Pentecost 2011
Volume 28, Issue 1

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

From the Pastor –
“Resurrecting Spiritual Piracy”

I n Sunday sermons, and in even greater depth in our Sunday morning bible classes, we have been engaging in cutting edge biblical theology. In the field of New Testament scholarship it has been called the “Third Quest for the Historical Jesus.” In the last decade or so biblical scholarship has substantially changed our understanding of Jesus and his time. It is an exiting time, because this scholarship supports the social stands of our congregation and can further integrate peace and social justice advocacy with our faith and the most recent theological scholarship. Even a common image of Jesus on a fishing boat can suddenly convey a quite radical subversive message.

Do you know, for instance, that there was a naval battle in ancient Galilee between Jews and Romans? Josephus Flavius reports this event in his book De bello Judaico [Jewish War III.10 (497-515)]. He describes how in the year 67 C.E. the Romans captured the fortified city of Tarichess (also known as Magdala). He relates how some of the Jewish resistance fighters escaped in boats on the Galilean lake and how the Romans chased them down the next day and defeated them in the first but last known Galilean naval battle. Josephus attributes the Roman victory to their superior ships, while the boats of the Jewish resistant fighters were, according to him, good only for piracy.

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Dr. Roger Franklin – By Nathan Matthews

R utgers Presbyterian Church mourns the loss of beloved Elder Roger Franklin, PhD, the Broadway veteran actor, singer and stage manager, opera director and author, died on May 23, 2011. He was 84 years old.

The muses of theater and music drew Roger to New York City in the early 1950s where he soon met Robert Bruce Holley, who became a Rutgers Church deacon and with whom he shared life for 35 years until Bob’s early death in 1998. They soon found Rutgers Church and sat in the far left pew that had legroom for the larger-than-life, 6’5” Bob, the pew where they first brought me to sit with them on January 1, 1978 and where Roger always sat.

Following in Bob’s footsteps at Santa as the South Street Seaport and one of few to earn a coveted five-candy-cane rating from “The New York Times,” Roger personalized Christmas for 22 years as the “Dean of New York Santas.”

In the mid-1950s Roger spent a day fielding calls from two Broadway titans. My Fair Lady’s director, Moss Hart, had decided that only Roger could do for an understudy to his star, Rex Harrison. But Mr. George Abbott, the ruling king of Broadway, wooed Roger onto his Damn Yankees team as the Coach in that show’s National Tour. He left the tour early to take over the role of Officer Krupke, the celebrated policeman, in the original production of West Side Story. Roger also appeared on Broadway in Canterbury.

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What Do You Think?

1. There isn’t a job beneath your qualifications if you’re borrowing money from family and friends to survive.
2. Is a baby pacifier more to comfort the parent or the child?
3. Do you ever have been in the middle of nothing?
4. What’s the difference between pride and bragging?
5. Are you living a complaint?
6. Why do neighbors decide not to be cordial?
7. Don’t let ageism take your confidence away.
8. Save some time, make a list of all the things your parents/guardians did wrong while raising you; then burn it.

“Til next time,
Jacquelyn M. Carpenter
pirates who robbed other impoverished fishermen and struggling merchants. Jesus was someone much more glorious and dangerous. At the same time, he was a preacher and healer with a message of intellectual, spiritual, gospel driven piracy, the most noble, gentlemanlike piracy. We still need to bond against the powers of destruction in the name of divine grace. On Sunday mornings in bible classes and in worship we continue in this subversive quest for justice, peace and healing.

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

Pastor Andrew

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Vacation Bible School 2011

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

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

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

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Dave Mammen began work at the Church on March 1. Renewal asked him how it is going. It is a challenging mix of responsibilities that are familiar to me from other jobs I’ve had (budgets, personnel, management issues) in a new setting. I’m really enjoying working with the dedicated staff and church elders. Everyone has been very welcoming, and I’m grateful for the opportunity.

Any surprises so far? The proposal to include the Church House and Sanctuary in an historic district was a surprise. I’ve spent quite a bit of time helping the Session and Trustees understand the implications of this proposal. It could have big implications for our future, so I’m glad I can be helpful.

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

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

What about your spare time? I like to cook, watch the Yankees, and read. And I’m hoping to start biking to work a few days a week, along the Hudson River greenway.

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

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

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

She's spent time working in a variety of denominations, including the historic Park Street Church on the Boston Common (Congregational), Chicago's Northwest Baptist, the non-denominational Grace Chapel in Lexington, Mass., and all the way out to Eden Prairie, Minnesota to the inter-denominational Wooddale Church. In all of those places she was heavily involved in educational ministries in many ways, including teaching (from nursery to grad school) and writing. I recommend you go to Amazon.com and enter her name - there are four books available, and the reviews alone will make it hard to decide which one to pick up first. My first choice may be "Postmodern Children's Ministry."

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

Ivy is delighted that Rutgers has welcomed her dog Lola as well. When asked what she likes about her new work environment, she points out that "at my last church I was in a windowless office – so I love all the natural light and the ability to look out on all the activity on Broadway. The neighborhood is so vibrant. It's great to have Riverside Park so close with the view of the Hudson River. One problem, though: It's too easy to run out and get something delicious to eat or a good coffee at Café Margot." She also praises the design of the 4th floor children's space.

Ivy looks forward to spending more time getting to know the congregation, especially our growing group of kids, from the littlest to the young adults in SKATE. As I write I'm getting ready for the first meeting of the Christian Education Committee with Ivy, and I know we all look forward to her tenure here with optimism and joy.
We have studied the relationship between archaeological discoveries and Biblical timelines—often they don’t match! We learned about the Jesus followers who were poor and often outcasts, and their comparison to the people in power, the Romans. Please bring your coffee and join us as we explore and expand our faith together.

Alice Hudson, Clerk of Session

The Giving Network

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

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

Joy Wyatt, Chair

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

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

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

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

Ivy, D.E.M.

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

Rev. Diana C. Austin, Parish Associate

Community Programs

PENTECOST 2011

June 2011

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat
5 6 7 8 9 10 11
7th Sunday of Easter 12:15 p.m. Al-Anon 10:00 a.m. Worship Committee
9:30 a.m. SKATE Group for Every Monday Group for %pers
Parents’ Meeting Group for Every Tuesday Unemployed
Adults Forum (through the Summer) Every Tuesday
9:45 a.m. Board of Deacons Meeting

Day of Pentecost 12:45 p.m.
Peace & Social Justice Meeting

Summer Community Programs - for Children & Adults of All Ages begin
(Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, June 15 through August 4)

19 20 21 22 23 24 25
Trinity Sunday 12:15 p.m. Al-Anon
12:30 p.m. Congregational Adult Forum on Landmarking
Men’s Support Group (RSVP)
Cub Scouts
6:00 p.m. Men’s Al-Anon

26 27 28 29
Gay Pride Sunday

Sundays

9:45 a.m. Adult Bible Class
10:00 Adult Choir Rehearsal
10:45 Infant & Child Care
11:00 Worship Service
11:15 Sunday School (ages 2-12)
12:15 Coffee Hour
12:30 Choir Rehearsal

Vacation Bible School “Tsare and See” August 15 - 19 & August 22 - 26 9 am to 12 pm

June 5 - 7th Sunday in Ordinary Time; Rev. Stehlik preaching
June 12 - Day of Pentecost; Rev. Stehlik preaching
June 19 - Trinity Sunday; Father’s Day, Rev. Stehlik preaching
June 26 - Gay Pride Sunday; Guest Preacher (Presbyterian Welcome)
July 3 - 4th of July Weekend; Rev. Amos preaching

Sunday

Preaching Schedule

Birthdays!

July 2011

5 Robin Berry
6 William Donnell, Bill
9 Kyle Okimoto
10 Kate Dunn
16 Susan Pollock
17 Krista Olson
19 Anne Burrows
21 Allison Okimoto
27 Cullen Dunn-Ellis & Nave Post

JUNE 2011

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