Dear Members and Friends of Rutgers Presbyterian Church,

Homecoming Sunday, September 14th, is right around the corner. And the program year ahead will afford us many ways to grow in the image of God and serve with justice and love in the name of Christ.

One of the ways this congregation is helping me grow in my role as a follower of Christ has been your granting me an eight-week sabbatical leave.

The purpose of a sabbatical is to take time out to think deeper thoughts than one can amidst the routines of daily church life and to grow through a set of experiences unattainable in the course of an ordinary work week. Allow me to report to you just how I am expecting to stimulate my thinking and grow through experience during my sabbatical leave and just how the ordinary course of church life will be carried on during my time out.

I have just completed the first two weeks of my sabbatical, curled up amidst the beauty of the Adirondacks (a true hardship post!) with some heavy theological tomes. For 2003–2004, I am part of a Pastor-Theologian Seminar sponsored by the Center of Theological Inquiry in Princeton, NJ. The topic for the year is: “The Identity of Jesus in a Pluralistic World.” So I used my sabbatical’s first two weeks to read (or read again): The Gospel of Luke; the Interpretation Series Commentary on Luke by Fred R. Craddock; Jesus of Nazareth, by Günther Bornkamm; Jesus the Savior, by William Pflucher; Jesus: Miriam’s Child, Sophia’s Prophet, by Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza; The Quest of the Historical Jesus, by Albert Schweitzer; “Jesus’ Identity as Theological Problem,” by Robert W. Jenson; and The Christological Controversy, translated and edited by Richard A. Norris, Jr.

The fruit of this study should manifest itself in my preaching, particularly in the sermons from Advent onward through 2004—Year C in the lectionary cycle, the year when the Gospel of Luke is the focus for our congregation’s worship life.

I will be taking the final six weeks of the sabbatical you have given me from October 6 through November 17. I will spend the first six days of that period at the Continuing Education Center and library of Princeton Theological Seminary, doing research for the paper that is required of all participants in the Pastor-Theologian Seminar.

(Continued on page 10)
Rutgers’ members and friends will have an opportunity to make a major impact on the future of worship and music at Rutgers during the coming months. The Organ Restoration Capital Campaign will be launched formally on September 14.

If you are thinking, "what's the problem with the Rutgers organ? George Davey makes the organ sound just fine!", remember that he is acting more like a physical therapist than organist and choir director in this regard. He will patch a squawk here, and a new honk emerges over there. The bubble gum and sticking plaster are nearly exhausted, George tells us. (See facing page for more details.)

As you might imagine, the work that needs to be done on the organ is significant. We anticipate paying in excess of $400,000 to do the necessary repairs and restoration on the organ and an additional sum on the walls and ceiling that house the organ pipes in the front of the church. The committee that worked to develop the restoration proposal considered several options, including replacing the instrument. After receiving advice from experts and our own organist and organist emeritus, it became clear that the organ is of a quality that is well worth giving a new voice. When considering the age of the instrument (nearly a hundred years), the cost we face is not unreasonable. Good stewardship to tomorrow's worshippers compels us to do what we need to do in order to bring the organ to its former level of musical glory.

With that in mind, Southfield Organ Builders are already on the case, gently dismantling the organ and beginning to repair it in stages, so we won't have to wait all that long before seeing the results of their labors and our investment.

Right now, we have our own work to do: inspiring each other to give generously, to ensure that our organ, given into our care a generation ago, is restored for future generations in our community to enjoy and treasure. At this time and in this place, let us remind ourselves of the spiritual importance of giving to the glory of God.

We are focused on encouraging every member to contribute. Small and large gifts are welcome (we have already received three-year pledges that are equal to or substantially exceed annual stewardship gifts). We will be seeking community and corporate sponsorship for this effort, and we would like to be able to say "the entire Rutgers community is contributing to this undertaking".

And in case you are wondering, "why wait to pledge?", you are in good company. Put your eagerness to work immediately by contacting Bruce Bergquist in the church office and letting him know how much you would like to contribute over three years in annual installments. All we need in the coming few months is your commitment, so take advantage of the waning days of summer to sit back and contemplate the organ pipe or windchest that will be restored thanks to your generosity.

Opportunity to Become an Organ Donor! Just Around the Corner...

By Joy Wyatt, Organ Capital Campaign Committee Chair
The next time you visit our chancel, you will probably notice a cavity in the west wall where there used to be a façade of pipes. Your first thought may be that the organ is down, but is it really down?

In order to understand what's going on, we need to know how this enormous instrument works. A pipe organ is essentially a wind instrument like a flute, recorder or even a whistle. Air is blown through pipes, creating sounds that vary in tone and duration and that experienced together, make music.

The wind used to produce the sound is pumped through the instrument from the blower, located in the basement. This giant electric fan sucks up air and sends it into bellows-like reservoirs, where it is stored until needed.

The reservoirs direct the stored air into windchests, which are airtight chambers that hold the wind and make it available to the pipes. Pipes are arranged on top of the windchests, where a valve opens and closes, sending air through the pipe, allowing it to speak.

The organist directs this movement of air from the organ console. Keys on the keyboards control the action of the pipe valves by way of electric signals. Drawknobs on either side of the keyboards control which pipes are in use at any given time.

That in a nutshell is how the organ works!

Our Möller organ was manufactured in 1925, incorporating elements from the 1874 instrument, and reflects the technology and production methods available at that time. With the passage of time, mechanical failures have rendered a large percentage of the organ unplayable. The reservoirs and windchests, made from wood and leather, have become brittle and leaky. Some of the organ pipes have been dented and even duct-taped in the effort to tune them correctly. Water damage destroyed the antiphonal section of the organ, located at the back of the sanctuary. The inner workings of the console are not reliable, and the 80-year-old wiring needs to be replaced and brought up to code.

Our organ also typifies the kinds of organ sounds that were popular in the 1920's. It is well suited for interpreting music from the 19th and early 20th centuries, but we are unable to experience earlier and more contemporary pieces as they are meant to be heard. Many of our pipes are redundant, duplicating functions rather than complementing each other. As we deal with the mechanics of the organ, we are presented with an opportunity to address these redundancies and stylistic issues. Additional sounds would allow us to draw from all periods of music history, diversifying and expanding our ability to minister through music.

Therefore, we have contracted with Southfield Organ Builders to begin a two-phase organ restoration that will afford us a rejuvenated, up-to-date instrument.

Phase One has already begun. During the first week of August, about 2,000 pipes, or over half of the organ, were removed. A few of these were unusable and thus discarded. Most of the pipes were taken to the organ builders’ shop, where they will be carefully reconditioned. At the same time, Southfield will be rebuilding and replacing our weary reservoirs and windchests. The revoiced pipes, along with some new ones, will return to our sanctuary during the spring of 2004.

Phase Two, which will begin in the spring, will include the removal and reconditioning of the remaining 1,500 pipes along with work on the console and new electric wiring. Our antiphonal organ will be revived, and we will even have trumpets! Because our organ has sections of pipes that function independently, Southfield has enabled us to continue to use it throughout most of the restoration.

New life is being given to an instrument that has served us well. That’s why I believe you will agree with me when I say that the organ is not really down but on the way up.

That’s what’s UP with the organ.
Rutgers’ Body and Spirit Program: Our Fourth Year
Diane Nicole, Director

The Body & Spirit Program will begin its fourth season this September. We are offering new and improved classes for all ages while continuing perennial favorites.

Among the new classes for adults, we welcome Robert Chang, who will be sharing his expertise in video production with those who register for his special six-week course, “Produce Your Own Reality TV.”

For kids, we are pleased to welcome back Laurie Berkner, who will have the rafters of the church ringing with her special concert for kids on Sept. 27th at 11:00 am. Laurie last appeared at Rutgers in 2002, when she played to an enthusiastic crowd of 321 adults and children. Tickets are $15 and go on sale Sept. 2nd. All proceeds will benefit the children in our scholarship program.

Little Wiggers from our summer session perform The Three Little Pigs.

Community for Kids, and Parents Too (Free to Rutgers Members!)
An Interview with Juliet Pritner

Juliet Pritner has attended Rutgers’ Child’s Play groups with her son, Christian Pritner Gonzales, since he was four months old. She hopes to share her enthusiasm for this program with other Rutgers families:

Q: How is a Child’s Play session structured?
A: The sessions last between one and two hours and are loosely structured. We start off circling up and singing songs with different hand motions and dances. This is usually followed by a time involving painting, play dough or other simple crafts. Then, we have free play time upstairs on the fifth floor.

There’s a group leader (she’s never called a teacher) who, in all the groups I’ve participated with, has always been a mother. There’s a limit on the size of each group, which gives you a chance to really get to know the other parents and children who are involved.

One of the things that makes the program unique is the fact that only parents (or primary caregivers) are allowed to bring their children.

Q: How do you see Christian benefiting from his participation in Child’s Play?
A: Because Christian is so frequently in this building, he’s instantly at ease here. I’m able to give him more independence, and be more independent, in this space than anywhere else. It’s so reassuring for me to let him run around freely and know he’s in such a secure environment.

At Christian’s age (he’s eighteen months old), kids are like puppies: you have to get them around each other to wear each other out. It’s the highlight of the week for him to hear that we’re going to church and that he’s going to see Charles and William and Kate.

It’s also a nice chance for him to be around children of other ages. He learns new skills and behaviors from being around older children, and he learns respect from being around babies.

And I’m excited about the Spanish playgroup that starts in the fall. Christian’s last name is Gonzales, and I would very much like him to become bilingual.

Q: Can you explain more about your involvement with Child’s Play as a parent?
A: It’s been a terrific human resource. It was a wonderful place for starters to meet

(Continued on page 5)
Vacation Bible School 2003
Cheryl Pyrch, Associate for Educational Ministries

Twenty children from three different boroughs came to the Rutgers VBS for the week of August 18th. Using the theme of “lighthouses” to think about God’s light, we read the stories of Moses and the burning bush, God’s leading the Hebrews through the wilderness with a pillar of cloud and flame, and the birth of Jesus – the Light of the world.

We started the day by praising God in song and learned by heart two Rutgers favorites – “Thy Word” and “The Lord Is My Light.” We also discovered a carol in our Presbyterian Hymnal that is new to us (#30) and celebrated Christmas in August. Trustee Clif Fisher was the wonderful VBS pianist who kept us on key, in time, and energized.

Each morning we had a special treat: a visit by our lighthouse keeper Captain Roger (Roger Franklin) and his sidekick, Beak’n the Pelican (Nora Lidell). Captain Roger always began by leading us in a decidedly non-biblical sea chanty (kept G-rated through some judicious editing). Nora and DeYan Jervis McCarthy painted beautiful sets of lighthouses and the sea.

Our skillful staff of classroom teachers led the children through lighthouse sculptures and other crafts, games, stories and snacks. Many thanks to Wanda Diaz, Richard Hill, Nora Lidell, and Holly Nedelka. Our youth interns kept the kids on track and the teachers calm: Jeffrey Glendon, José Melendez, Cherise Ou Yang, and Angelika Rodriguez.

We concluded each day with prayer as we lifted up to God the joys and concerns of children and adults: thanks for new friends, family, the earth and all God’s creatures, including our pets; concerns for parents going to war, friends who were mean, people we didn’t know, grandparents who were sick, and for cats without homes. We ended with our going-forth hymn, “Go and Serve Your God.”

We look forward to seeing the children again next year – along with new friends – and give thanks to God for a safe and Spirit-filled VBS week.

For more information about Rutgers’ Child’s Play, or to register for fall sessions, contact Holly Nedelka, Director, at x204.

Q: How do the Child’s Play groups address the spiritual aspects of parenting?
A: The Child’s Play groups provide a window into the spiritual community here at Rutgers rather than directly addressing religious or spiritual questions. They bring people exposure to the life of this church who might not otherwise have come through the doors. So, from the church’s perspective, it’s an excellent mission.

Of course, not every parent coming to Child’s Play is looking for a church home, but I think many of them are. And I think it’s a longing that often becomes greater with young children.

Q: What else would you like to tell other Rutgers’ parents?
Try it if you haven’t! It’s been a treat to me because it’s free to Rutgers members.

Q: What else would you like to tell other Rutgers’ parents?
Try it if you haven’t! It’s been a treat to me because it’s free to Rutgers members.
A Homecoming Celebration

On Sunday, September 14, help us launch a new program year with a full array of church school classes, choir activities, and worship services. At 9:30 am, Dr. Shafer will be launching a four-week adult class on “Jesus’s Puzzling Parables” (see below). At 12:45 pm, the Special Events Committee will serve our Homecoming potluck luncheon (bring your favorite dish to share and drop it off on the fifth floor before the worship service). During the meal, information will be shared about the exciting organ renovations that are now underway.

Considering Church Membership?

An Inquirers Class for people who wish to discuss spiritual issues or learn more about Rutgers Church will be held from 6:30—8:00 pm on Wednesday evenings, September 17 and 24. New members will be received at the service of worship on Sunday, September 28. If you are looking for a spiritual home in New York City, come learn more about Rutgers Church and share your own insights. You’ve always known that worshiping God is good for your spirit; now doctors confirm that worshiping God is also good for your body. So join us!

Invite a Friend...

on Sunday, September 28.
Share the good news about Rutgers Church with some friends. Bring them with you for worship and the special coffee hour that will follow afterwards. And greet the new members who will be formally received into our community of faith.

Adult Classes: September and October 2003

(Please call Cheryl Pyrch at x205 for more information; child care available for all classes.)

Jesus’s Puzzling Parables. Join our Pastor, Dr. Byron Shafer, on September 14th for a four-week series on the parables of Jesus, Sunday mornings at 9:30 am (please note time) in the Session Room. Dr. Shafer has taught this course at Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, and our members who have taken it give it rave reviews. September 14, 21, 28 and October 5.

World Communion Sunday: “Multiculturalism and the Church.” On Sunday, October 5, come to an after-church adult forum led by the Reverend Rob Calder of Scottsville Presbyterian Church in Pietermaritzburg, Natal Province, South Africa. Mr. Calder is one of the few white pastors of a multi-ethnic congregation in South Africa and has much wisdom to share on this topic. At 1:00 pm in the Daniel Russell Room; light refreshments will be served. Child care available, but please reserve by September 28. Sponsored by the Peace and Social Justice Network.

The Erotic Word: Sexuality, Spirituality and the Bible. On October 12 and 19, at 9:45 am in the Session room, Cheryl Pyrch will lead a Bible Study focusing on aspects of sexuality and spirituality in Genesis 1-3; on October 26th, at 1:00 pm in the Daniel Russell Room, Professor David Carr of Union Theological Seminary will lead a presentation/discussion on the Song of Songs (also known as Song of Solomon). Professor Carr has recently published a book with the same title as this series. People are welcome to any and all sessions, and light refreshments will be served at the after-church forum on Oct. 26th.

And, Presbyterian Welcome invites you to join them for

Current Presbyterian Conflicts: Why They Matter
A Panel Discussion with Barbara Wheeler and Doug Nave.
What should local congregations know about the struggles at the national level of the Presbyterian Church? Why should they care? How can the church address its differences and make its witness more faithful? September 25, 2003, at Brick Presbyterian Church, located at 91st St. and Park Ave. The discussion will last from 6:30 - 7:30 pm and be followed by a reception. See www.pwny.org for more information.
## September 2003

**Sunday Worship Schedule**

Worship Service at 11:00 am — Coffee Hour at 12:15 pm

Sunday School for Youth and Adults at 9:30 am — Infant and Child Care from 9:30 am — Sunday School (ages 3-10) at 11:15 am

Choir Rehearsals at 10:00 am and 12:30 pm

- September 7 — The Rev. Dr. Byron E. Shafer preaching; the Choir resumes
- September 14 — Homecoming Sunday; Sacrament of Holy Communion; The Rev. Dr. Byron E. Shafer preaching; Adult and Youth classes resume
- September 21 — The Rev. Dr. Byron E. Shafer preaching
- September 28 — Invite-a-Friend Sunday; Reception of New Members; The Rev. Dr. Byron E. Shafer preaching

### Men's Overnight Shelter Program:

6:30 pm, seven days a week

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<td>Labor Day</td>
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<td>Choir resumes;</td>
<td>Body &amp; Spirit classes resume;</td>
<td>Men's Support Group (PLWA/HIV);</td>
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<td>Mothers' Bible Study</td>
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<td>Men's Support Group (PLWA/HIV);</td>
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<td>Church building closed</td>
<td>2:30 pm</td>
<td>Youth Basketball &amp; Pizza resumes</td>
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<td>Mothers' Bible Study</td>
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<td>6:00 pm</td>
<td>Session Meeting; Capital Campaign Committee</td>
<td>6:00 pm</td>
<td>Starting Over</td>
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<td>6:15 pm</td>
<td>LYT Youth Theater Program resumes</td>
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<td>7:00 pm</td>
<td>Every Tuesday</td>
<td>11:00 am</td>
<td>Inquirers Class</td>
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<td>Rutgers volunteers staff the shelter</td>
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<td>11:00 am</td>
<td>Peace &amp; Social Justice Network</td>
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<td>12:45 pm</td>
<td>Scouts resume</td>
<td>6:00 pm</td>
<td>Christian Education Committee</td>
<td>11:00 am</td>
<td>Mothers' Bible Study</td>
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<td>6:30 pm</td>
<td>Youth Basketball &amp; Pizza</td>
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<td>Scholarship Committee</td>
<td>6:00 pm</td>
<td>Scouts resume</td>
<td>6:30 pm</td>
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<td>Laurie Berkner Concert</td>
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<td>Invite-a-Friend Sunday &amp; Reception of New Members</td>
<td>Men's Support Group (PLWA/HIV);</td>
<td>The Rev. Dr. Byron E. Shafer preaching; Adult and Youth classes resume</td>
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<td>Christian Education Teacher Training</td>
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# October 2003

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<td>1</td>
<td>2 (6:00 pm) Senior Meal Program and 7:00 pm Movie Series Every Thursday</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>10:30 am LYT Youth Theater Program Every Saturday</td>
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## Men's Overnight Shelter Program:
6:30 pm, seven days a week

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<td>World Communion; Peacemaking Offering; Organ Pledges Received; 12:45 pm Board of Deacons 1:00 pm Forum: Multiculturalism and the Church</td>
<td>Dr. Shafer’s Sabbatical begins; 2:30 pm Worship Committee 6:00 pm Scout Meeting Every Mon/Tues</td>
<td>4:00 pm Starting Over Every Tuesday</td>
<td>Every Thursday</td>
<td>6:30 pm Rutgers volunteers staff the shelter Every Friday</td>
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<td>Columbus Day Holiday Church office closed</td>
<td>5:00 pm Youth Basketball &amp; Pizza 6:30 pm Session Meeting</td>
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<td>9:00 am - 4:00 pm Presbytery Day at Riverside Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:45 pm Peace &amp; Social Justice Network</td>
<td>6:00 pm Cub Scout Potluck</td>
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<td>Daylight Savings Time ends— change your clock!</td>
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<td>1:00 pm Forum: Song of Songs 4:00 pm Organ Fundraising Recital</td>
<td>5:00 pm Youth Basketball &amp; Pizza</td>
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## Sunday Worship Schedule

- Worship Service at 11:00 am — Coffee Hour at 12:15 pm
- Sunday School for Youth and Adults at 9:45 am — Infant and Child Care from 9:30 am — Sunday School (ages 3-10) at 11:15 am

## Choir Rehearsal 10:00 am

- October 5 — World Communion Sunday; Peacemaking Offering; Celebration of the Lord’s Supper; The Rev. Dr. Byron E. Shafer preaching
- October 12 — Columbus Day Weekend; The Reverend Charles A. Amstein preaching
- October 19 — Elder Christine Gorman preaching
- October 26 — The Reverend Charles A. Amstein preaching
An HIV+/PLWA Spiritual Support Group for men meets every Tuesday evening from 6:00—7:30 pm. The group is led by Douglas Rowan, a professional counselor and facilitator. Please mention this support group to anyone in need that you know.

Rutgers Church provides a Senior Citizens Meal Program every Thursday evening at 6:00 pm from September through June. A movie is shown after the meal most Thursdays except those between Thanksgiving and New Year’s Day. Contact Ulla Farmer (212) 744-5313 or Mark Young (212) 724-8339 if you are interested in helping to prepare or serve!

Rutgers Church provides a shelter for homeless men in our gymnasium seven nights a week throughout the year, in cooperation with volunteers from Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church and Christ & Saint Stephen Episcopal Church. Volunteers from Fifth Avenue staff the shelter Sundays through Thursdays, volunteers from Christ and St. Stephen, on Saturdays; and volunteers from our own church staff the shelter on Fridays. The program needs YOUR help to make a difference. Please call De Monte Alleyne for more information or to volunteer—877-8227 x203.

Look for a special feature on the homeless shelter in the next issue of the Renewal.

Sunday, November 23, 2:30 pm—Benefit Concert for the Organ, featuring sopranos Faith Esham and Sherry Zannoth, plus George Davey.

On Thanksgiving Day, November 27, volunteers from Rutgers Church provide Thanksgiving Dinner for the residents of Euclid Hall, a nearby residence for senior citizens operated by the West Side Federation for Senior Housing, of which one of our Parish Associates, the Reverend Laura Jervis, is the Executive Director. Call the church office (877-8227) with your offer of food—cooked turkeys, potatoes and other fixings—so that others may share in the bounty God has provided.
The Spring 2003 Concert Series
R. Wellington Jones, Special Events Committee Chairperson

A series of four Thursday afternoon recitals were presented at Rutgers Church during May and June.

On May 15th, the Golden Fleece presented Beth Fischer, John Nelson, Wallace Norman and Lucy Soruccio in a program of folk and art songs called “Voices of Spring,” including selections by Virgil Thomson, Benjamin Britten, Lou Rodgers, Richard Rodgers and Leonard Bernstein. Shinah Riley was the accompanist.

The second recital on May 22nd featured Ladie Whitaker and Alburt Rhodes in a program of popular ballads, classical arias and spirituals, including several compositions set to poems of Langston Hughes.

On May 29th, Umberto Giordano’s Andrea Chenier was presented before a large and appreciative audience with Paula Poulafear, soprano, and Salvatore Motisi, tenor; Bob Wilson accompanied at the piano.

On June 6th, a dual song recital was presented. Soprano Colleen Kennedy sang traditional Welsh and Irish ballads involving audience participation, and Stephen Whitley’s P. S. 161 District 7 Chorus of grade school children skillfully presented Broadway and popular vocal selections involving each of the choristers in solo contributions. They were very well received by those present.

Then on October 12, my wife Margaret and I will begin a five-week journey—flying to India and returning through Egypt. During that time, we will be visiting and working collegially with the principal Protestant churches in India—the Church of North India (CNI) and the Church of South India (CSI), particularly their educational institutions.

We will spend time at the United Theological College (the English-medium seminary of CSI) in Bangalore; Bishop’s College (the English-medium seminary of CNI) in Calcutta; Woodstock School (an international, English-medium Christian school, K through high school) in Mussoorie; and Bar ing Union Christian College (an undergraduate liberal arts college with a M.A. program in English Literature and an Institute for interreligious dialogue) in Batala. Our time at these places will be spent participating in consultations, giving and listening to lectures, offering leadership training courses, and learning more about the Protestant community in India.

At the conclusion of our time in India, Margaret and I will escort the CNI Bishop for the Diocese of Amritsar, Pradeep Kumar Samantaray, and that diocese’s Coordinator of the Socio-Economic Development Program, Daniel Das, to Egypt, where we will introduce them to Dr. Nabil Abadir and the staff of the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS). CEOSS is one of the premier church-operated social service agencies in the world, and the Church of North India will greatly benefit from studying CEOSS’s way of doing community development. The situations of the Protestant communities in India and Egypt have many similarities, and CNI can learn much from the expertise of CEOSS. So Margaret and I are playing “matchmakers.” We will spend four days visiting CEOSS projects with the CNI representatives before returning to the USA. (The Indian leaders will spend an additional week to ten days in Egypt.)

Upon my return to the office on November 18, I expect to be able to give an exciting report on the work and ministry of the Protestant Christian communities in two fascinating countries of the world.

I thank you all for affording me this incomparable opportunity.

During my absence, our Associate for Educational Ministries, Cheryl Pyrch, will be coordinating the pastoral ministries of our church. You may reach her at the church Sundays through Thursdays. Our Executive Director for Property and Administration, Bruce Bergquist, will be in charge of all business matters. You may reach him at the church Mondays through Fridays. The Reverend Charles Amstein will also be available in his church office for additional hours each week (the times will be announced in the Sunday bulletin). And my Executive Assistant, Jennifer Hanson, will be able to coordinate for you a wide variety of administrative matters, such as those related to committee meetings. She is in the office Mondays through Fridays. The Rutgers Church staff are extraordinary, as you know, and the programs and ministries of this community of faith will go on during the six weeks of my sabbatical leave without missing a beat!
A Picnic Remembered
R. Wellington Jones, Special Events Committee Chairperson

The annual Rutgers Church Picnic took place under exceptionally favorable weather conditions on Saturday, July 12th, at the Presbyterian Center at Westminster Lake in Putnam County, New York.

Mildred Saunders and R. Wellington Jones handled the pre-picnic preparations. The menu included grilled shrimp, pork spare ribs, beef franks, knockwurst, beef and vegetarian burgers, and vegetarian and pork baked beans, all fired on the grill, along with macaroni salad, tossed green salad and vegetable crudités.

Special thanks for grilling and food preparation go to: Louisa Berry, Doris Bryant, Emilio Padilla and Stephen Whitley.

After luncheon, Ms. Lois Bellamy led a game competition with prizes, which gave considerable pleasure to the picnickers. Boating, swimming and nature walking filled out the afternoon. The picnic can be revisited during two Wednesday noon-hour broadcasts on New Ventures, September 3rd and 10th at 12:30 pm, on Channel 56 Time/Warner and Channel 108 RCN Manhattan Cable (public access) TV.

What Do You Think? by J.M.C.

1. When you think your burden is heavier than anyone else's, take a walk or look out of your window for a few minutes. Someone will pass by who will make your burden seem very light.

2. In an emergency, who do you save first?

3. You can't make a person want to live longer.

4. Why does your dirty apartment/house bother you only when you're expecting company?

5. When men gain weight, why can they simply buy larger clothes without having a nervous breakdown?

6. Why do you fall into a deep, peaceful sleep 20 minutes before the alarm goes off?

7. Why doesn't the leftover food's special sauce from one restaurant enhance the flavor of the leftover food from another restaurant?

8. Why do the habits you pick up while dating seem cute, loving and special, but after marriage annoy the heck out of you?

9. Working with older people sometimes takes a lot of patience. Have you ever reflected on how much patience it took for that person to be a mother, father, teacher, doctor or preacher during their lifetime?

10. When you think your burden is heavier than anyone else's, take a walk or look out of your window for a few minutes. Someone will pass by who will make your burden seem very light.

Play Ball!
Kim Hodges, Team Captain

Take a close look at this team picture and see if you recognize any Rutgers members. You will have to look really close to find members Kim Hodges and Lili Bohan.

The Rutgers softball team finished the season in first place with a record of 6-4, playing in a league of New York City Presbyterian churches.

Our success is thanks to team member, Cindy Cuad-rado, who discovered the Rutgers softball team through the Body & Spirit Program, in which her son, Xavier, participates. Cindy brought sisters, cousins, uncles and neighbors to fill up the roster.

Of course, we got our biggest help from #1 fan, DeYan Jervis McCarthy, who attended most of our games.
Rutgers 2003 Film Festival
Featuring films by the Marx Brothers and Alfred Hitchcock

Thursday Evenings
at 7:00pm
sponsored by the Board of Deacons
Free Admission
Hosted by DR. ROGER FRANKLIN

Sept. 4th • Duck Soup (1933) B&W, 77 mins

Sept. 11th • A Night at the Opera (1935) B&W, 92 mins.
Considered by many to be the best of the Marx Brothers’ films, where they take on the opera world - *Il Trovatore* will never be the same again! Allan Jones and Kitty Carlisle co-star, with Margaret Dumont and Sig Ruman.

Sept. 18th • A Day at the Races (1937) B&W, 111 mins.
Groucho is a horse doctor treating hypochondriac Margaret Dumont, while Harpo and Chico wreak havoc at trackside. With Maureen O’Sullivan and Allan Jones.

Sept. 25th • Room Service (1938) B&W, 79 mins.
Groucho, Harpo and Chico are Broadway producers who have a play, some hungry actors, no backers, and a rising hotel bill! Lucille Ball, Ann Miller and Frank Albertson co-star.

A wheelchair-bound photographer spies on his neighbor and believes he’s witnessed a murder. James Stewart, Grace Kelly, Raymond Burr, Wendell Corey, Thelma Ritter, and Judith Evelyn star.

Oct. 9th • Dial M for Murder (1954) Color, 105 mins.
A woman becomes aware that her husband is trying to kill her and must devise a plan to trip him up at his own game. Grace Kelly, Robert Cummings, Ray Milland and John Williams star in this classic thriller.

Oct. 16th • Vertigo (1958) Color, 120 mins.
When an old friend asks a retired detective (with an intense fear of heights) to follow his beautiful wife, he becomes involved in her strange world in this timeless classic. James Stewart and Kim Novak star.

Cary Grant finds himself chased by criminals, framed for murder, sharing a sleeper with Eva Marie Saint, dusted by a crop plane, and hanging from Mount Rushmore in Hitchcock’s gem of thrills and mystery. With James Mason and Martin Landau.

Nature runs amok in Hitchcock’s chilling adaptation of Daphne DuMaurier’s novella, when a Californian coastal town finds itself under attack by birds! Tippi Hendren, Jessica Tandy, and Rod Taylor star.
I bring you greetings from the Board of More Light Presbyterians and from the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta, a place deep within the embrace of southern culture, the very place where the first Presbyterian minister who is transgender had her ordination sustained and her ministry affirmed. I am that minister, a member in good standing of my presbytery, parish associate of the Ormewood Park Presbyterian Church, and founder of the Southern Association for Gender Education, a non-profit organization devoted exclusively to the task of educating our church and our community about the reality of gender diversity.

Ministry in our respective communities is a daunting task. Help me for a moment. How many people here have gender? If you didn’t just raise your hand I need to speak with you after the service. It’s clear that when the topic of gender identity is on the table we all have something at stake for we all must deal with what it means to be gendered as male or female. So when I speak of myself as transgender I am talking about a subject that in one way or another affects us all.

Most of us are lucky. In the words of recently deceased Presbyterian minister Mister Fred Rogers, we are born male, feel like boys and men, and are attracted to females. Or, we are born female, feel like girls and women, and are attracted to boys. For the small but very real number of us for whom this does not happen, the world becomes a dangerous place filled with ridicule, rejection, and violence. For many trans youth or children already overstressed with the task of growing up, our communities can be settings for a violent death—a violence bred, I believe, in the determined ignorance of our churches and communities who refuse to face the reality of gender and its diverse expressions, preferring to enforce artificial gender expectations.

How does one speak rationally in this world about such a pervasive and yet little understood topic as gender identity? Embedded deep within the fabric of our society are assumptions about what it means to be male or female that lie at the bedrock of our cultural institutions, most especially the church. The first words we hear in life are a fateful proclamation of this reality. “It’s a boy!” or “It’s a girl!” comes the blessing. A blessing, that is, if your sense of being a boy or a girl, a man or a woman, fits the label given. And woe unto you if even this pronouncement, this first category, cannot be established because some twist of biology has caused your anatomical sex to be indeterminate. We are only now beginning to resist our corporate temptation to surgically—violently—impress an acceptable gender onto the bodies of these intersex infants, a way of assuaging our anxiety over our compulsive need for them to be clearly gendered as either male or female.

It’s a daunting task as Christians to change the world’s perception—“neither male nor female,” from God’s perspective. Like the religious people of biblical times, we resist overcoming boundaries: clean and unclean, welcomed and outcast, male and female. But then that’s exactly what a poor carpenter’s son from Nazareth asked of us.

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Children and Worship
Cheryl Pyrch, Associate for Educational Ministries

How do you pray in worship when you can't read the bulletin? This is one of the questions that the Christian Education and Worship committees, parents and the Session wrestled with this past spring while talking about ways to engage children more deeply in worship. How could we maintain the freshness and beauty of weekly prayers connected to scripture and sermon, while providing more consistency for our beginning readers?

The Session has proposed a (modest) liturgical experiment for September 21st through Advent:

- Use alternating Calls to Worship that can be memorized, so everyone can join in.
- Use a variety of Prayers of Confession, but always start with a familiar invocation of God’s presence and request for God’s forgiveness, allowing children to learn the form of the prayer as they listen and follow.
- Always end the Assurance of Pardon with the joyful words, “In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!”
- Introduce the Passing of the Peace – a favorite part of the service for most children – the same way each Sunday. Repeat the musical response for several weeks, so it can be sung by heart.
- Keep Communion Sundays “as is,” since young children do not enter until the offering.

We hope these changes will be helpful for children and adults. Please talk to Dr. Shafer, Cheryl Pyrch, or Alice Hudson (chair of the Worship Committee) if you have any questions or thoughts about children and worship.