

Continued from page 1 ... "Resurrecting Spiritual Piracy"

This mention of piracy could be considered just a standard schematic denunciation of any sea-born opposition. One can hardly envision any true piracy on this lake, because you can easily see from shore to shore. On the other hand this inadvertent remark could be quite close to reality and interestingly illuminate Jesus' life and ministry.

In the year 1986, two brothers - Moshe and Yuval Lufan - discovered the remains of an ancient boat in the Galilean lake near modern Migdal (ancient Magdala). The boat rested in shallow water and had been covered and preserved by mud since the first century C.E. It was retrieved and painstakingly reconstructed and now is on display in the museum of Kibbutz Ginossar. The boat was about 27 feet long and 7.5 feet wide. It carried five crew members, in addition, it could carry about a ton of cargo or ten passengers. The boat's bottom was nearly flat, permitting it to be used close to the shore. It could also easily land and be pulled out of water on shore - all properties sought after by fishermen and pirates alike, giving them opportunity to embark and disembark, to appear and disappear almost anywhere along the shore. One more detail was interesting: the boat was patched together from fourteen different kinds of wood and most of it was reused - salvaged from other older boats. Evidently in the first century even the ship owners lived under severe economic pressure.

Now think about Jesus. He called fishermen as his disciples, preaching from their boats moored by the shore, appearing in villages and towns around the lake, embarking and disembarking along the shore, often on the deserted places. You cannot avoid thinking he was escaping across the lake, crisscrossing the lake often by night. I am not implying he was a leader of any true

pirates who robbed other impoverished fishermen and struggling merchants. Jesus was someone much more glorious and dangerous. At the same time, he was a preacher and healer with a message of the kingdom of God, with an incendiary message of a new order built on divine abundance, grace, healing, peace and the justice of God. He was reconnecting impoverished, dispossessed, alienated people, offering them acceptance, restoring their self esteem and their integrity and bringing them hope.

The economically stressed and disenfranchised fishermen recognized this otherworldly grace. They allowed him in their boats, they let him preach from their boats, they offered him the skills and protection of old salts. It wasn't just a regular piracy, it was an intellectual, spiritual, gospel driven piracy, the most noble, gentlemanlike piracy.

This is a piracy which is still needed even two thousand years on, desperately needed on our noodle-shaped island and along the Hudson Bay shores. People still need to hear and experience feeding of multitudes, gaining liberation and healing from political and financial oppression, liberation from evil spirits of selfishness, greed, negativity, vindictiveness, etc. We still need to bond against the powers of destruction in the name of divine grace. On Sunday mornings in bible classes and in worship we continue in this subversive quest for justice, peace and healing.

A Quiz Question: In a sermon and in several bible classes I have mentioned tangentially that fish from the Lake of Galilee were processed in coastal towns on an industrial scale. What was the major product and export article of this Galilean fish industry? You can give me any ancient name of this article or even only its description. The first three people who would send a right answer to my e-mail address andref@steblik.org will receive an appropriate reward.

Pastor Andrew

S.K.A.T.E. Swings Into Spring

Despite the cold winter and a spring that just doesn't seem to want to settle in, S.K.A.T.E. has been actively gathering for Friday evening events.

In February, the Coudal-Jones family graciously hosted S.K.A.T.E. for dinner and games. The highlight was a charade like game of guessing famous people through gestures and one or two word descriptions.

March brought the first ever S.K.A.T.E. retreat. Our eighth graders and high schoolers headed out to the Stony Point Retreat Center for a time of fun and reflecting on what place God has in each of our lives.

In April, we returned S.K.A.T.E. to the church building for a Mexican Cook-Off. The 5th floor kitchen was buzzing during preparations for guacamole, chicken tacos, and rice and beans. The meal was topped off with Mexican brownies. We made enough to share with the men from the homeless shelter.

In May we shared pizza and some fabulous desserts, had a good discussion about the future of S.K.A.T.E. and shared some of our God-given talents with each other. As always, every S.K.A.T.E. meeting ended with our prayer circle giving us opportunity to intercede for ourselves, friends, and family and lift up gratitude to God. In June, we're looking forward to our end of the year cook-out.

In other youth group related activities, four of our youth, Hayden Coudal-Jones, Lucy Dunn-Ellis, Cass Knox and Sam Reggio, have been attending Confirmation classes this spring and will be confirmed during the worship service on June 12.

During each second Sunday worship service our youth have participated as worship leaders reading scripture, prayers and, also, helping with the ushering. And, last but certainly not least, thanks to John Bessonette we have an Older Teens Sunday School class.

Ivy, D.E.M.



Dates: Aug. 15-19 & Aug. 22-26

Time: 9 AM - 12 PM

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2011

RUTGERS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

73rd Street west of Broadway

Ages 4-11

Cost: \$50.00/child/week

Contact the church office for registration information or with questions.

212-877-8227, x205 or ibeckwith@rutgerschurch.com

Rutgers Church is a caring and inclusive congregation.

During week one we'll go on a Journey with Jesus. The theme of the second week is "Taste and See." Kids will learn to look at food differently as they learn about gratitude, generosity, and "spiritual food."

Vacation Bible School 2011

This summer Rutgers Presbyterian Church will be hosting 2 weeks of Vacation Bible School. VBS will be held the weeks of August 15-19 and August 22-26 from 9 AM to 12 PM each day. Children age 4-11 are invited to attend. The cost is \$50.00 per child per week. Children may sign up for one or both weeks.

This summer the theme for the first week is **Journeys with Jesus**. We will be following Jesus to the city, the town, the lake and other places through stories of Jesus from the New Testament. The theme for the second week is **Taste & See: God is Good**. We will be exploring what the Bible has to say about food and the ways that God provides for our needs. Each day will be filled with stories, games, crafts, projects, and snacks all led by a caring and dedicated staff of adults and teens.

To register your child for VBS please contact Ivy Beckwith, Director of Educational Ministries, at ibeckwith@rutgerschurch.com or at 212-877-8227, x205 or go online at www.rutgerschurch.com to download the registration form.

Summer Film Festival - 2011

July 17
Trashed
 This is the story of Garbage American style

July 24
The Earth Human Planet
 The BBC documentary

July 10
Food, Inc.
 You would never look at dinner the same way again.

Always 7PM
 @Stehliks
 275 W 96th #17D

Getting to Know the New Director of Educational Ministries – By Jonathan Smith

Rutgers is blessed to have Ivy Beckwith joining us as Director of Educational Ministries.

Ivy's journey has led from her home in Connecticut only a Metro North ride away, around the country (and world) to teach, write, and minister to children, young adults and families, and she's happy to be back, a Metro North ride away once again. (Well, I'm not sure anybody is happy about a Metro North ride, but you know what I mean.)

Dr. Beckwith (I don't think she wants the kids to call her that!) earned a B.A. in English at Gordon College in Wenham, Mass., focusing on the 19th century British and 20th century American novel. Her Masters in Religious Education is from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, also in Mass., and she earned her PhD in Education at Trinity International University, north of Chicago.

She's spent time working in a variety of denominations, including the historic Park Street Church on the Boston Common (Congregational), Chicago's Northwest Baptist, the non-denominational Grace Chapel in Lexington, Mass., and all the way out to Eden Prairie, Minnesota to the inter-denominational Wooddale Church. In all of those places she was heavily involved in educational ministries in many ways, including



teaching (from nursery to grad school) and writing. I recommend you go to Amazon.com and enter her name -- there are four books available, and the reviews alone will make it hard to decide which one to pick up first. My first choice may be "Postmodern Children's Ministry."

Since she spent all that time in Massachusetts my boys wanted me to ask about the "Yankees vs. Red Sox" issue, but I figured we'll find out when she wants us to know.

Ivy is delighted that Rutgers has welcomed her dog Lola as well. When asked what she likes about her new work

environment, she points out that "at my last church I was in a windowless office -- so I love all the natural light and the ability to look out on all the activity on Broadway. The neighborhood is so vibrant. It's great to have Riverside Park so close with the view of the Hudson River. One problem, though: It's too easy to run out and get something delicious to eat or a good coffee at Café Margot." She also praises the design of the 4th floor children's space.

Ivy looks forward to spending more time getting to know the congregation, especially our growing group of kids, from the littlest to the young adults in SKATE. As I write I'm getting ready for the first meeting of the Christian Education Committee with Ivy, and I know we all look forward to her tenure here with optimism and joy.

Meet the New Church Administrator



Dave Mammen began work at the Church on March 1. *Renewal* asked him how it is going.

It is a challenging mix of responsibilities that are familiar to me from other jobs I've had (budgets, personnel, management issues) in a new setting. I'm really enjoying working with the dedicated staff and church elders. Everyone has been very welcoming, and I'm grateful for the opportunity.

Any surprises so far?

The proposal to include the Church House and Sanctuary in an historic district was a surprise. I've spent quite a bit of time helping the Session and Trustees understand the implications of

this proposal. It could have big implications for our future, so I'm glad I can be helpful.

What were you doing before you came to Rutgers?

I've been a nonprofit executive with organizations concerned with international development. I've also taken breaks to do research work related to urban planning and disaster-recovery, including a year as a visiting professor at Kyoto University where I wrote about New York's experience after 9/11. That work will be published as a book later this summer, in English and Japanese editions.

Are you a native New Yorker?

I grew up in the midwest and moved to New York in 1979. I've lived in Washington Heights for 22 years. My wife Kristin is an economist at Barnard; we have a daughter in college and a daughter in 7th grade.

What about your spare time?

I like to cook, watch the Yankees, and read. And I'm hoping to start biking to work a few days a week, along the Hudson River greenway.

Thank you Dave. Welcome. It is great to have you onboard!

Continued from page 1 ... Dr. Roger Franklin

Their work organizing lunchtime concert series, establishing the church's AA meetings and organizing church theatricals and concerts helped to shape what Rutgers Church is today.

We will be forever grateful to Roger for his over forty years of service at Rutgers. Plans for a memorial service will be posted on the church's website at www.rutgerschurch.org.

Session Update

The Session meets monthly, except in August, and is the ruling board for Rutgers Presbyterian Church. The Session makes decisions in concert with the Pastor about administrative and programmatic issues at Rutgers.

As Clerk of Session, I take the minutes of the meetings, and on a yearly basis those are approved by the Presbytery of New York City, the governing body that links all the Presbyterian churches in the five boroughs.

We make decisions of community issues related to Rutgers church, such as landmarking, or our own community programs and classes, or the church budget or welcoming new members and designing worship.

Here are some recent decisions made by Session which may be of interest:

- We have received a bequest from Vera Roberts' estate to form an endowment, the interest of which will be used for scholarships, according to her wishes.
- We are pleased to be continuing the Community Programs [Body & Spirit, Child's Play], even though we did have to reduce the size of the program, and limit classes to Tuesday-Wednesday-Thursday. Watch for fliers with information on classes and times.
- What about those colorful scarves at the front of the Sanctuary? Holly Nedelka put them on the ramp which leads from the people to the place of the spirit, where the music and ministers tell us of God. So for Vacation Bible School in 2010 the scarves were a decoration for the children reflecting the rainbow imagery which appears in many religious cultures. Pastor Andrew liked them and suggested we keep them up, as they reflect the rainbow flag, and the fact that we are a More Light Church.

Adult Sunday Bible School

Getting up early on Sunday seems to go against the idea of Sunday as a day of rest, but several members of Rutgers do it anyway! We meet at 9:30 in the Session room, and under Pastor Andrew's leadership we watch videos focusing on spiritual and social justice issues and the church, and have great conversations and exchange of ideas and opinions.

As a bunch of film-expert New Yorkers we are always ready to critique the filming and editing techniques! And we often disagree, or overtly wildly agree, with the presenters—in other words, we have fun. Drinking coffee, watching the videos, seeking Pastor Andrew's perspective, arguing our cases, praying together, we grow in faith and understanding together.

Community Programs

After six months of many changes, it's good to report that the programs and classes are doing very well and are now solvent. The programs now operate on a three-day schedule with a reduced number of instructors who are both popular with the students and parents and show excellence in their work with the students. We have merged "Child's Play" and the "Body & Spirit" classes into one unit: *Rutgers PC Community Programs*, serving both adults and children. An evening with parents and adults participants was instrumental in finding out what is cherished and what needs some improvement. We look to the future with a greater sense of purpose and hopes for what the programs may accomplish in our midst. Session appointed a Programs Task Force that continues to look towards long-range plans and future goals. Summer registration is now underway and the Fall classes are now on the Rutgers website. Many thanks to all who have provided their support and guidance throughout this time!

Rev. Diana C. Austin, *Parish Associate*
Interim Programs Administrator

We have studied the relationship between archaeological discoveries and Biblical timelines—often they don't match! We learned about the Jesus followers who were poor and often outcasts, and their comparison to the people in power, the Roman rulers. Please bring your coffee and join us as we explore and expand our faith together.

Alice Hudson, *Clerk of Session*

The Giving Network

The Giving Network is the new name for the Rutgers Presbyterian Church Committee that manages our Benevolence and Stewardship activities. (These were formerly named the Benevolence and Stewardship Committees, respectively.)

The Giving Network is charged with recommending to Session contributions to support non-profit organizations, the missions of which are consistent with Rutgers' own. The Giving Network is also charged with engaging the congregation to contribute to Rutgers through the annual stewardship campaign. The Giving Network: our giving collectively, to support organizations and people in need, and your own giving, to support our church and its mission every day.

Joy Wyatt, *Chair*

Children's & Middle School Sunday School: Living In God's Time

Our Sunday School curriculum, Seasons of the Spirit, follows the rhythms of the church year so, during the late winter and early spring our children have been learning about Lent, Easter, and the season of Easter.

For Lent, we made pretzels together as a symbol that Lent is a time for extra prayer. The overlapping circles of the pretzel resemble arms crossed in prayer, so these are yummy reminders of our need to spend more time talking and listening to God. During circle time, we learned the Taize song, "Lord, Hear our Prayer" as another reminder about prayer and that God hears us when we pray. On Palm Sunday we walked our way through the story of Jesus' last week and then participated in activities to help us reflect on the last supper, Jesus' trial, and crucifixion. We celebrated Easter Sunday with an egg hunt in the Sanctuary. Everyone went home with baskets, bags and pockets bulging with eggs filled with sweet surprises.

Now, as we move toward Pentecost we are celebrating the season of Easter by learning the stories of Jesus and his followers after the resurrection. We're learning another Taize song, "Live in Charity," as a reminder that people who follow Jesus are to love others and live in reconciled relationships with each other.

Ivy, *D.E.M.*

June 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
5 7th Sunday of Easter 9:30 a.m. SKATE Parents' Meeting 9:45 a.m. Adult Forum (through the Summer) 12:45 p.m. Board of Deacons Meeting	6 12:15 p.m. Al-Anon Every Monday	7 10:00 a.m. Worship Committee 11:00 a.m. Support Group for Unemployed persons Every Tuesday	8 6:00 p.m. AA Meeting Every Wednesday	9 10:30 a.m. Staff Meeting Every Thursday 6:00 p.m. Meal Program 7:00 p.m. Movie Series Every Thursday	10 5:30 a.m. Women's Spirituality Group (RSVP) 6:00 p.m. Scouts - Troop Final Court of Honor	11 6:00 p.m. AA Meeting
12 Day of Pentecost 12:45 p.m. Peace & Social Justice Meeting	13	14 6:30 p.m. Session Meeting 7:00 p.m. Trustees Meeting	15 5:30 p.m. Christian Ed. Meeting	16 6:30 p.m. Joint Worship and Personnel Cttee. Meeting	17	6:00 p.m. Men's Shelter Every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Closed July and August
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> Summer Community Programs - for Children & Adults of All Ages begin (Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, June 13 through August 4). </div>						
19 Trinity Sunday Father's Day 12:30 p.m. Congregational Forum on Landmarking	20	21 12:15 p.m. Al-Anon 6:00 p.m. Men's Support Group (HIV+/PLWA) Cub Scouts 8:00 p.m. Men's Al-Anon Every Tuesday	22	23 7:00 p.m. New Al-Anon Group through August 25 Every Thursday	24	25
26 Gay Pride Sunday	27	28	29	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> Preaching Schedule June 5- 7th Sunday in Ordinary Time; Rev. Stehlik preaching June 12 - Day of Pentecost; Rev. Stehlik preaching June 19 - Trinity Sunday; Father's Day, Rev. Stehlik preaching June 26 - Gay Pride Sunday; Guest Preacher (Presbyterian Welcome) July 3 - 4th of July Weekend, Rev. Amstein preaching </div>		

Sundays	
9:45 a.m.	Adult Bible Class
10:00	Adult Choir Rehearsal
10:45	Infant & Child Care
11:00	Worship Service
11:15	Sunday School (ages 3-12)
12:15	Coffee Hour
12:30	Choir Rehearsal

July 2011

Vacation Bible School
"Taste and See"
August 15 - 19 & August 22 - 26
9 am to 12 pm.

Birthdays!	
June	July
5 Robin Berry	6 William Donnell, Bill Falk
9 Kyle Okimoto	7 Kate Dunn
16 Susan Poliacik	8 Richard Reece
19 Krista Olson	
22 Anne Barstow	
27 Cullen Dunn-Ellis & Newt Pate	
29 Allison Okimoto	

