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RUTGERS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Renewal

What Do You Think?

1. How long does it take you to rationalize an excuse?
2. Do you tell yourself no all the time?
3. How hard is it not to take an interest in people you associate with on a regular basis who are depressing?
4. Are you amazed at the detailed memories of the elderly?
5. How many times have you stopped your own growth?
6. Is being comfortable with someone the same as being in love with them?
7. When was the last time you got out of your comfort zone and did something exciting?
8. What keeps you grounded in rough times?
9. Look in the mirror and give yourself a pep talk.
10. What words of encouragement can you use to convince a person to continue living when they've made up their mind to die?

'Til next time,
Jacquelyn M. Carpenter

A Moment for Mission

continued from page 5

for world-redemption. And the torture failed—spectacularly. So that the very definition of “prophet” is one who speaks the truth to violent powers; and the very instrument of Jesus’ torture became the symbol of our redemption. I’m talking about the Cross.

When your government, in your name, with your resources, tortures an allegedly threatening prisoner, as the Roman government did to the men on either side of Jesus at Calvary, you, as his follower, are to imagine your government crucifying him with Jesus.

We torture because we are afraid. You, as a Christian, are commanded to “be not afraid.” We torture in the hope of national Security. You as a Christian are taught that “nothing . . . nothing can separate us from the love of God.” When Jesus entered Jerusalem a week before Easter, he was hailed a David, come again—David, who achieved the throne by insurrection, who was his peoples’ most celebrated military savior, who slaughtered Goliaths, sexual rivals, multitudes of enemies, even his rebellious son, Absalom. Jesus was no David. Jesus took as his ideal the Suffering Servant of Isaiah’s poetry, “despised and rejected, a man of sorrows . . . by whose stripes (from state torture) we are healed.

When the state arrested Jesus, Peter, soon to be the head of the church, drew his sword and lanced the lead soldier. But Jesus healed the soldier, and said to the head of the church, “Put up your sword, Peter. Whoever lives by the sword will die by the sword.”

Nearly everybody says that the ultimate power is the power to inflict pain and death. It is the prophetic, Christian witness that, no, the far greater, world-transforming power, is the power to suffer pain and death, and, nonetheless, to love. ω

From the Interim Pastor The Reverend David D. Prince

Memorial Day weekend marked the unofficial beginning of summer in New York City. At Rutgers Presbyterian Church we continue to hold our Sunday worship service at 11 a.m. as usual. Our choir will strengthen the congregation’s singing of hymns and responses and proclaim the truth of our faith in anthems through June. In July and August our outstanding soloists will replace the choir’s leadership while George Davey will support congregation and soloists most Sundays, providing substitutes when on vacation. I express my gratitude for the way George Davey and our other wonderful musicians inspire us and support us in our praise of God.

The current global financial crisis is affecting some of our members through loss of employment and/or decrease in income. We hold them in our prayers as well as people around the world who face daily uncertainty and need. On Sunday, June 14, the session and I will present an update on the church’s 2009 budget in the Fellowship Hall after the morning worship service. There will be opportunity for asking questions about our projections for income and expenditures for the rest of 2009.

My perception at this point in my interim ministry here is that the congregation is strong and growing, with new people attending worship just about every Sunday. Most of our new at-

tenders are toward the younger end of the age spectrum, a hopeful sign regarding the future of this vital church. I appreciate all the people who make up our congregational family—from youngest to oldest. Our worshipping congregation includes two hundred-year-olds and a few more in their nineties. We are blessed to have such a wide range of age groups in our diverse and inclusive faith community.

The Pastoral Nominating Committee reported to the session at its May meeting that they are hard at work narrowing down the pool of candidates for the position of installed pastor at Rutgers Presbyterian Church. While it is not yet possible to fix a date for the end of my service as your interim pastor, it looks as though I will be here well into the fall. Please remember that I cannot and will not be the next installed pastor here (the session, presbytery, and I agreed on that when I came in 2006). I continue to enjoy my time with you and expect to do so until I leave. I know, and I trust all of you know, that life consists of comings and goings and that God is with us in all the changes we experience.

I hope you have a refreshing spring season, and I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at our Sunday services and other gatherings.

Dave Prince

Music From Rutgers

By Roger Franklin, Ph. D., Music Critic

On Sunday, May 3rd, **MUSIC FROM RUTGERS** proudly presented *A Musical Anthology*, the annual benefit concert for The Christopher Roberts Homeless Shelter here at Rutgers Presbyterian Church, staged by Rutgers own producer / director / choreographer / pianist R. Wellington Jones. This concert was dedicated to Ms. Mildred Sutherland, a community organizer, who was formerly honored later in the program. The Reverend David D. Prince, Rutgers’ Interim Pastor, opened this afternoon’s Gala Benefit Concert with a warm welcome to a sold out audience.

The program got under way with three keyboard selections from Johannes Brahms’s *Vier Kravierstücke*, Intermezzo, Op. 119, No. 1 & 2, plus *Sechs Kravierstücke*, Intermezzo, Op. 118, No. 1, played without interruption by Mr. Jones, with

depth, sensitivity, and understanding.

Today, whenever we think of Verdi’s *Aida*, we sometimes see it as a theatrical spectacle with hordes of spear-carrying supers. However, at the Sunday matinee at Rutgers, Mr. Jones focused his attention on its main romantic triangle—Aïda – Radamès – Amneris—conceiving the work as an intimate opera.

Giuseppe Verdi’s *Aïda*

Act III, scene 1 (“Nile scene”)

From Rutgers darkened sanctuary, voices were heard softly chanting, as they enter into the Temple of Isis with the High Priestess (**Cynthia E. Burke**), Amneris (**Ladie Whitaker**) and the High Priest Ramfis (**Arthur “Jerry” Weiss**).

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Music From Rutgers

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On the banks of the Nile. Aida (Anna Marie Mackey), torn between her love of Radamès and memories of her native land she will never see again, expressed in song: “O patria mia, mia, mia piu rivedro!”

Ms. Mackey scored again this season, exhibiting her exquisite top dramatic soprano voice to her lower silvery pianissimo. Brava!

Expecting to see Radamès, Aida was startled to behold her father, Amonasro, King of Ethiopia, before whom he demanded that she disclose the Secret Routes by which the Egyptian army will pass. When Aida refuses, Amonasro reacted vehemently, denouncing his daughter as “The Whore of Babylon!”

This duet of Aida and Amonasro is in the line of Verdi’s most famous “Father/Daughter” duets. Its dramatic effectiveness is enormous and nowhere is there a better example of his skill in advancing the drama in purely musical terms. **Francisco Perez-Abreu** (Amonasro) had no problem projecting his stirring Verdi baritone, singing in the bravura Italian tradition.

As Radamès approached, Amonasro hid behind a rock, where he could hear every word spoken. When asked by what route they could escape without fear of capture, Radamès reveals that the only way was through the “Gorges of Napata.”

Salvatore Motisi (Radamès), a well-known tenor, has sung major verismo roles in the Italian repertoire, including Otello, Manrico, Cavaradossi and Turiddu. He has performed with the late Anna Moffo and Birgitt Nillson.

Having overheard the secret plan, Amonasro comes out from hiding, revealing his identity. Radamès is horrified that he has betrayed his country. Amneris and the High Priest have overheard everything. Act III ends as voices from the temple shout: “Traitor!”

Following a brief intermission, the Benefit Concert continued, with two artists: tenor **Edward Bruce Stevenson** and soprano **Barbara Bliss**, both of whom were favorites from last year’s concert.

Mr. Stevenson sang two of the

tenor arias from Giacomo Puccini’s *Tosca*. The first being *Recondita Armonia*, where the artist compares his painting of Mary Magdalene in Rome’s church of Sant’Andrea della Valle with the features of Flora Tosca, the woman he loves. The second: *E lucevan le stelle*, (“When the Stars Were Brightly Shining”), with memories of Tosca, the dawn before his execution by a firing squad in castle Sant’Angelo.

Barbara Bliss selected *Lisa’s Arioso: T’will soon be midnight* from Tchaikovsky’s *Pique Dame* (Queen of Spades) and Franz Liszt’s *Oh! Quand je dors!*

For a change of pace, Mr. Stevenson sang: *Bring Him Home* (Jean Valjean’s Prayer) from Broadway’s musical *Les Misérables*.

Our charming couple concluded their section with a medley from the Jerome Kern/Oscar Hammerstein II’s 1927 classic *Show Boat: Make Believe, Why Do I Love You?* and *You Are Love*.

Both were appealing, visually attractive and vocally sound; Ms. Bliss, using her lovely lyric soprano sensitively with impeccable sense of style and Mr. Stevenson, matching her with his warm, well-focused tenor, particularly in his dramatic *Les Misérables* prayer. Even in the ambience of the church sanctuary, there was an intimate feeling of a cabaret, or supper club, like the *Regency*.

And now, Rutgers Interim Pastor, the Reverend David D. Prince introduced the Honorable Robert Jackson, member of the New York City Council, 7th District, who was the Guest Narrator for the pièce de résistance of the afternoon; Giuseppe Verdi’s *La Traviata* after Alexandre Dumas’ play *La dame aux Camélias*.

Giuseppe Verdi’s

La Traviata, Act I

It is Paris, 1853, in the salon of the Courtesan Violetta Valéry. As the lights come up, the entire cast begins Verdi’s spirited drinking song: the *Libiamo, a Brindisi* for Alfredo, Violetta and Chorus: “Let’s quaff from the wine-cup o’er following.” Music is heard from an adjoining salon to which the guests proceed.

Violetta is about to follow them, but is seized by a coughing spell and sinks upon a sofa to recover. Alfredo has remained behind. When asked why? he admits his love to her. Violetta slowly realizes that his depth of affection for her is real. For over a year he has loved her . . . *Un di felice esteria*, (“One day, a rapture ethereal”) he sings. The party breaks up, the guests leave.

Alone, her heart touched for the first time, she sings: *An fors’è lui che l’anima* (“For him, perchance, my longing soul”). And suddenly, she changes as if there were no hope of lasting love for a woman of her character and dashes into the brilliant *Sempre Libera* (“Ever free shall I be”), as Alfredo’s voice is heard singing outside her window *Di quell’ Amor*.

R. Wellington Jones assembled a First Rate cast of singing actors under his spirited direction, soprano **Roza Tulaganova** (Violetta) gave a stand out performance in the title role, using her lovely, clear-focused voice with intelligence and superb musicality. Her sensitive phrasing and innate dramatic ability were a plus. Ms. Tulaganova is a doctoral candidate at Stony Brook, New York.

Hector Palacio (Alfredo) also was in splendid vocal form Sunday’s matinee, scoring heavily with his lyric tenor voice and effortless top. He has starred in a wide range of lead tenor roles including Cavaradossi in *Tosca* and Pinkerton in *Madame Butterfly*. His “leading man look” is certainly a plus!

Conductor/pianist **Nicholas Fox** showed technical knowledge and outstanding musicianship over the months of preparation as music director. Mr. Fox began studying piano and composition at the age of 12 in Los Angeles and is a graduate of Mannes College of Music, class of 2006.

Rutgers’ Annual Opera Benefit for the Christopher Roberts Memorial Shelter will be re-broadcast in 5 consecutive 1/2 hour segment beginning Wednesdays, September 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30, at 1 p.m. on Time Warner Cable Channel 57 and on RCN Channel 85. (Please check with your local cable provider.) ω

A Report from the Benevolence Committee: The Brotherhood—SisterSol

By Richard Reece

Over the past year the Benevolence Committee has been including articles in the Rutgers Newsletter with the intention of keeping the Rutgers Community informed about the organizations we contribute to throughout the year. Since May 14, 2009 was the Annual Benefit for **The Brotherhood/Sister Sol**, I have chosen this organization for this month’s report.

“**The Brotherhood** was founded in 1994 in Providence, Rhode Island by students at Brown University and in 1995 moved to New York City. The organization expanded in 1998 to include young women and was renamed **The Brotherhood/Sister Sol**. It is a Harlem-based organization with a mission to empower Black and Latino young women and men to develop into critical thinkers and community leaders. The Brotherhood/Sister Sol offers a safe space full of resources and love for 250 Black and Latino youth to speak their minds, acquire knowledge and skills, explore their identity and beliefs, and receive support to make their dreams reality.” The core program on which the organization was founded is **The Brotherhood/Sister Sol Rites of Passage**. The goal is to empower youth through discovery and discussion of history, culture, social problems, and political forces surrounding them.

The Objectives for the program are for the participants to:

- Become independent and resourceful;
- Strive for their highest personal potential;
- Develop leadership skills and a sense of community responsibility;

Word of Mouth



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E-mail: jmcarpenternyc@aol.com

*Free consultation

A Moment for Mission given on Sunday, May 31, 2009

By the Reverend Dr. George Williamson

Good Morning. A word from the Peace & Social Justice Network regarding the torture issue. Our “No To Torture” banner will go up this week, and stay up for the entire month of June, along with the other churches, synagogues and mosques in the National Religious Coalition Against Torture, we’ll be giving this matter special attention.

It is argued that state sponsored torture doesn’t work, that it is in fatal contradiction to core American values. But here’s another word.

- Demonstrate knowledge of our curriculum issues and the world;
- Build self-esteem, confidence, and self-respect;
- Explore beyond their comfort zone and challenge themselves;
- Embrace the ideals of brotherhood and sisterhood; and
- Discover their individual, creative voices.

The Brotherhood/Sister Sol is not simply an organization; more accurately, it’s a way of life. Providing youth with an opportunity to explore their ideas, identity and future among peers, with the support and guidance of their immediate elders, is a natural method of promoting positive development into adulthood.

If you would like to know more about The Brotherhood/Sister Sol, or make a contribution, you can visit their website at www.brotherhood-sistersol.org.

Benevolence Mission Statement

As imperfect witnesses to God’s wildly inclusive love, we gratefully pledge ourselves and our congregation’s resources to help make the world a better place for children, women and men who are poor, sick or marginalized and to extend the reality of peace with justice. ω

If you have something personal to advertise such as a lead

for employment or looking for employment, need a roommate to split rent or sublease,

have a performance coming up or trying to

sell/give away a pair of blue suede shoes, etc., submit your information to

jeremiah@rutgerschurch.com or call (212) 877-8227.

A recent Pew Research poll found that of the groups asked, the one least likely to reject torture on behalf of national security, were Christians; and that the more they went to church, the more they favored it.

The biblical tradition specifically employs state torture as the *chief symbol of evil*. The Hebrew prophets were tortured by the state, not to extract information but to silence their cry of justice. Jesus was tortured—to death—to prevent his movement

continued on back cover

June 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat																
	1 12:15 p.m. Al-Anon <i>Every Monday</i> 3:30 p.m. Worship Committee	2 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 <i>Every Tuesday</i>	3 6:00 p.m. AA Meeting Alateen Meeting <i>Every Wednesday</i>	4 6:00 p.m. Meal Program 7:00 p.m. Movie Series <i>Every Thursday</i>	5 10:30 a.m. Mothers' Bible Study 6:00 p.m. Men's Shelter <i>Every Friday</i> 6:30 p.m. S.K.A.T.E.	6 6:00 p.m. AA Meeting Men's Shelter <i>Every Saturday</i>																
7 Trinity Sunday 12:45 p.m. Board of Deacons Meeting 6:00 p.m. Men's Shelter <i>Every Sunday</i>	8	9 6:30 p.m. Session Meeting	10	<i>June Birthdays!</i> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>1 Edward Alley</td> <td>18 Sally & Amelia Suchanek</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2 Colin & Zachary Nelson</td> <td>19 Krista Olson</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4 Adele Ou Yang</td> <td>22 Anne Barstow</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5 Robin Berry</td> <td>24 Julia Spencer</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6 Muriel Knight</td> <td>26 Alan Robinson</td> </tr> <tr> <td>9 Kyle Okimoto</td> <td>27 Cullen Dunn-Ellis & Newt Pate</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15 Marion Towne</td> <td>29 Allison Okimoto & Benjamin Williamson</td> </tr> <tr> <td>16 Susan Poliacik</td> <td>30 Benjamin Shultz Greer</td> </tr> </table>			1 Edward Alley	18 Sally & Amelia Suchanek	2 Colin & Zachary Nelson	19 Krista Olson	4 Adele Ou Yang	22 Anne Barstow	5 Robin Berry	24 Julia Spencer	6 Muriel Knight	26 Alan Robinson	9 Kyle Okimoto	27 Cullen Dunn-Ellis & Newt Pate	15 Marion Towne	29 Allison Okimoto & Benjamin Williamson	16 Susan Poliacik	30 Benjamin Shultz Greer
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14 12:45 p.m. Congregational Forum	15	16	17																			
21 Father's Day and Youth Sunday	22	23 6:30 p.m. Christian Education Meeting	24																			

Preaching Schedule

June 7 ___ Trinity Sunday; David D. Prince preaching

June 14 ___ 11th Sunday in Ordinary Time; David D. Prince preaching

June 21 ___ Father's Day, Youth Sunday

June 28 ___ Gay Pride Sunday; David D. Prince preaching

<i>Sundays</i>	
9:45 a.m.	Adult Sunday School
10:00	Adult Choir Rehearsal
10:45	Infant & Child Care
11:00	Worship Service
11:15	Sunday School (ages 3-12)
12:15 p.m.	Coffee Hour
12:30	Choir Rehearsal
6:00	Men's Shelter

28
Gay Pride Sunday
9:30 a.m.
Board of Trustee Meeting

June 2009 at Rutgers Church, and Beyond

Adult Bible Class

Sunday, June 7, 14, and 21, 9:45 a.m., Session room

Join us for our last sessions before the summer break. We are continuing our study of Romans, Paul's letter to those who gathered in the house churches of Rome. This is a fascinating text that witnesses to the broader theme of God's righteousness towards us as well as to others such as the "big ideas" of sin, salvation, faith, justification and redemption. We invite you to come and participate in our lively discussion and study.

S.K.A.T.E. June event – End of the Year Picnic

Friday, June 5; 6:30 p.m., Rutgers roof

Come join the fun up on the roof! S.K.A.T.E. is having an end-of-the-school year picnic on the rooftop of Rutgers Presbyterian Church. Picnic fare, games, singing and having a great time are included. Bring a friend or two. We will end our evening in the candlelit sanctuary with prayers and song to send you off for a relaxing and renewing summer. RSVP Jacqui at the church office, (212) 877-8227 x 205 or e-mail your attendance and the number coming at jvanvliet@rutgerschurch.com.

Youth Sunday

Sunday, June 21; 11:00 a.m., Sanctuary

What a privilege it will be to have our youth help lead us in worship on this Lord's Day in Ordinary Time in the church season and on Father's Day. The primary text that day will be found in the gospel of Mark, chapter four, verses 35 - 41. The youth will also be singing a song during this special worship. Afterwards, a bake sale will be held to benefit the non-profit organization, Shoe4Africa, which is helping to raise funds for a children's hospital in Africa.

Sunday School 2009—2010: New! Workshop Rotational Model

One of the wonderful advantages of using a Workshop Rotation Model for Sunday School is that in order to function "it takes a village," so to speak, to make it work well. Rather than have a handful (or less) of individuals who become the perennial, Sunday School teachers in perpetuity, this Workshop Rotation Model paradigm explores ways to become aware, develop and utilize the gifts and passions of many people within a whole congregation. No longer does teacher recruitment become as focused on "slotting a warm body," but rather calls on individuals within a community to use their specific gifts and passions to meet the needs in this given area. The potential for a greater cross section of diversity within the congregation becomes possible in ways not thought of before.

The lessons will be taught through these gifts and passions. Think how the story of the last supper of Jesus and his disciples can come alive for children and youth if it is learned by baking bread or having a table fellowship meal as a person in the 1st century Greco-Roman world might do. Or think how the

Gay Pride Sunday

Sunday, June 28

Our observance of Gay Pride Sunday begins at 9:30 a.m. in the Session room with a conversation with a number of LGBT inquires and candidates as they share their experience, struggles and hopes for ordination in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). This will be followed in the worship service with a Moment for Mission by the Reverend Mieke Vandersall, Minister Director of Presbyterian Welcome, and chair, of the Presbytery of New York City's Committee on Preparation for Ministry. Following the worship service, those wishing to march in the Pride parade will assemble in the Daniel Russell room, then travel together to the staging area in mid-town off of Fifth Avenue. More information to follow.

Vacation Bible School

Monday - Friday, August 17 - 21, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon; Fellowship Hall

All children ages 4 - 11 are invited to Rutgers Presbyterian Church's Vacation Bible School where we will be focusing on the New Testament with our theme of "By the Sea: Stories of Jesus in Galilee." We will be learning some of the wonderful stories about Jesus that took place around the River Jordan and the Sea of Galilee. Our days will be filled with these great tales as well as crafts, songs and snacks. We may even go "fishing!" If you would like to help either by working directly with the children or helping to organize and prepare for each day, please talk to Jacqui at the church office, x 205. Please pass the word to friends and neighbors. The cost is \$25.00 per child for the entire week.

beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount might make sense to a 7th grader when the lyrics of the contemporary song by Ben Harper, *Blessed to be a Witness* is played and sung together.

Each lesson will be taught for 2-3 weeks in different modalities. It gives children a chance to learn in ways that may be more in tune with their own style of learning. Those teaching can sign up for one lesson, a bundle of 2-3 lessons or more if they choose. The flexibility gives those who want to teach a chance to teach and also to be in worship more often. There will also be a core team of leaders who stay with the children throughout the year to provide continuity.

Consider your gifts and passions. Do you enjoy singing, playing an instrument, acting, telling stories, painting, arts & crafts projects? That's just a quick list. There are certainly more gifts and talents in this community. Now's the time to bring your talent(s) to teaching in the Workshop Rotational Model Sunday School that will begin in the fall. Call Jacqui in the church office, x. 205 for more information. *ω*