

Pastor's Corner

"Let us Resolve To...."

Pastor Tom Philipp



One of our members made the comment to me the other day: "I am wondering if our Congregation still has a mission!" I suppose I could have given a quick response such as: "If I didn't feel Old South Haven has a mission I wouldn't be here!" The comment, however, deserves a more well thought-out response. I am sure what was behind that comment was remembering the time when this Congregation was very present and very vocal in addressing issues (social, political, economic, theological) both locally and beyond, as well as, being involved in several significant outreach programs to the community. This Congregation was known for its voice within the community and in the Presbytery. Maybe those days are now long gone...or maybe not, just needing to be updated in terms of present circumstances. Or maybe today our major focus has been simply on surviving.

As I left the church member and was driving home I thought of two experiences involving other Presbyterian congregations. A number of years ago, when I was serving in northern New York, I was asked to lead a discussion with a small congregation in Fulton, NY regarding its future. At our first meeting I asked the folks who had gathered to give three reasons why that church should continue. The only answer given was: "We have always been here!" The second experience took place years later. I was reading the Clerk of Session's annual report for one of our small congregations on the Nassau/ Queens border. The Clerk's report consisted of just two sentences: "It was a good year. We survived."

I have been giving a lot of thought to this ever since the comment was made by the OSH member. In fact, I have even wrestled with it the middle of the night! What is the mission of Old South Haven Presbyterian Church in 2009 and beyond?

It is not as though we have not wrestled with this question before in my time as your pastor. In 2007 we conducted a Congregational Study in which responders could be quite specific, and, of the 22 responders many were quite specific. This was followed by the Session receiving at its retreat that year, a summary of those responses together with a report based on the 2000 census for Brookhaven, Bellport, East Patchogue, Shirley and Mastic. The report indicated some of the interests, concerns, and needs for

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MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Linda Scott

It is hard to believe all the festivities of the holiday season are behind us. Weeks of special services, fellowship, gatherings, gift giving and lots of decorations.

For me, January has always brought a mix of emotions as it may have for you. Part of me feels subdued and somewhat disappointed as Bill and I take down the tree. The stillness of the month makes me think "now what"? Tired as I may be, I feel as if I should still be on the go.

As I was reviewing the Newsletter today, the house was very quiet. Within a few minutes. I realized how peaceful and serene my surroundings were. It was a wonderful feeling.

The time of "stillness" is where we are meant to be. Each week during Advent and Christmas we lit a candle symbolizing Hope, Peace, Joy, Love and Grace. Let us take advantage of this quiet time for personal devotion and to pass along each of these in preparation of the Lenten Season, reflecting on the areas of great need locally and globally.

As I look ahead, God continues to call us as members of Old South Haven Church. Our numbers may be small, but I have and always will see strength beyond measure. Strength that comes from reaching beyond ourselves!

Thank you for all your contributions to the Old South Haven News and look forward to continuing our ministry in the New Year.



Immigration Reform

The United Methodist Church's General Board of Church and Society is calling on churches, synagogues, and mosques to join in a Prayer Vigil for Immigrant Families from February 13-16. More information will be forthcoming.

A group of clergy here on Long Island met the first week of January to formulate a statement addressing the act of violence that occurred in Patchogue and pledging to work together to not only address the issues of violence shown toward racial and ethnic minorities, particularly immigrants, but also to work with legislatures in the area of Immigration reform. If members of Old South Haven Church are interested in exploring this concern please speak to Pastor Tom.

Pastor's Corner

the population of this area. This was followed by a retreat in 2008 in which we tried to come up with a few specific programs or events that would be an outreach to the community.

Two events came as a result of the 2008 Session retreat: the program on Veterans Day and the Cecilia Brauer Concert, both taking place this past November. They were offered with the hope of drawing in the larger community. In each case a few "outsiders" did attend. Though we made our posters and bulletin inserts, and it appeared on our website and in e-mails, we did not get the media attention or the response from the community we had hoped. Another suggestion from the 2008 Session retreat will begin Thursday, January 29, when we launch a Book Study program with the New York Times bestseller: Wm. Paul Young's "The Shack." We hope this will have appeal for others besides our own church family. Then on Saturday, April 4 we will host the South Country Education Foundation's spring recital.

Yet this matter of "what is our mission" needs to be constantly before us. It needs to lead to specific programs and projects. For those programs and projects to take place we need individuals to take on the responsibility to see them through. Rather than "I think we could be doing such and such," we need to hear "I will take on the responsibility to check out the need and how it can be addressed and assist to make it happen."

I shared this concern with our Lunch Bunch at their last get-together and the women there were most helpful. Suggestions were made on what could be the next steps in dealing with this vital matter:

1. That this be the theme of my column in the January Newsletter.
2. That the Newsletter contains a list of our Pastor's mission opportunities, as a stimulus for others to share their own items.
3. That a major portion of time at our Annual Meeting (Sunday, Feb.8) be given to this matter. The Pastor's list, augmented with the contributions given by others prior to the meeting, be presented and the opportunity given for members to volunteer to take on at least one of these matters. The list will be mailed to members and others before the meeting so that those who are unable to attend can still respond. It is hoped that each member or participant in the life of OSHPC will find one or more items to research and develop.

I am most hopeful that this will not only stimulate new life in the Congregation but also be a significant witness to our community and beyond. I believe each participant in the life of this Congregation wishes to not only be nurtured (grow in understanding of the Faith and experience growth in their own personal spiritual life) but also find ways to SERVE. May God bless our endeavors.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Darcy Stevens

Sunday School

For the "second semester" in Sunday school we will go back to the Rotation Curriculum, with the theme "Listen, God is Calling". We will study some of the people Jesus met in his ministry. Presently we are studying Zacchaeus, the rich, short tax collector who climbed a tree to see Jesus as he entered Jericho. In the coming months we'll move along to Mary, Martha, and Nicodemus. We hope Jaylyn's friend Biba will continue to join us.

Sometimes the teacher learns the most.....

Book Discussion - The Shack

Several members have suggested that "The Shack" by William P. Young will spark lots of thought and theological discussion. It's available in paperback at Borders (take your coupon) or Costco and Amazon.com for approximately \$8. Since it tops the NY Times best seller list, surely there will be some around to borrow from the library or perhaps a friend. Hope you will join us and bring a friend. **Thursday, January 29th at 7:00pm.**



BOARD OF DEACONS

Kappy Tilney



Prior to Christmas, the Deacons had a busy time stuffing stockings, wrapping gifts and delivering them.

Christmas giving was expanded in 2008. In the past, the focus has been the stockings for the Brookhaven Town House in Brookhaven Hamlet. In addition to the stockings (182!), the Deacons "adopted" local family of five (2 adults and 3 children). A turkey with all the "fixins" was provided for the family and books, toys, games and clothes for the children. The Deacons also received a request for toys for three children in Brookhaven Hamlet. After speaking with their grandmother for some suggestions, personalized gifts were left at their home on December 23, 2008.

Many thanks to the many helping (and donating) hands that enabled the Deacons to increase Old South Haven's outreach.

Christmas cards and seasonal plants, wishing Christmas joy and peace, were mailed or delivered.

Food Shelf

As we begin a new year filled with personal resolutions, the Deacons are hopeful that Old South Haven members might resolve to increase their individual giving to the Food Shelf. Over the years, the number of food items that have been given has decreased. Hopefully, 2009 will see that trend reversed. We have traditionally collected items the first Sunday of the month, Communion Sunday. But they may be placed in the basket in the Narthex at any time.

EXPLORING MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

(Note: This list will be available at the Annual Meeting. Some of these items were presented to the Session at its 2008 Retreat).

Look at this list and consider checking one or more that YOU are willing to explore and work on in terms of need, feasibility, and how it might be addressed. Of course, we can't tackle all of this but hopefully you can find concerns that you want to work on and be part of.

1. What does it mean to be across the street from Bellport high School? Can a relationship be developed to the benefit of both our Church and the School? Explore specific areas for program development. Eg. A Peacemaking Essay Contest, space for tutoring, et.al

2. What can be our relationship to Brookhaven Town House and the Health facility on Beaver Dam Road? What kind of volunteers are necessary, what kind of programs might be helpful?

3. We presently collect food for a food pantry. Is it feasible to be more involved in soup kitchens, food pantries?

4. The Carriage House is now available for either groups or for our own programming weekday mornings. Are there particular seminars, programs or other activities that could benefit individuals with particular needs? Eg. Senior citizens, single parents.

5. We have stated that environmental/ecological concerns are a priority for us. We did some initial programming in this regard and took some steps to become more energy efficient. Where do we go from here? Future programs, future steps taken for our church life and individual lives.

6. Social and political issues. Which one(s) are YOU willing to work on? This may include formulating statements in support of a particular policy, legislation, etc.

- a. immigration
- b. hunger
- c. housing
- d. the Middle East
- e. same sex marriage legislation
- f. gun control
- g. fostering tolerance

- h. medical benefits (a national health plan)
- i. public education issues
- j. Caithness
- k. veterans concerns
- l. other

7. Offering music events to the community (money available to underwrite programs through the Kickerer Fund).

8. Making known the fact that we are a More Light congregation.

9. Art shows in the Gallery

10. Expand the Film program to the larger community.

11. A Speakers program with monthly forums on current events (may relate to item 6).

12. Expand our Yard Sales into 'country fairs' with music. Parking lot dancing and whatever!!!

13. Personal Service to those who need it: shopping, driving to appointments.

14. Ministry to Care Givers: stay with housebound individuals so that care givers can have some free time.

15. Develop a twinning program; a relationship with another congregation in the US or elsewhere for the purpose of learning about each other, maybe meeting particular needs.

16. Relationship with organizations involved in specific ministries: Thursday's Child, The Ministries. et al.

17. Developing closer relationships with other churches in our area, perhaps leading to some joint programming.

18. Relationship to various local organizations.

- a. South Country Peace Group
- b. Greater Bellport Coalition
- c. Boys and Girls Club
- d. Others:

19. Keeping the Community informed;

Developing a relationship with the Advance and other community publications so as to keep them informed of whom we are and what we are about.

Congregational Meeting

The Annual Congregational Meeting will take place after Sunday morning worship on February 8. The major part of the meeting will focus on the Opportunities for Mission in which members will be encouraged to consider giving their commitment and time and energy to one or more mission possibilities, reflecting their particular interest. These opportunities involve reaching out to the larger community in the name of Old South Church.



Music Department

"Thank You" Peggy for filling our Sanctuary with beautiful music during Christmas!

"Welcome Back" Danny and hope you had a wonderful time visiting family!

Violence in Gaza

The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church issued a statement calling for all violence to stop. The statement says (in part): "As followers of the Prince of Peace, who has shown us that true victory comes only through non-violent reconciliation, we yearn for an end to sixty years of conflict, violence, and oppression, all of which have left scars on all parties regardless of ethnic, religious, or political identification and have contributed to wider uncertainty about global peace. It will require not only our fervent prayers, but a renewed commitment to action so that when a cease-fire is achieved, it is followed by a new commitment by all parties to the rule of law as the only path to justice, security, and freedom for all." The statement called upon the United States, together with international partners, to work to bring about an immediate cease fire and for lifting the blockade of Gaza's borders.

(A Report from the Washington Office of the PCUSA)



Morning Worship Assignments

DATE	GREETER	LAY LEADER	COFFE HOUR
Jan 4	W. Scott	J.Neal	H. Altomare
Jan 11	S. Moran	S. Welgoss	L. Scott
Jan 18	Jaylyn/Jack	N. Best	A. Wiswall
Jan 25	J/E Morgan	S. Moran	P. Light
Feb 1	W. Scott	L. Majowka	L. Majowka
Feb 8	K. Barry	J. Barry	S. McKay
Feb 15	Jaylyn/Jack	K. Tilney	K. Tilney
Feb 22	J/E Morgan	F. Decker	G. Decker
Mar 1	W. Scott	L. Scott	C. Kellogg
Mar 8	S. Moran	D. Jones	D. Stevens
Mar 15	K. Tilney	J. Neal	N. Best
Mar 22	Jaylyn/Jack	S. Welgoss	L. Scott
Mar 29	J/E Morgan	N. Best	H. Altomare
Apr 5 Palm Sunday	W. Scott	S. Moran	P. Light
Apr 12 Easter	H. Altomare	J. Deitz	R. Thomas
Apr 19	K. Barry	J. Barry	K. Tilney
Apr 26	J/E Morgan	J. Neal	A. Wiswall
May 3	W. Scott	L. Scott	J. Neal
May 10	S. Moran	F. Decker	G. Decker
May 17	Jaylyn/Jack	L. Majowka	L. Majowka
May 24	K. Tilney	N. Best	S. McKay
May 31	J/E Morgan	D. Jones	C. Kellogg
June 7	W. Scott	S. Welgoss	L. Scott
June 14	K. Barry	J. Barry	N. Best
June 21	Jaylyn/Jack	A. Steven	D. Stevens
June 28	J/E Morgan	K. Tilney	K. Tilney

If you have a conflict with your assignment, please contact Kappy Tilney at 286-0024.

Lenten Services

Plans are underway for the Season of Lent. Once again we will holding Wednesday night services in cooperation with other churches in the Mid Suffolk Presbyterian Parish. Those pastors will be meeting on January 21 to work out final details. Present schedule is as follows:

February 25 ASH WEDNESDAY

We will have our individual congregational observances. Ours will be designed and led by Alan Stevens. We are grateful that Alan has done this each year for us.

March 4 Old South Haven will play host

March 11 Center Moriches

March 18 East Moriches/ Remsenburg

March 25 Yapank

April 1 Middle Island

April 9 MAUNDY THURSDAY in our individual churches

April 10 GOOD FRIDAY with Bellport Methodist, there

April 12 EASTER SUNDAY

Early sunrise service at the Bellport dock

Morning Worship



A Prayer for a New President and a New America

(Note: The January issue of Sojourners Magazine contained reflections from several individuals from various walks of life upon the inauguration of a new president. What follows is a prayer offered by Shane Claiborne, a founding partner of The Simple Way, a radical faith community in the Kensington neighborhood of Philadelphia.)

God of love, grace and hope, thank you for creating a perfect world. Forgive us for the mess we have made of it. Forgive us for the groaning of creation, for the millions who die of hunger and curable diseases, for warehousing people in prisons and using them for labor, for the scandal of billions wasted in war, for an economy that mirrors the seven deadly sins, for the violence and greed in our own hearts. Save us from ourselves.

Give us imagination that we might not conform to the patterns of this world, that we might shatter indifference and interrupt injustice with grace, that we might choose the cross over the sword, that we might be shrewd as serpents and as innocent as doves, that we might consider the lilies and the sparrows as they shame Wall Street's splendor, that we might choose the dream of God over the dream of nations, that we might cling to the God who so loved the world, not just America, that we might allow our Jesus to change America rather than America to change our Jesus. Amen.

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