
The Tower *Chimes*

Union Church of Pocantico Hills
555 Bedford Road
Pocantico Hills, New York 10591

The Rev. Dr. F. Paul DeHoff, Pastor

Janet Graham, Editor

January 2011

.....from the Pastor's desk

The Annual Meeting was held January 23 following a lunch presided over by the Board of Deacons. Food was supplied by members of the congregation and the entrées by the Dinner Club. Clerk of the Congregation, Robert Seixas, called the meeting to order at 12:45 p.m. Wilson Neely was elected Presiding Officer. The Boards and Committees commented on their printed reports in turn. The booklet of reports is available to you and you are urged to take one and read the report of the congregation's faithfulness to its calling in 2010. A Resolution of Recognition and Appreciation for the dedication and talents of Thomas Zachacz shared unstintingly with the congregation from October 1998 to the present was unanimously and enthusiastically adopted!

The following persons were elected as officers: Matt Mattoon, Chris DiLorenzo, Richard Joao and Robert Seixas to the Board of Trustees; John Loase, Irene Scazzero and Joyce Skiko to the Board of Deacons; Beth Coffman as Clerk of the Congregation, and Linda DeLaurentis as Chairperson of the Committee on Nominations.

Wilson Neely, Chair of the Endowment Committee reported that the Pastoral Endowment has re-gained approximately 80% of the losses it suffered during 2008-09, all the while continuing to provide over \$60,000 each year of support of the Operating Budget. The current campaign to raise \$1,000,000 for the Pastoral Endowment reached the half-way point Dec. 31, '10, and will conclude June 30, 2012. To date nearly \$900,000 has been raised. Unfulfilled pledges from the congregation total \$145,000. The ultimate goal of the Pastoral Endowment is \$3,000,000. As of Dec. 31, 2009 the value of the Pastoral Endowment was \$2,175,915! Our continued faithful response will enable us to reach the ultimate goal – thanks be to God!

The Operating Budget for 2011 was adopted at \$343,838. This compares to \$328,654 of un-audited actual expenses for 2010. To underwrite this budget we will need to have contributions from the congregation of \$190,000; actual contributions in 2010 were: \$169,486 – the expectation is a 12% increase in our financial support. Please consider this a request for your increased financial support; thank you.

The Boards of Trustees and Deacons will hold their annual Planning Conference/Retreat at the Rockefeller Brothers' Conference Center, Pocantico Hills, February 5, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Organist/Choir Director Search Committee has been formed under direction from the Board of Trustees. Members are: Kathleen Murray, Chairperson; Robert Seixas and Nancy Burkley, Trustees; Kathleen Imperato and Bob Sweeney, Deacons; Charles Carlson and Victoria Mattoon, Choir. The Committee has met and is now drafting a job description.

Looking to the near future please join me in anticipating the following dates and events: **Ash Wednesday Service** at 8 p.m., March 9; **Chagall and the Bible Lecture** by Vivian Jacobsen, 3 p.m., March 27; **Bruce Levingston Piano Recital**, proceeds to benefit the Pastoral Endowment, April 3. Details forthcoming!

LAMPSTAND

By Nancy Burkley

LEAD ON

*" . . . The best-laid schemes of mice and men
Go often astray . . . "*

- *To A Mouse* by Robert Burns

It's a new calendar year and the beginning of our new church year. We just finished the annual meeting, and some fresh faces will serve on various boards and committees to help the church fulfill its mission. As with all new beginnings, there is a sense of hope and excitement as we set goals, make resolutions, and dream that the ideal may actually come to pass this year.

As a trustee, I'm tempted to tell you all about all the successes the church has had this year, and even share with you some of the struggles it took to achieve those successes. That would be redundant. We just recapped them at the annual meeting and they are captured in writing in the nicely bound annual reports. Our Pastor Paul DeHoff is far more aware of, responsible for, and able to recount every jot and tittle of what it took to achieve what in our church.

So let me let me tell you as truthfully as I can what I personally experience and know this new year.

I confess that I haven't stopped myself from ingesting as much sugar as I had planned, and my new exercise routine experienced an even shorter run than in past years. There are

other plans that have been thwarted, because our household has lost much of the income we once had. After 15 years with a major corporation for which we left our hometown and relocated twice to another state and once literally across the world, my husband's employer decided - only God really knows why - that it no longer needed John's services. Like millions of others in our country today, we found our main "breadwinner" without a job for the first time ever. I'll spare you the unpleasant details, but let's just say it's been difficult. Now we, like many others, even in privileged Westchester, are faced with a myriad of choices most of which boil down to downsizing our house to lessen our expenses, but living in the same school district, where our daughter Julia has spent her entire formal education so she can finish high school here.

I don't feel sorry for myself (anymore), but I still do wonder what God has in mind in this scenario. I had assumed - and even decided - that the next few years until Julia graduated would be a time of stability for the Burkley's. We both had jobs - even if we didn't love them. Julia was happy and doing well in school. We had replaced the 25-year-old HVAC system in our house, along with items like unsealed windows and sagging ceilings. In addition to the grants and promotional materials that made money for my employer, I was finally starting to have time to write bits and pieces that expressed my heart. Then, John lost his job, and the domino effect from such an event began.

In his poem *Zero Circle*, the Muslim poet Rumi wrote:

"Crazed, lying in a zero circle, mute,
We shall be saying finally, With
tremendous eloquence, Lead us."

That's where I begin this new year, but from a Christian perspective. All I really know is that this year so far I've kept my resolution to be led. Where that leaves me now in this second month is here: This year as I watch and listen to the choir sing, I see and hear my husband and daughter there. I no longer come to church without my family as I had for almost a decade. I still take pleasure in our house where we have watched Julia grow, a couple of pets come and go, and our "treasures" take roost, but I can let it go if I must. I have no assumption, much less plan, that the next few years will be stable or tumultuous or both, rich or poor or middling, good or bad or not.

In his letter to the Philippians, Saint Paul says "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." I am.

"For God is at work in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure."

PREACHING SCHEDULE FOR FEBRUARY

- Feb. 6 – "*Sympathy and Judgment*" -
Ezekiel 2:8-3:3, 10-17 (15)
Feb.13 – "*On Being Mad*" –
Acts 26:19-32 (24)
Feb. 20 – "*What Makes Me A Christian?*"
Matthew 11:25-30 (28)
Feb. 27 – "*In Search of Simplicity*" –
Luke 11:29-36 (34)

CHRISTMAS GIFTS FOR KIDS

The next time you are in the Parish Hall, please check out the bulletin board and the display of thank you notes and letters from the grandparents and grandchildren who benefited from our donations to the **Grandparents Coalition** this past holiday season. It is a heartwarming outpouring of gratitude that will be appreciated by all.

NOTE OF THANKS

John and Emma Thaler wish to express their thanks to the congregation for their care and concern during John's surgery and recuperation.

SPRING TAG SALE

This year's Spring Tag Sale is set for **May 6 and 7, 10 A.M. to 4 P.M.** Featured will be Home Baked Goods; Children's, Men's and Women's Clothing; Linens; White Elephants; Flowers and Plants. More information to follow.

FALL HARVEST FAIR DATES SET

The **2011 Harvest Fair** will be here before you know it. The dates are **October 14, 15 and 16.** The success of the Fair is entirely dependent on donations, so please pass the word along to your family, friends and neighbors as they do their spring cleaning. We are accepting the following:

Books (no textbooks); **Furniture** (no old box springs and mattresses) - delivery to the church is desirable; **White Elephants** (no outdated or non-working electronics, such as computers, printers, TVs, etc.); **Jewelry** and **Boutique** items; **Antiques**; **Clothing** – men's women's, children's (clothing must be clean, neatly folded or on hangers, not torn, etc.); **Linens** (must be clean, neatly folded, or on hangers). Thank you.

Special note: The **Jewelry Dept.** is in need of those pieces that you no longer wear. We would appreciate it if you would wonder through your jewelry drawer/box and keep us in mind as you make your choices as to what to keep and not keep. Thank you.

Linda DeLaurentis and Janet Graham

DINNER CLUB NEWS

The Christmas wreaths and garland in the sanctuary as well as the tree in the Fellowship Hall are gone, and all of the ornaments packed and stored for another year. It's hard to believe

we are into the New Year and we're looking forward to our first dinner.

The baton has been passed to our new co-presidents – Victoria & Matt Mattoon. Margaret Gasser has graciously agreed to stay on as treasurer and Kris Weltzheimer continuing to oversee the monthly sign-up duties.

The month of February has not only Valentine's Day but both Lincoln and Washington's birthdays as well. It will be a spirited **February 12** dinner and among other things, we will hold a very different and exciting game of Bingo....but it won't be your grandma's church Bingo! Be ready to play and win one of the many prizes on hand. Our "red letter" evening starts at **6 p.m.** and, as usual, we invite all who would like to join us in the fun.

NEWS FROM THE PEWS

- We were saddened to hear about the passing of Arline Weiss, Carol Staudter's mother. Arline, and her husband, Harry, who predeceased her, were long-time, active members of Union Church until they moved to Carlisle, PA in 1990. If you would like to send a card or a note to Arline's daughters, addresses are as follows:

Carol Staudter
1 Sleater Drive
Ossining, NY 10562

Ceceile Strand
348 Wilson St.
Carlisle, PA 17013

IN MEMORIAM

As requested by the family, the following people have gifted the Pastoral Ministry Endowment Fund in loving memory of Anne Klami:

Peter Haupt
Mark and Linda DeLaurentis

Gifts to the Endowment Fund in loving memory of Arline Weiss have been received from:

David and Ceceile Strand
Tom and Carol Staudter

The Endowment fund also received a gift from Debbie Needleman in honor of her sister, Joyce Stanton.

We gratefully acknowledge and accept these gifts.

**Articles for the MARCH Tower Chimes
are due by FEBRUARY 27.**
