

Renewal

From the Pastor’s Desk...

The Reverend Byron E. Shafer

What wonderfully old-fashioned words “Hosanna” and “Alleluia” are. Several years ago, in a children’s sermon for Palm Sunday, Laura Jarvis offered us a modern-day equivalent for that day’s word, “Hosanna!” Do you remember? She suggested it means, “You go, God!” And she had all the kids shout it out with her: “You go, God!”

Well, Easter is the day on which we affirm that all our cries of “Hosanna,” of “You go, God,” have been fulfilled. Easter is the day we affirm that God has actually gone and done it! God has raised Jesus from the dead. And in so doing, God has vindicated the goodness of Jesus and validated the good news that Jesus preached to the poor, the outcast, and the oppressed. God *has* raised Jesus from the dead.

That’s why on Easter our “Hosannas” give way to “Alleluias,” our cries of “You go, God!” give way to shouts of, “Good job, God!” For God has rolled aside the stone from Jesus’s grave and unleashed in the world the power of eternal life.

Yes, Easter is a day for us to affirm not only that God came to Jesus to roll aside the stone that held him in death, but also that God comes to us to roll aside those figurative stones, those forces, that hold us in a death-like grip, constricting and limiting our lives in ways

that keep us from experiencing joy and vitality. Easter is a day on which God comes to assure each and every one of us that in our times of



An Alleluia chorus: Solomon Raj’s “The World of Angels”

limitation and loss, when we feel more dead than alive, God has the power to call us forth from our tomb. God’s love *is* able to reclaim us for abundant life.

After that very first Easter, we can be confident that whenever we confront pain or failure or illness or dying, God will come to us, if only we ask. God will come to us to calm our fears and to carry us through to the eternity of Christ’s joy and love.

In the face of pain and illness and dying, fear is instinctive, but we can confront and cope with that fear by drawing on the hope and faith created in us by God’s raising of Jesus, the hope and faith that, in God, the death of our body is not the end of our existence but merely a

transition from one experience of life that’s transient to another that’s eternal.

And it is not sickness alone that confronts us with the specters of death, of limits and losses, of feeling more dead than alive. We also confront these specters when we are caught in the grip of forces like racism, homophobia, addiction, greed, jealousy, hatred, and violence.

For overcoming all of these forces of “death,” God’s loving presence is a counter-power capable of breaking the hold forces like these have over us. For God’s love is stronger than sin, as God’s raising of Jesus from the dead has proven once and for all.

God’s raising of Jesus trumpets the incredibly consoling truth that whoever we are, whatever our pain or problem, our anxiety or af-

(Continued on page 2)

Inside this issue:

Rutgers and AIDS in the World	3
Rutgers and Upper Manhattan Together	4
Adult Education	5
Upcoming Events	6-9
What Happened at Session?	10
Organ Photo Essay	11
Of Protests and Pie	13

From the Pastor's Desk

continued from page 1

fiction, our frustration or failure or sin, God has the power to raise us to life and to well-being. For even if it should happen that our pain does not pass, that our problem does not go away, that our failure is not forgotten, still, to use the expression given to us by the Jesuit poet Gerard Manley Hopkins ("The Wreck of the Deutschland"), Christ "easterns" in us, offering us hope for life and well-being on the other side of physical death. This is a hope rooted in the reality that although Jesus experienced the most horrifying kind of suffering imaginable, God stood with him both through it and beyond it, raising him to the glory of life eternal.

The resurrection is not a denial that pain and suffering exist in life. Quite the opposite. As the experiences of Good Friday attest, the resurrection is a sacrament built on death-confronted, on pain-borne, on tears-shed. Resurrection is a sacrament of life raised from the ruin of human suffering and pain and conflict. And faith in the resurrection is founded on those glimpses of wholeness that come to us in the midst of suffering. It is founded most powerfully of all on our glimpses of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, when from the suffering of the cross God was able to bring forth newness of life and of well-being.

On a Friday long ago (Luke 22:54–23:49), Jesus—scourged, buffeted, stretched out on a cross—painfully and agonizingly died.

Then on Sunday (Luke 24:1–12), some women—grieving, distraught, forlorn—went to Jesus's tomb to cover the stench of putrefaction with the scent of their spices. There, these women—surprised, perplexed, alarmed—found the

tomb open, and empty. Suddenly, dazzlingly, terrifyingly, two beings appeared to them, saying: "He is not here, but has risen." And in that instant, they were transported from the grief of Good Friday to the joy of Easter, from the specter of death to the promise of life—as are we today.

For what the two messengers continue to announce today is that the beauty and goodness, the tenderness and strength, the justice and love that we saw die on Friday are again alive.

What seemed on Friday to be a powerless love is seen on Sunday to have ultimately triumphed, to have triumphed over all the forces of death in the world! For as the messengers say, "He is not here, but has risen."

God raised Jesus from the dead, and Jesus now "easterns" in us, offering us the gift of wholeness and well-being and abundant life that God gave to him. But here is the hard part! The Risen Christ comes to call on us, in turn, to carry that gift of abundant life to others. Christ comes to call us, as a people of God, to share in God's task of rolling aside many more gravestones, of carrying the sacrament of resurrection, of life rising from the ruin of death, to any who are still entombed by illness, fear, or oppression, still entombed by anyone or anything that crucifies. Christ calls us to mediate God's life-giving love to others, so that Christ may "eastern" in them as well.

Christ desires to use us to help create a world in which life is continually being raised from the ruins of death, in the way spoken of in Isaiah 65:17–25: a world in which infant deaths are no more, in which poverty and despair are elimi-

nated, in which old enemies become fast friends, in which violence and death yield to peace and long life for all.

So you see, Easter is not the end of the story, but just the beginning. On Palm Sunday, we journey to Jerusalem with Jesus, and on Easter the Risen Christ calls us to go forth from there out into the world. On Good Friday, we stand at the foot of the cross, and on Easter we learn to identify the stigmata of Christ's hands and feet with the suffering of the world. Easter morning, we go to the tomb, and there we first hear the life-giving words, "He is not here, but is risen," and soon thereafter hear the Risen Christ calling us to carry the healing power of God's love to others—so that one spouse doesn't abuse the other, so that adults don't pollute God's world, so that children don't open fire on playmates, so that love may be seen to be stronger than sin and all the forces of death.

Yes, Easter begins with God, yet it ends with us. It begins in a vigil, yet it ends in a task. It begins in a holy place, yet it ends in the world. For it is through the faith, the hope, and the love that are kindled in us by God's raising of Jesus and through our sharing of that faith, hope, and love with others that Christ is made known to the world.

This Easter we shout, "Allelu-ia," "Good job, God!" And as we journey through the season of Eastertide and on through the rest of our liturgical year, I pray that this shout of praise from us to God may be echoed back in an answering benediction pronounced upon us by God: "Allelu-iam," "Good job, people!"

Yes, Easter begins with God, yet it ends with us. It begins with a vigil, yet it ends in a task. It begins in a holy place, yet it ends in the world.

Rutgers Engages with AIDS in the World

A Moment for Mission given by Deacon Jeremiah Rosario on March 21, 2004



Next Sunday, March 28, the Christian Education Committee and the Peace and Social Justice Network will be showing *A Closer Walk*, a film narrated by Glenn Close and Will Smith about AIDS in the world today. This film gives an excellent overview of the AIDS pandemic worldwide.

This is an important film, and I invite everyone here to see it. Why? We think we know what AIDS is about. After all, many of us have lost a friend, family member or loved one to HIV/AIDS. But there has been a sense in the United States that HIV/AIDS is under control thanks to new medications. People are acting as if we don't have to worry about it any more. *A Closer Walk* shows just how wrong that type of complacency is.

The movie asks the question "Who is my neighbor?" and challenges us to be neighbors for those around the world. When AIDS first appeared in the United States, a lot of people said, "It is not my problem; it only affects homosexuals and intravenous drug users." And now it seems that we are painting it as an African problem, an Indian problem, a problem that affects the third world. Certainly not our problem. But it is our problem. Anything that affects our brothers and sisters around the world affects us.

The face of AIDS is not only in remote parts of Af-

rica, the streets of Bombay and Shanghai. It is not only in some obscure town or village we have not heard of. It is much closer; it is right here, in our own community, in our own church. I am that face. I was diagnosed with AIDS in 1994. In the ten years since I was diagnosed, more than 25 million people have died of AIDS and AIDS-related opportunistic diseases worldwide. By contrast, 500,000 people have died of AIDS in the United States since the beginning of the epidemic.

Am I any better than a young mother in Uganda? Are the gifts and talents she possesses less important than mine? Is my life more valuable than hers because I am an American? No. The only difference is that I have access to medical treatment and medications that she does not have.

We have all been affected by HIV/AIDS. Mark, Rodger, and George are only a few of those we have lost here at Rutgers. I lost my partner Bruce Gorry and many friends over the years to this virus. We can still feel the loss, the emptiness and void left behind in our lives, in our church, in our community. This pain is still palpable for many of us here. Now magnify that a hundred times, a thousand times, and maybe then you can begin to understand the pain felt by AIDS orphans who have lost their mothers, fathers, aunts, uncles, even their older siblings to HIV/AIDS. Their

entire family has been eradicated, and only they are left.

Rutgers has allocated 1% of the church operating budget each year to fight HIV/AIDS. This is more than what our own federal government has done. I commend you for your support and efforts, but we cannot stop here. We need to add our voices to our donations. Too long has the church at large been silent on HIV/AIDS. Too long have we, as Christians, watched others march in the streets. Too long have we remained silent and let others call for change, for access to health-care, for access to medication. It is time that the church as a whole, the body of Christ, raises her voice and says "NO MORE!! NO MORE will we sit back while millions of people around the world die of HIV/AIDS. NO MORE will we allow pharmaceutical companies, motivated by greed, to determine who lives and who dies. NO MORE will we accept the excuse from our elected officials that their hands are tied. NO MORE will we allow governments to turn a blind eye to the plight of their own people. NO MORE!!!" We will stand up and say to those suffering, "You are our friends, our mothers and fathers, our sons and daughters, our sisters, our brothers. We will stand with you, we will fight with you, we will cry with you, and if you do leave this world, we will make sure your death is with LOVE, with Dignity, and with Honor."

[Special note: If you missed the screening and discussion of this film, it is available to borrow from the church office. Contact Jennifer Hanson to schedule a one-week loan.]

Rutgers Church and Upper Manhattan Together

The Reverend Dr. W. Scott Morton

Rutgers Church is a member of Upper Manhattan together, an affiliate of the Industrial Areas Foundation. This is a grass-roots organization, made up of churches, synagogues and neighborhood groups, whose purpose is to work with elected and appointed officials—and to hold them responsible—to improve the quality of life in the neighborhoods of this and other cities.

There are several affiliates in the boroughs of New York. Ours was started in the mid-1990's and was then called Westsiders Together. We later joined with older groups to the north of us under the name Upper Manhattan Together. Rutgers Church was one of the founding members. I was then one of the leaders and continued along with others, such as Renee

Lord and Joan Keener, to represent our church until 2003.

What does Upper Manhattan Together do? Here are some examples from over the years:

- Improving the 72nd Street subway.

- Helping direct police narcotics squads to sites where drugs were being sold. Because of danger to individuals, this was done in some churches by brief, anonymous notes put in the offering plate.

- Cleaning and properly lighting the tunnel access to the subway at 191st Street.

- Addressing the problem of green meat and brown vegetables in certain supermarkets in our neighborhoods.

- Helping individuals fill out income tax forms to ob-

tain earned income tax credit they would otherwise not have received.

- Getting out the vote!

- Providing interview training for applicants for jobs in hotel work.

- and most recently, addressing health issues in public housing—e.g. factual reporting and pressure on housing authorities to clean up conditions causing asthma in children, like lead and asbestos, as well as dirt, garbage, rats, and graffiti.

Beverly Thompson is our current representative (it would be helpful for her to have a partner/back-up) and attends periodic organizing meetings. THEN, when ACTION is decided upon, Rutgers leaders call out our troops, and a big meeting takes place with city officials. Usually RESULTS are obtained.

New Members Profile: Michelle and Sean Nelson



Trey and Lily, Charlotte and Catherine...we'll soon have another pair of twins here at Rutgers, for Michelle and Sean Nelson are expecting twin boys at the end of May!

Michelle is a New York native, having grown up in Queens, and she still has a lot of family in the area. She headed south to North Carolina for college and graduate school (and still misses the climate there) but returned to New York to pursue a career in marketing, accompanied by Ballou, a golden retriever mix. Michelle is the Director of Marketing at New York University, where the academic pace suits her quite well at the moment.

Sean was born in Baltimore and grew up on the East Coast; he attended Haverford College in Philadelphia and then completed a music fellowship in India before embarking on a somewhat circuitous but fulfilling career path. Along the way, he acquired an M.B.A. and now works in the interactive division at American Express, which handles “anything you can do on-line.” He’s been in New York since 1986.

Both Michelle and Sean have scholarly backgrounds in religion. Michelle studied literature and religion at the undergraduate level and has an M.T.S. from Duke Divinity School; Sean’s studies in southern India focused on the *veena*, a classical stringed instrument, and devotional music, which he says was “a wonderful way into the cul-

ture” given India’s thick religious texture.

Sean and Michelle joined Rutgers at last year’s Easter Vigil service, so they are coming up on their first anniversary of membership. They found their way to this church, just a few blocks from home, as they were planning to begin a family and build a community of support. Sean had his first turn as a lay reader earlier this month, and Michelle is looking forward to sharing her fundraising and marketing expertise at some point in the future. They seem quite relaxed as they anticipate the imminent arrival of their two children and are particularly excited about the unique relationship that will develop between the twins.

Adult Education Offerings for Spring 2004

Cheryl Pynch, Associate for Educational Ministries

Below are some of the classes and events we've planned for the spring. We'll keep you informed of other classes or forums as they materialize.

"Reflections on Jesus's Last Hours," Palm Sunday, April 4, at 9:45 am in the Session Room. Whether or not you've seen THE MOVIE, this is a chance to meditate on the last hours of Christ accompanied by scripture, prayer and community. In the events before and during the crucifixion, was there some special secret to explain Jesus' bravery and calm amid the disappointments, the physical and spiritual suffering and the desolation which he experienced? It is not enough to say he was divine; at this point he was in certain ways most human – witness, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" We shall try to discuss this rev-

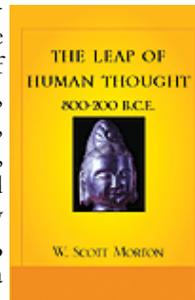
erently. Led by Dr. Scott Morton.

"Old Testament Prophets in New York City," Monday evenings, May 3, 10 17, and 24 at 7:00 pm in the Session Room. Dr. Shafer will lead this study of the role of prophets in ancient Israel and of the meaning of their words both for their own time and for ours. Particular attention will be paid to the prophets Amos, Hosea, Micah, Isaiah and Jeremiah. Class members will be asked to identify contemporary prophetic voices in the world and to discuss the prophetic role Christian churches should now be playing.

This course is being offered here at Rutgers through the Center for Christian Studies of Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church; it requires advance registration with a \$15 fee. Brochures are available at Rutgers or online at www.christianstudies.org.

"The Leap of Human Thought, 800-200 BCE," Sundays, May 2 and May 9, 9:45 am in the Session Room.

An introduction to the thought of Zoroaster, the Buddha, Confucius, Lao-Tze and the Hebrew prophets, based on a recently published book of the same title by Dr. Scott Morton. For those of us who remember falling asleep over our introductory philosophy textbooks, this is different: the truths of these great thinkers are conveyed in the conversation between a young man and his learned uncle, told in Scott's clear, accessible, and elegant style. No prior knowledge of these ancient thinkers is as-



sumed and all questions are welcome. Led by Dr. Morton (see below).

We strongly suggest you read the book before coming to class. The book may be ordered from Xlibris at this website address: www.xlibris.com/LeapofHumanThoughtThe.html. If you have any trouble ordering the book, or if you're not on the web (it is available only through the site and printed to order), please call Cheryl Pynch at x205.

"Sophia and Wisdom Christology," Sundays, June 6 and 13, 9:30 am in the Session Room (note earlier time), led by Dr. Shafer. Wisdom, or Sophia, is spoken of in the Bible as a feminine personification of God, and the gospels refer to Jesus as the Wisdom of God. An exploration both of Jesus as the prophet and embodiment of this feminine image of God and of the importance of this image for contemporary Christian thought and interreligious dialogue.

"Eyewitness Report from Iraq," Sunday, June 20, 9:45 am in the Session Room. Mel Lehman, journalist and former Director of Constituency Information for the Church World Service, has traveled to Iraq many times over the past 13 years. He is planning a trip with a group of medical personnel in May and will report to us on what he has seen and heard. Mel will also give the Moment for Mission on that day. Sponsored by the Peace and Social Justice Network.

What Do You Think?

1. Have you recently seen some classmates or old friends and wondered if you look as old to them as they look to you?
2. What difference does it make to shake before you drink?
3. Who couldn't believe in the Bible when it comes to tax season?
4. Have you ever been included in a story or an event in which you don't remember participating?
5. There's no such thing as "getting away with something" as long as you have a conscience.
6. Why do you let people who have no respect for your time continue to control your time?
7. Is having an expensive lifestyle worth the price you pay?
8. You can never control how a person perceives you.
9. Why do friends or acquaintances tell you all their problems and then run out of time to listen to yours?
10. Living a truly simple life is being able to relocate at a moment's notice.

~Til next time, JMC

Holy Week at a Glance

Palm Sunday, April 4, 2004

- 9:45 am** **Adult Class:** Reflection on the Last Hours of Jesus with Dr. Scott Morton (see p. 5)
- 10:45 am** **Procession on Broadway with Palms**
- 11:00 am** **Morning Worship**

Maundy Thursday, April 8, 2004

- 7:00 pm** **Service of the Last Supper and Tenebrae:** In addition to Holy Communion and foot-washing, this lovely service of shadows will feature solos by Albert Williams, *bass*, and Elder Jacquelyn Carpenter, *soprano*.

Good Friday, April 9, 2004

- 12:00 pm - 2:30 pm** **The Seven Last Sayings of Jesus:** A Service of Prayer, Song, Scripture and Meditation. This will be a joint observance of Good Friday with three other West Side congregations, plus special music from the choir and partially restored organ. Come when you can; leave when you must!

The Vigil of Easter, April 10, 2004

- 7:00 pm** **A Service of Light, Scripture, and Baptismal Renewal.** This evening we will also be celebrating several baptisms and receiving new members. *Bring a bell!*

Easter Sunday, April 11, 2004

- 9:00 am** **Brief Service of Communion** at the Church Entrance
- 9:30 am** **Complimentary Easter Breakfast** on the Fifth Floor: Please sign up on the bulletin board in the entry of the Church House, or call the church office.
- 11:00 am** **Principal Service of Morning Worship** with Holy Communion

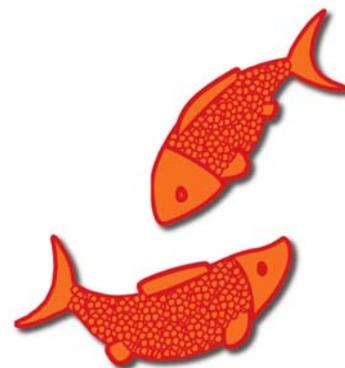
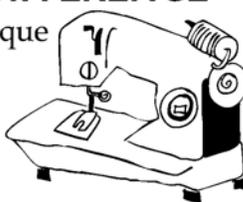
The One Great Hour of Sharing offering will be collected during the Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday Services.

DOLLARS DO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

For people in war-torn Mozambique trading guns for tools:

- \$350 Sewing machine
- \$95 Bicycle
- \$50 Farm tools

**One
great hour
of sharing**



Child care will be provided for all of the worship services during Holy Week.

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Hayden Coudal-Jones
- 2 Lily and Trey Santiago
- 3 Laurel Brevoort
- 4 Mary Beth Coudal
- 5 Massimo Maglione
- 6 Muriel Knight
- 7 Robert Chang
- 9 Sean Nelson
- 10 Joan Keener
- 14 Bob Shelton
- 16 Gladys Morris
- 18 Cherise Ou Yang
- 19 Nicholas Diaz
- 20 Bronwyn Thomas
- 23 Sophia Graham-Kay,
Samuel Reggio
- 27 Charles Platt

Serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.
—1 Peter 4:10b

Women grow up to 90 percent of all food for home consumption in developing countries. They produce half the world's food, but own only 1 percent of its farmland.

One great hour of sharing

April 2004

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 6:00 pm Senior Meal Program 7:00 Movie Series Every Thursday	2 10:30 am Mothers' Bible Study	3 All Day The organ's being tuned! 1:30 pm Opera Rehearsal
Men's Overnight Shelter Program: 6:30 pm, seven days a week						
4 Palm Sunday; 9:45 am Adult Class: Reflection on the Last Hours of Jesus 10:45 am Procession on Broadway w/ Palms 12:45 pm Deacons Meeting	5 2:30 pm Worship Committee Meeting 6:00 pm Scout Meeting Every Mon./Tues. 7:00 pm Benevolence Committee Mtg.	6 8:00 am The elevator is being repaired today. 6:00 pm Men's Support Group (PLWA/HIV) Every Tuesday	7	8 Maundy Thursday; 6:00 pm Special Session Meeting 7:00 pm Service of the Last Supper and Tenebrae NO MOVIE	9 Good Friday; 12:00 pm The Seven Last Sayings of Jesus	10 The Vigil of Easter; 7:00 pm Service of Light, Scripture, Baptism & Baptismal Renewal, plus Reception of New Members
11 Easter Sunday; 9:00 am Brief Communion on church steps 9:30 am Easter Breakfast	12 Easter Monday Church and office buildings closed.	13	14	15	16 10:30 am Mothers' Bible Study Every Friday	17 1:30 pm Opera Rehearsal
18 12:45 pm Peace & Social Justice Network	19 6:30 pm Christian Education Committee Mtg.	20 6:30 pm Session Meeting	21	22	23 6:30 pm Rutgers staffs the shelter Every Friday	24 1:30 pm Opera Rehearsal
25	26	27	28	29	30	

Sunday Worship Schedule

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

Sunday School for Adults at 9:45 am — Infant and Child Care from 9:30 am — Sunday School (ages 3-10) at 11:15 am

Adult Choir Rehearsals at 10:00 am and 12:30 pm—Children's Choir Rehearsal at 10:15 am

- April 4—Palm Sunday; The Reverend Dr. Byron E. Shafer preaching
- April 11—Easter Sunday; Holy Communion; The Reverend Dr. Byron E. Shafer preaching
- April 18—Second Sunday of Easter; Elder Cheryl Pynch preaching
- April 25—Third Sunday of Easter; Celebration of Earth Day; The Sacrament of Baptism; The Reverend Dr. Byron E. Shafer preaching

May 2004

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2 9:45 am Adult Class: The Leap of Human Thought 12:45 pm Deacons Meeting 2:30 pm Shelter Benefit: An Anthology of Opera	3 2:30 pm Worship Committee Meeting 7:00 pm Adult Class: Old Testament Prophets in NYC	4 6:00 pm Men's Support Group (PLWA/ HIV) Every Tuesday; Scout Meeting Every Mon./Tues.	5	6 6:00 pm Senior Meal Program 7:00 Movie Series Every Thursday	7 10:30 am Mothers' Bible Study Every Friday	1/8 1:00 pm Dress Rehearsal for Opera (May 1)
9 9:45 am Adult Class: The Leap of Human Thought 12:45 pm Peace & Social Justice Network	10 7:00 pm Adult Class: Prophets	11 6:30 pm Session Meeting	12	13 12:00 pm Noon Concert: The Golden Fleece	14 6:30 pm Rutgers volunteers staff the shelter Every Friday	15
16	17 7:00 pm Adult Class: Prophets	18 7:00 pm Body & Spirit Musical Theatre Performance	19	20 12:00 pm Noon Concert: Ladie Whitaker & Alburtt Rhodes	21	22
23	24 7:00 pm Adult Class: Prophets	25	26	27 12:00 pm Noon Concert: Highlights from <i>Cavalleria Rusticana</i>	28	29 The Society for the Advancement of Judaism (SAJ) begins worship- ping at Rutgers.
30 Pentecost	31 Memorial Day					

Men's Overnight Shelter Program:
6:30 pm, seven days a week

Sunday Worship Schedule

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

Sunday School for Adults at 9:45 am — Infant and Child Care from 9:30 am — Sunday School (ages 3-10) at 11:15 am

Adult Choir Rehearsals at 10:00 am and 12:30 pm—Children's Choir Rehearsal at 10:15 am

- May 2—Fourth Sunday of Easter; Elder Mieke Vandersall of Presbyterian Welcome preaching
- May 9—Mother's Day; Fifth Sunday of Easter; Holy Communion; The Reverend Dr. Byron E. Shafer preaching
 - May 16—Sixth Sunday of Easter; The Reverend Dr. Byron E. Shafer preaching
 - May 23—Seventh Sunday of Easter; The Reverend Laura R. Jervis preaching
- May 30—Pentecost; Holy Communion; The Reverend Dr. Byron E. Shafer preaching

Summer Kids at Rutgers Church

We are now accepting registrations for the kids' summer sessions of **Child's Play** and the **Body & Spirit Program**.

The Child's Play summer session will begin on June 7 and continue through August 13. Brochures will be available soon, or call Holly Nedelka for more information.

Body & Spirit classes will meet from June 7 through July 30. New this year, we are offering one- and two-day drop-off specials with the opportunity to register your pre-school child for back-to-back classes. In addition to our well-established art, music, and movement classes, this drop-off program will include a Science Discoveries

class, which will explore butterflies, bugs, volcanoes and more. Check out the offerings on our web site, or pick up a brochure in the Church House entry hall.

And save the date! This year's **Vacation Bible School** will take place from August 23 through 27. Look for more information later in the spring.

Beginning in May, the Society for the Advancement of Judaism will be worshipping at Rutgers on Saturday mornings while their synagogue is being renovated.



Music from Rutgers proudly presents
A Benefit for the Christopher Roberts Memorial Shelter for the Homeless at Rutgers

An Anthology of Opera
 Opera Highlights from the Music of the Masters
Sunday, May 2, 2004 at 2:30 pm

EXCERPTS FROM

Charles Gounod's
"Faust"

✦

Kurt Weill's
"Down in the Valley"

Giuseppe Verdi's
"Rigoletto"

✦

CARL MARIA VON WEBER'S
"Oberon"

Donation:
\$15.00 [tax-deductible]
Tickets:
212-877-8227

R. Wellington Jones, Pianist and Director
 Nick Fox, Conductor /Accompanist; Alburtt Rhodes, Choral Preparation
 Ms. Lynne Morris, Dr. Vera Roberts, The Rev. Charles A. Amstein, Narrators

C. Virginia Fields, Borough President of Manhattan,
 Special Guest Narrator



Spring Noon-Day Concert Series

Come join us for free concerts in the sanctuary, Thursdays at 12:00 pm:

May 13, 2004

The Golden Fleece, Ms. Lou Rodgers, *director*, in a program of musical comedy and theater selections.

May 20, 2004

Ladie Whitaker and Alburtt Rhodes present a selection of Broadway, classical, and opera songs, and spirituals.

May 27, 2004

Highlights from the opera *Cavalleria Rusticana* by Mascagni. Featured performers are Salvatore Motiti, *tenor*, Paula K. Poulafearh, *soprano*, and Bob Wilson, *accompanist*.

June 3, 2004

Director Stephen Whitley and the P.S. 161 Region 9 Chorus, Colleen Kennedy, *soprano*, and Anna-Marie Mackie, *soprano*, in varied program of music.

MAY BIRTHDAYS

9 Sabine Slaymaker

10 Juliet Pritner

15 Cliff Fisher

17 Beverly Thompson

19 Rashid Fawwaz

21 Nora Lidell

30 Elinor Bowles, David Hill,

Ruth Munson

31 Cynthia Gale

What Happened at Session?

Elder Christine Gorman, Clerk of Session

Here are some highlights from the regularly scheduled Session meeting of **February 1, 2004**. This was a joint meeting with the Board of Deacons. You can always get the full Session minutes by sending an email to Jennifer Hanson (jhanson@rutgerschurch.com).

1. The Session interviewed the newly elected officers to the Session and Board of Deacons. After due examination, a motion carried that we ordain and install those elected at the congregational meeting in January.

2. Cheryl Pynch, Jeremiah Rosario, Chris Jones and Christine Gorman presented a skit on the lighter side of pledging that was met with general amusement. They played the following characters made famous in literature, television, and newspaper comic strips: Calvin and Hobbes, Steve Allen, Ebenezer Scrooge, and Miss Emily Latella. Cheryl Pynch then passed out a proposal, which

was requested at the January Session meeting, for an educational program on pledging for the Deacons, Session, and Trustees.

3. Mark Young, as moderator of the Board of Deacons, reported on the activities of the Deacons in the past year.

A. Deacons this year started a card ministry, writing cards to those who have been sick, homebound or in special need and met with the Reverend Jim Ellis about setting up a caring ministry. They are also exploring setting up a telephone or e-mail tree to reach out to members and friends in need. Regular duties included serving coffee, preparing the elements for Communion and serving the meal at the annual meeting. There is still a need for volunteers for the Thursday Nighters meal and movie program and for the shelter on Friday nights.

B. Dr. Shafer thanked Mark Young for the Deacons report and reiterated the need for volunteers at Thursday Nighters (both for preparing and serving the meal or hosting the movie afterwards) and for the Friday night shelter program.

4. The Session and Deacons discussed ways of keeping in closer contact with members, particularly those who may have not have been attending worship more recently. Susan Scherer, chair of the Membership Committee, talked about various possibilities for outreach. The subject of a pictorial directory also came up.

Here are some highlights from the regularly scheduled Session meeting of **March 9, 2004**.

1. The Session re-elected Christine Gorman as Clerk of Session, re-elected War-

wick Busfield as Church Treasurer and designated Renee Lord and Vera Roberts as representatives to the Presbytery of NYC.

2. A motion passed to concur in the Moderator's appointments of the committee chairs (see below) and program coordinators.

3. A motion passed to have envelopes for the Organ Capital Campaign available in the pews. A motion passed to approve in principle a concert series to raise money for the antiphonal organ and to designate a committee that will organize those concerts.

4. A motion passed to approve the baptisms of Aubrey Chang (daughter of Emily and Robert Chang), Natalie Georgia Graham-Kay (daughter of Bruce Graham and Valerie Kay), Natalie Wyatt (daughter of Joy and Graham Wyatt) and Jared and Matthew Gryte, sons of prospective member Debbie Gryte.

5. A motion passed to hold a special Session meeting on April 8 at 6 pm (before the Maundy Thursday service) to receive new members.

6. A motion passed to refer to the Christian Education Committee a proposal that we have more informal discussions in people's homes in which small groups could meet with the pastor about spiritual or religious questions.

7. A motion passed to approve the Ansonia's request for a block party on September 12, 2004.

8. We're in the process of signing a lease with Select Comfort, a mattress company, for the first floor of the building at 2091 Broadway.

The next regular meeting of the Session will be Tuesday, April 20 at 6:30 pm.

2004-2005 Committee Chairs

Benevolence Committee	Elder Charles Platt
Body & Spirit Program Steering Committee	Deacon Kim Hodges
Building Use Committee	Elder Richard Reece
Capital Campaign Committee for the Organ	Trustee Joy Wyatt
Christian Education Committee	Elder Chris Jones
Membership and Communications Committee	Elder Susan Scherer
Peace & Social Justice Network	Elder Suzanne Spears
Personnel Committee	Elder Dr. Vera Roberts
Special Events Committee	Trustee R. Wellington Jones
Stewardship Committee	Elder Robert Shelton
Worship Committee	Deacon Alice Hudson

Organ Photo Essay

On March 10, Rutgers hosted an open house for neighbors and members as the façade pipes were delivered and installed. Choir member Theodore White took these pictures of Southfield Organ Builders on the job:



As Phase One of the organ restoration comes to a close, the organ is scheduled to be tuned on Saturday, April 3.

Beginning on Good Friday, you'll be able to hear many new and restored pipes from the Great and Choir divisions, including our rare harp unit.

Phase Two will begin later this spring...

We are collecting a photographic diary of the project; please share any pictures you may have!



Dietary Genesis for the end of Lent

submitted by member Ed Alley (source unknown)

In the beginning, God covered the earth with broccoli and cauliflower and spinach, green and yellow and red vegetables of all kinds, so Man and Woman would live long and healthy lives.

Then using God's bountiful gifts, Satan created ice cream and doughnuts.

And Satan said, "You want hot fudge with that?" And Man said, "Yes!" and Woman said, "I'll have another with sprinkles." And lo they gained 10 pounds.

So God said, "Try my fresh green salad."

And Satan presented crumbled bleu cheese dressing and garlic toast on the side. And Man and Woman unfastened their belts following the repast.

God then said, "I have sent you heart healthy vegetable and olive oil in which to lightly sauté the wholesome vegetables."

And Satan brought forth deep-fried coconut shrimp, chicken-fried steak so big it needed its own platter and chocolate

cheesecake for dessert. And Man's glucose levels spiked through the roof.

God then brought forth running shoes so that humankind might lose those extra pounds.

And Satan came forth with a cable TV with remote control so Man would not have to toil changing the channels. And Man and Woman laughed and cried before the flickering light and started wearing stretch jogging suits.

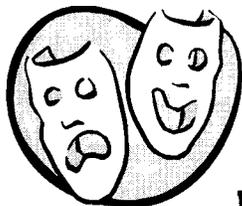
Then God brought forth lean meat so that Man might consume fewer calories and still satisfy his appetite.

And Satan created the 99-cent double cheeseburger, and said, "You want fries with that?" And Man replied, "Yes! And super size 'em!" And Man went into cardiac arrest.

God sighed and created quadruple bypass surgery.

And Satan created HMOs.

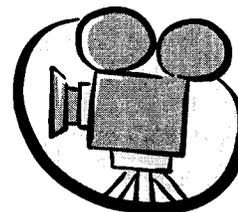
Spring 2004 Movies at Rutgers



Thursday Evenings at 7:00pm

sponsored by the Board of Deacons
Free Admission

Hosted by DR. ROGER FRANKLIN



April 15th • Daddy Day Care (2003) Color, 92 mins.

Eddie Murphy and Jeff Garlin star as stay-at-home fathers who open their own day care – with hilarious results!

April 22nd • Kangaroo Jack (2003) Color, 89 mins.

What happens when two guys (Jerry O'Connell and Anthony Anderson) jokingly dress a kangaroo with a jacket carrying \$50,000? The kangaroo hops off with their money, of course!

April 29th • Secondhand Lions (2003) Color, 110 mins.

Robert Duvall, Michael Caine and Haley Joel Osment star in this touching family comedy about a young boy who spends a summer with his eccentric great uncles.

1909 • KATHARINE HEPBURN REMEMBERED • 2003

May 6th • Adam's Rib (1949) B&W, 101 mins

Spencer Tracy and Katharine Hepburn as husband-and-wife lawyers on opposing sides of the same case, remind us of what movie magic is really about. George Cukor directs, with Judy Holliday, Tom Ewell, and David Wayne.

May 13th • The African Queen (1951) Color, 104 mins.

Filed in the African jungle by John Huston, a river trader (Humphrey Bogart) rescues an abandoned missionary (Hepburn) on his boat, the war-torn "African Queen." Their perilous escape turns into an entertaining mix of romance, comedy and adventure.

May 20th • Summertime (1955) Color, 98 mins.

Hepburn offers one of her best performances as a tourist who finds bittersweet romance in Venice. Touching, often funny and lushly photographed, Summertime comes close to capturing the essence of Venice. Rossano Brazzi co-stars.

May 27th • Rooster Cogburn (1975) Color, 107 mins.

A marshall (John Wayne) and a missionary (Katharine Hepburn) catch an outlaw gang in this comedy western.

Of Protests and Pie

At Rutgers Church, we celebrated Women's History Month in March. Deacon Mary Beth Coudal shared these thoughts on women in mission:



Striking garment workers in the 1920's. (<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/eleanor/>)

When the statue of Eleanor Roosevelt went up on the corner of 72nd and Riverside, I went to the dedication alone. I heard this story.

A mom was patiently explaining to her young daughter why Eleanor Roosevelt was important – “She fought for civil rights, she fought racism, she cared about international women and children when others didn’t.”

“I still don’t get it,” shrugged the little girl.

“Oh, for God’s sake, she was just a good, strong woman!” said the mom.

That’s how I feel about the women in mission and church women in general. For 200 years they have fought for the rights of women and children and have kept their churches going. Besides that, they’ve tried to nurture one another spiritually. They are good and strong, and they have done their work faithfully, quietly and effectively.

200 years ago, a handful of courageous church ladies in predecessor Presbyterian churches thought women should have influence outside their homes – a radical idea. I doubt

women would’ve won the right to vote, to be educated and to have access to health clinics around the world as early as they did if not for these women.

What started as a handful of little ladies who wanted to make the world a better place is a movement of millions of women connected to churches in the U.S. and around the world – women who want to make the world a better place. They have been in the forefront of many important movements: advocating for women in church leadership, for peace, and for justice issues like anti-sweatshop and anti-child labor campaigns.

The concept of mission has been transformed in the last 200 years. At first, church women’s primary focus was to send missionaries to places where male missionaries couldn’t or wouldn’t go, like to India in the late 1800s to start schools and hospitals. But lately, the concept of mission has evolved from being in “missions to” to being in “partnership with.” Instead of looking at a community’s needs, the focus is on a community’s assets.

But to me the best part of church women is their diversity. At Manhattan Neighborhood Network, when I was a producer, we always said our television crew was as diverse as any subway car. So are church women. And like the subway, we go places.

At this church, the Friday Morning Mothers’ Bible Study Group does more than gab about breastfeeding and preschool choices (although we do a lot of that). We also, thanks to Marisol Kaminski, participated in a “moms against guns” rally. To me, faith means community.

In 1995, after I went to the women’s conference in

China, I spoke to many women’s church groups. I believe church women instinctively understand and have a passion for international sisterhood.

As a New Yorker, in the tough days that followed 9/11, I drew on that international feeling of sisterhood that I experienced in Beijing to know that the world WAS definitely not a bad or fearful place, but rather a loving and activist place.

Last summer a friend of mine, Lindsay Pontius, did a performance art piece about frontierswomen at an Adirondack museum in upstate New York. At the end of the historical piece, Lindsay had all these women holding hands and almost hysterically running around in a circle proclaiming the names of every kind of pie you can think of.

Yes, pie is great. And like church women’s activism, pie first appeared on the American landscape in the early 19th century. Pie is like church women. Its power is underrated, it comes in many flavors, and it warms the soul. It tastes sweet and has been invented by good strong women from our heartland who, themselves, knew a lot about survival! But pie is not just for oneself. Women who make pie love to share it. And in feeding others, we are fed.

If you look around at church any given Sunday, you can see the daughters, granddaughters and great granddaughters of ordinary church women who, like Eleanor Roosevelt, have done extraordinary things, and they are making a difference every day.

Rutgers Presbyterian Church

236 West 73rd Street
New York, NY 10023

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



The Family Retreat: Fellowship, Prayer, Learning and Fun

by Cheryl Pyrch

On March 5 and 6, thirteen children and nineteen adults gathered for a retreat at the Presbyterian Center in Stony Point, New York. Worried about the weather – the forecast was for heavy and uninterrupted rain – we packed suitcases full of board games and toys. However, the misty, warm and (eventually) sunny weather allowed for labyrinth walks, soccer games, relay races and short hikes. In between making new friends on the playground and enjoying kid-friendly meals of French toast, fried chicken and shepherd's pie, we talked, heard Bible stories, and played Scrabble.

The adults had time together to discuss the spirituality of parenthood with the retreat leaders, the Reverends Thea Crites and Lew Johnson. It was a chance to learn about the different stages of faith development, but more importantly, people were able to share the joys (and stresses) of parenting children in faith.

The children, led by Holly Nedelka, Pat Wright and Cheryl Pyrch, learned two stories about "Picnicking with Jesus" (John 6:1-14 and John 21: 1-14). The children made large, painted and stuffed fish to remind us of the abundance of food and love when Jesus is near.

The retreat ended with a time of sharing and worship with Holy Communion, led by Cheryl Pyrch and the Reverend Kate Dunn.

Special thanks to Harold Manners, former Greyhound bus driver, who got so many of us there and back safely in our (temporarily rented) "Rutgers Church Van!"