvary Presbyterian Church on Staten Island. Among the business of the day will be the vote on overtures from the 218th General Assembly. This is an important time in our denomination, PC (U.S.A.), and our Presbytery. If you are able to provide a ride, in the morning to, or in the evening from, Staten Island to a voting member of the Presbytery, or if you would like to show your support, please contact the Reverend Mieke Vandersall of Presbyterian Welcome at (917) 441-8638.

### Spring Spruce-up

By Elder Harris Shultz

For our Rutgers family, the Daniel Russell Room is where we come together for relaxed fellowship. It's our first step each week in extending our worship from the sanctuary into our everyday lives. In the room we celebrate each other's birthdays, enjoy coffee and cake, greet visitors, and share our week's events with friends. It's our family room, and frankly, it's looking a little shabby.

With the loss of one of our retail tenants on Broadway and the current economic crisis affecting us all, now is not the time to spend money better used elsewhere, so we're putting in some elbow grease to make the room more welcoming.

On the evening of Friday, April 3rd, S.K.A.T.E., our youth group, will be having a painting party to clean up the walls, create art, and dress up some of the furniture with crafts projects. If you want to get involved, please come, and roll up your

### Chinese Cultural Event: Child's Play Mandarin Program

**4th Friday of the Month; 3:30 p.m.**

Join us as we explore the rich mandarin culture through themes, every fourth Friday of the month at 3:30 p.m. Last month we learned how to say "rice" and other yummy foods in Chinese, made our own "fried" rice, and a squishy-sticky rice art project! Our next theme will be paper. Try your hands at calligraphy writing and other craft projects that are designed especially for toddlers, pre-school and school-age students. We welcome Mandarin and non-Mandarin speaking families. Please contact Linda Kuo at [lkou@rutgerschurch.com](mailto:lkou@rutgerschurch.com) for further information.

### Adult Education for the Spring

**Sundays in March and April, 9:45 a.m., Session room**

The Adult Bible Study will continue its study of Paul's letters with a look in the last two weeks of March at Philippians. This is a passionate letter to the house church at Philippi written from prison by the apostle at a time of uncertainty about his own future. There will be no Adult Bible Class on Palm Sunday and Easter. We will resume on Sunday, April 19th with a look at the letter of Paul to the Romans. We will study this complex letter of Paul in which he lays out his most persistent theological arguments for the good news of salvation "in Christ." We'll look at its meaning then and what it might offer to us today. All are welcome to attend!

### Book of Order 101

**Sunday, May 17, 12:45 p.m., Daniel Russell room**

The *Book of Order*, or BOO as it is sometimes called, can seem scary and daunting. In an abridged version of his acclaimed course taught at Princeton Theological Seminary, the Reverend David D. Prince will shed light on the Book of Order, highlighting parts that every Presbyterian needs to know. Whether you are an Elder, Deacon, Trustee, or just come to service on Sundays, you will benefit from the rich history of Presbyterian Polity, and insight of the Reverend David Prince.

sleeves. All ages are welcome!

We also want the décor to better represent us as a community, and one element we want to include is a wall of photos of us. We have the start of a collection from years past, but many of them are looking a bit faded. We challenge you to come up with fun, creative images that best represent our vibrant Rutgers community or look through your personal pictures and find the one that you love of yourselves. You can either e-mail the digital file to [rutgerschurchfamily@live.com](mailto:rutgerschurchfamily@live.com) or drop a hard print in the marked box in the church office. Please speak to Kim Hodges if you have any questions. (She can usually be found chasing her two year old twin girls . . .)

We want to create a comfortable space in the Daniel Russell Room that we are proud to have represented our Rutgers family. By getting involved in the process, let's renew a shared sense of responsibility for our church home.

So send us your picture and come join us on the 3rd for pizza and painting and bringing pizzazz to the Daniel Russell Room!