

The Peekskill Presbyterian Church

The Messenger

VOLUME 12, ISSUE 5

JANUARY 2011

An Important Christian/Islam Study Opportunity

Dear Friends,

September 11 and the ensuing “war on terrorism” brought Islamic beliefs to the forefront of many Americans’ concern and curiosity. More recent controversy over the proposed building of a cultural center/mosque in Manhattan, along with the threatened Qur’an burning in Florida have served to increase our anxiety and confusion. It has become hard not to be suspicious; it’s tempting to despise Islam before learning anything about Muslims or their faith. We may even wonder if Muslims and Christians have anything at all to say to one another.

These are some of the reasons the Christian Education Committee and I began looking around this fall for resources to help us study Islam and Christianity together as part of our Sunday Adult Bible Study. In the meantime, ironically enough, the UN General Assembly unanimously adopted a UN Observance Event called “World Interfaith Harmony Week.” Proposed by King Abdullah of Jordan, this event is “not a call to water down one's faith, but rather it's a call to respect our differences and personal beliefs and to unite around the basic principles that people of all beliefs agree upon and to understand that harmony can only come if we build upon a solid foundation of dialogue that has “Love of God and love of the neighbor or, love of Good and love of the neighbor” as its core principle for engagement.” (worldinterfaithharmonyweek.com) This event will be observed around the world during the first week of February 2011.

So we invite you all to join us for an important study on Sundays, **January 9, 16, and 23; and February 6, 13, and 20 at 11:30am in the parlor.** We will be using the book *Islam and Christianity* by Mitali Perkins (available to purchase for \$4.50), which is based on Christian Scripture but also shows that Christians and Muslims actually share a lot. Members of the Islamic Center of Peekskill will be our guests, joining us in our journey toward interfaith harmony, sharing their beliefs while learning more about ours, and helping us clear up any myths or misconceptions.

As Christians, we want to learn and interact with people of other faiths, yet simultaneously maintain the uniqueness of Christ. If we want to enter into genuine friendships with Muslims and in the process articulate what we believe, then we need to understand the important connections and distinctions between Christianity and Islam. Please join us for this important opportunity to increase our mutual understanding. If you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to contact me at rhondakruse@gmail.com or in the church office, 737-3322.

Rev. Rhonda K. Kruse
Interim Pastor

January Birthdays



Deleted to help protect our security online

Shutter Shy ????

The Congregational Life Committee is continuing to take photos of our congregation. This committee will present our new pastor with an album to use as a reference. Our 'studio' is in the nursery room...please come in (most) any Sunday after worship. We promise to make this as quick and painless as possible. If you are unable to attend worship call me and I will visit you at your residence.

- Nancy Horton (914) 737- 0315

Stewardship Corner

Now that our *financial* Stewardship drive has just been completed, we would like to highlight this month the other two main concepts of *Stewardship* which is the giving of our *time* and *talents*. For the initial article in our “Stewardship Corner” we would like to acknowledge *Dick Crawford* for the giving of his *time* and *talents* to the *Peekskill Presbyterian Church* over many years.

Before his retirement a few years ago, Dick served the public as a police officer. He also served our country as a member of the US Marine Corps.

Dick and his wonderful wife Marjorie who celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary last year, have been members of the Peekskill Presbyterian Church for almost 28 years. During those years, he has given his time and talents to many endeavors such as being a member of the usher team, participating at the Thursday morning prayer breakfasts, help clean the sanctuary before holidays with other church members, participating at our “hobby nights”, always willing to be a liturgist to now giving his time and talents to the *Memorial Meditation Garden*. The list goes on and on.

Dick started his work on the garden by helping with the weeding. He weeds almost weekly all summer and waters when needed (for the last 3 years). Dick moved the forget-me-nots and other plants from the path and other places they invaded. (We have heard from a good source that Dick called them “what-nots”).

Moving on from his weeding expertise, Dick helped to plant the path edging and took over the creation of the long linear garden alongside the Christian Education building with its marigolds, hostas, lilies and this year, chrysanthemums and irises.

Dick recently planted many tulips in the triangle area by the doors to the social hall – you’ll see them next spring!

Among Dick's future projects is to plant a floral display around the Church sign on South Street.

This is what Stewardship is all about!

We can all take inspiration from Dick’s interest, determination and dedication.

Thank you Dick!

- Members of the Stewardship Committee

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Year End Mission Summary

We’re a little out of breath, but excited about what we accomplished this fall with the reorganized Mission ministry. The most obvious things you’ve surely noticed already. We’ve been serving breakfast to about 70 people on the first Sunday of each month, roughly evenly split between church members and guests from the Community. We’ve already given away dozens of coats, hats, gloves, warm shirts, and blue jeans to grateful day-laborers and others, and at the time of this writing we’re

planning to give away many, many more on Christmas. There are new shelves in the Social Hall for our food pantry ministry. We've donated 6 cases of food to the veterans and sent a huge donation over to the Kiley Youth Center's emergency food bank. A little less obvious are the more than 30 Christmas cards we (with your wonderful help) sent to prisoners this year. We also "adopted" a family from the Salvation Army and made sure their children received some gifts on Christmas. We're working on setting up another Mission Trip next summer, and we've provided some support to our resident missionaries, Cindy & Eric Bohler, for a return to Louisiana to continue Hurricane Katrina recovery. Finally, we've got initiatives in the works for speakers and a book of resources to help quickly and easily point people in need to where they can get immediate help. And we have lots more ideas. Hold onto your hats, and come fuel up for the New Year at the next **Community Breakfast on January 9th**. Here comes 2011!

Stewardship 2011 Wraps Up

As of December 12, fifty seven pledges were received amounting to \$106,729. Our average commitment was \$1,872, a 1.4% increase from the average of \$1,846 given in 2010. Giving of time, talent and treasure enables us to demonstrate our gratitude and commitment to our Lord and our beloved church. Sincere thanks to all who have participated.

PW/Women of H.O.P.E.

The Women of H.O.P.E Christmas was held December 10, 2010 at the Piazza Roma Restaurant in the Cortlandt Town Center. Approximately 40 women were in attendance and the program was enjoyed by all – a Christmas reading titled "Tidings of Joy" was read by Carol Robinson while music "Angels We Have Heard On High" was played softly by Tina Wileikis with the group singing a verse of the carol. The invocation/blessing was given by Rev. Rhonda Kruse. Good food, hot tea or coffee and dessert was next on the agenda along with merry chit chat, recognition of guests (there were quite a few) and ended with carol singing. Vera Sokol graced us with a poem she wrote titled "Star of Bethlehem". Many thanks for everyone's participation and attendance, and we certainly thank Vera Sokol, Jean Valente and Leonor Mancebo as our hostesses for the day.

Women of H.O.P.E. meet the second Friday every other month with a snow date scheduled for the month of February. We urge all women of the church to join us at these meetings. The time is noon to 2:30pm with a special presentation at most meetings.

Future Dates:

- February 11, 2011 (snow date February 18, 2011-social hall – program to be announced later
- April 8, 2011 – Birthday Luncheon – social hall – special luncheon & activity
- June 10, 2011 – End of Year Picnic Luncheon – someone's home

Special Events:

- March 4, 2011 – World Day of Prayer –Peekskill Community and surrounding areas participate – Mt. Lebanon Baptist Church – 12 noon
- April 10, 2011 – Birthday Offering & Moment for Mission in Church followed by hostess for Coffee Hour

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Men's Bible Study Breakfast

Happy New Year! Men's Bible Study/Breakfast will resume twice monthly meetings January 13, 2011 and January 27, 2011. Now that the busy holiday season is over, we hope you will join us on these dates.

Annual Meeting



The Annual Congregational Meeting is January 30 following worship.

Ministry reports for the Annual Report are due January 13.

Christian Education Events

What do YOU know about the Islam faith? For that matter, what do you really know about Christianity? We live in a world where we need to understand each other's beliefs so....

Starting on January 9th at 11:30, a program comparing and contrasting Islam and Christianity will occur. The purpose of this six-session study will be to understand both faiths in today's turbulent world. After we have compared the two religions' understandings of the Trinity, the role of Jesus and Mohammed and the Holy Books, we are inviting a Muslim spokesperson to visit with us and answer our questions. The final meeting will deal with the present day issues facing both religions.

This scripture-driven program will occur after church on January 9th, 16th & 23rd and continue on February 6th, 13th and 20th. Make a New Year's resolution to broaden your horizons and deepen your faith. Come join Cliff Heaton, Jay Buckiewicz and Pastor Kruse in the library after the Sunday coffee hour and we will all learn together!

Everyone is invited to join the Book Group on January 28 at 7:30 in the library. We will be discussing Debbie Macomber's *God's Guest List*. The book is filled with true stories and rich insight that will forever change how you see the people in your life. Who is on God's "guest list" for your life . . . and why? The answers may surprise you.

Christian Education Ministry thanks Tina Wileikis for teaching Sunday School during the month of January. The children will be in for a treat as Tina is a retired elementary music teacher.

- Diana and Cliff Heaton

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Peekskill Presbyterian Church

January 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Every Sunday 9am Confirmation 9:15am Choir 10am WORSHIP Sunday School	Church Office Hours 8am-2pm, M-Thrs, 737-3322, 737-7822 fax PeeksPres@aol.com	Thrift Shop Hours (845) 538-2669 Wed., Thrs. Sat. 10-3 PeeksPres@aol.com	Every Sunday 12-1:30 Gates of Heaven Service, also Tuesdays, 7:30-9pm			1 NEWYEAR'S DAY 
2 NO Breakfast (will be next week) Harriet Sandmeier, guest minister, 12-1:30 Gates of Heaven	3 OFFICE CLOSED 7:30-9pm Boy Scout Troop #284, Social Hall	4 7:30pm Christian Ed. Mtg. 7:30-9pm Gates of Heaven Prayer Service	5 10:30am Bells 3pm Good News 6:15pm Lord's Attic 7:30pm Ch. Choir	6 <i>Epiphany of the Lord</i> 7:30pm C&B Mtg.	7	8
9 8:30am Breakfast, 9:15am New Mbrs/Session 11:30 Cong Life Mtg. Islam Stdy, 1-5pm Three Kings Party	10 7:30-9pm Boy Scout Troop #284, Social Hall	11 12:30 PAPA Mtg., 2pm Yorktown Presby Soup Kitchen Prep 7:30-9pm Gates of Heaven Prayer Service	12 10:30am Bells 7:30pm Ch. Choir	13 8am Men's Breakfast Bible Study 2pm 2020 Vision Mtg. <u>Annual Reports Due</u> 7pm Session Mtg.	14 4-8pm 2nd Fridays Community Youth Group	15
16 11:30 Prayer Chain & Mission Mtgs, Islam Stdy 12-1:30 GOH Service 7:30pm B. Scout Ldrs.	17 Martin Luther King Jr. Day OFFICE CLOSED	18 7:30-9pm Gates of Heaven Prayer Service	19 10:30am Bells 1pm Bridge, Robinson's MESSENGER ARTICLES DUE 7:30pm Ch. Choir	20 5:30-7:30 Headstart Parents Meeting	21 7:30pm Bridge, Horton's	22
23 11:30am Islam Stdy 12-1:30 Gates of Heaven Service	24 Mission does Soup Kitchen Prep 7:30-9pm Boy Scout Troop #284	25 7:30pm Deacons Mtg. 7:30-9pm Gates of Heaven Prayer Service	26 10:30am Bells 7:30pm Ch. Choir	27 8am Men's Breakfast Bible Study	28 7:30pm Book Discussion Group, Parlor	29
30 11 pm ANNUAL MEETING 11:30 am Stwrdsip Mtg 12-1:30 Gates of Heaven Service	31 7:30-9pm Boy Scout Troop #284, Social Hall					