

Grace Notes

VOLUME 107 RYE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH • 882 BOSTON POST ROAD • RYE • NY • 10580 FEBRUARY 2011

For those of you who attended the recent Rye Women's Interfaith Conference, this will be familiar. If you were not able to be there, the following is the conclusion to Kevin Walters' excellent presentation on the history and nature of sacred music — especially as it relates to singing as a part of our worship. Read, enjoy, worship... and sing!

Now we've come nearly to the end, but before I finish I want to share a few brief thoughts.

I'm stating the obvious when I say that ours is a singing faith. We learn in scripture that Moses, Miriam, and all Israel sang on the shore of the Red Sea; Jesus and the disciples sang in the Upper Room during the Last Supper; Paul and Silas sang hymns in prison; the Psalms overflow with references to singing, and the New Testament ends with the Song to the Lamb. Considering the prominence scripture attaches to singing in it behooves us to be attentive to what we sing and to how we sing it.

The title of my presentation is taken from a rather well-known and often-repeated expression of St. Augustine, "He who sings prays twice." Well, that's not exactly what Augustine said. Augustine's original Latin is, *qui cantat bene bis orat*. He who sings well prays twice. Now, that puts quite a different spin on it – the addition of word "well" suggests something entirely different. Did Augustine mean that only those who make beautiful sounds pray twice? - or, only those who have had vocal training and sing absolutely in tune? No, that's not it at all. What Augustine meant was that whoever sings with heart *and* mind is the one who sings well. In another context Augustine wrote, "When you pray to God in psalms and hymns, let what is pronounced by the voice be meditated upon in the heart." Three things: voice, mind, and heart. Perhaps Augustine was thinking of Psalm 47, "Sing praises with understanding..." or Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, chapter 14, v. 15: "I will sing praise with the spirit but I will sing praise with the mind also." This is translated in the New English Bible as, "I will sing hymns as I am inspired to sing, but I will sing intelligently too." Dr. Peter Gomes, popular author and sometime minister of Harvard's Memorial Church, expressed the need for people of faith to cultivate 'loving minds and thinking hearts'. I understand this to mean that in worship we are expected to be fully engaged, feeling and thinking, and that should include musical aspects of our liturgy.

Isaac Bashevis Singer (remember him and his stories of Gimpel the Fool?) – Singer's grandfather was a rabbi in Russia. One day a few men from his congregation asked him, "Rabbi, why must we worship God every day? We say our prayers, study Torah, but why is it so important to God that we worship him?" "It is because," said the Rabbi, "God knows that when we stop worshipping him is the time when we begin to worship ourselves."

Well, none of this is easy. It requires intentionality and it requires a loving mind and a thinking heart that can resist the temptation to make worship or our faith a long butter-slide into sentimentality. But, of course, sacred song cannot be about us. The orientation of worship, Reformed worship, in particular, is always vertical, never horizontal or earthbound. Think of it like Jacob's ladder: a continuous 'loop' of dialogue between God and God's people, up and down the ladder of praise and teaching. Dietrich Bonhoeffer expressed it exactly right when he said, "...it is not *you* who sing – it is the church that sings and you add your voice to the church's song."

Karen Armstrong wrote the following in her wonderful new book, "*The Case for God*,"

"Religion's task, closely allied to that of art, is to help us live creatively, peacefully, and even joyously with realities for which there are no easy explanations. Religion will not work automatically, however; it requires a great deal of effort and cannot succeed if it is facile, idolatrous, or self-indulgent. Religion is a practical discipline, and its insights are not derived from abstract speculation but from spiritual exercises and a dedicated lifestyle. Without such practice, it is impossible to understand the truth of its doctrines."

The church's song is portable theology, you see; it is one of the spiritual disciplines that will help to shape us and to form a mature spirituality. People internalize religious messages and teaching as they learn the tunes that carried them, and the music of the church is a key expression of devotional sentiment and religious identification.

So take St. Paul's advice to the Colossians to heart: "Let the word dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God."

And when you sing with heart *and* mind, you will pray twice.



Christian Education, Youth Group, Confirmation, Connection, Bible Studies, Empty Bowls, and Thrift Shop Door Restoration

Christian Education

February finds the Church School finishing up our series on Joseph and moving on into the stories of Jesus' life. To culminate our Joseph unit, we are so excited to see the 7th and 8th Grade Sunday School class and Youth Choir perform their mini musical version of Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat. In addition to beginning the story of Jesus, we will engage in Christian service with Enrichment activities.

Don't miss this month's Family Fellowship event: a Mother Daughter Tea on Sunday, February 6th from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. in the Assembly room.

High School Youth Group

This month, the Youth Group will host a Valentine's Day party at the Carver Center on Saturday, February 13th. We will also begin preparations for our annual Doggie Treat Bake Sale, benefiting the Elmsford Animal Shelter, on Sunday, February 27th at 6:00 p.m.

Confirmation

Meetings this month:

Sunday, February 13

4:00 (M-Z) and 5:00 p.m. (A-L) in the Westminster Room

Winter Trip to Vermont: March 4 - 6
Registration forms are due!

Empty Bowls 2011

Many thanks to all who made this year's Empty Bowls another great success:

The potters of the Clay Art Center

Cornerstone Caterers

The Kneaded Bread

Strauss Paper

RPC's middle school youth.



*Snow days turns to Bowl days
as middle schoolers prepare
for Empty Bowls*

Men's Bible Study

Sundays, February 13 and 27
at 8:00 p.m. in the Library

Join us as we work our way through the Book of Revelation. If you'd like to get email updates about this ongoing gathering, contact Rev. Dan Love at dlove@ryepc.

Middle School Connection

Wednesdays - 5:30 p.m. to 6:45 p.m.
February 2 and 16

If you'd like to get email updates about this ongoing middle school group, contact Rev. Dan Love at dlove@ryepc.com

Wednesday Morning Bible Study

February 2 and 16

at 9:15 a.m. in the Library

Our reading of the Psalms continues.

Thrift Shop Door Restoration

Family members remember their parents and grandparents in restoration

The restoration underway of the outside entrance of the thrift shop door was made possible by a contribution from the Thomas F. Staley Foundation in memory of the Foundation's founders, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas F. Staley. The Staleys were long-time residents of Rye and active members of the Rye Presbyterian Church for many years. They are buried in RPC's Columbarium.

The Foundation's trustees are the Staley's children, Janet S. Howard and Thomas F. Staley, Jr. and their spouses, Catherine H. Staley and Robert G. Howard together with grandchildren Mrs. Diane Bernard, Mr. Stuart Staley, Mrs. Sarah Wichert, and Mrs. Susan Canada.

Four generations have worshipped at Rye Presbyterian Church. Members of three generations have served as Trustees and as Deacons and on the Session (two as Clerk of Session). Two generations were married in the sanctuary and all the grandchildren and some of the great grandchildren were baptized in the church.

The restoration is given in gratitude for God's blessings to this family.



*Thrift Shop Door work beginning
during warmer days this Fall!*

Lives in Transition, Stephen Ministry Women's Association and Homeless Overnight

Lives in Transition

February 3: "Self Assessment: Connect Who You Are with What You Do." Self-assessment is the most important first step to take in one's job search. During this session, Executive Coach Arjan Eenkema Van Dijk will discuss the Holland Framework and the STRONG career assessment technique. STRONG provides a tool that can be very useful in determining what kinds of careers best connect with one's skills and interests. Whether you are clear about your next career step, or are considering a career change, this session will provide helpful information and valuable insights.

February 17: "All About You: Actions Speak Louder than Words." This session will provide participants an opportunity to share the challenges they're experiencing and plans to find their next career or landing job. In a safe and confidential setting, participants will get feedback and support from professionals and other participants. The evening will be facilitated by Executive Coach: Henriëtte Wentholt.

Held in the Assembly Room from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Free and open to all. Please invite a friend! Lives in Transition programs are held on the first and third Thursdays of each month. We ask participants to RSVP to this email address: livesintransition@gmail.com.

Stephen Ministry

A new calendar year often brings resolutions, fresh starts, hopes and promises. The magi traveled a long distance, gifts in hand, believing in God's promises. Stephen Ministry at RPC is committed to encouraging those who journey with hope toward healing. Eight new Stephen Ministers have joined in this hope.

In January, Ed Avery, Bridget Davis, Martha Downen, Teri Greene, Charlene Laughlin, Susan Morison, Vera Seifert, and Pamela Springer completed thirteen weeks of training and joined the fifty-five Stephen Ministers commissioned to share their gifts with the people of RPC and the surrounding community.

If you are committing to a journey

toward healing in the new year and would like more information about how Stephen Ministry can help, please contact Becky Ruegger, Referrals Coordinator at 914-967-2812. If you are interested in more information about becoming a Stephen Minister or Stephen Leader, please contact Patti Adimari at 914-967-6351 or Gail Langeloh at 914-967-4126.



Continuing Education - On Tuesday, February 15 at 7:00 p.m. we welcome Judy Holding, a graduate of Smith College, Fairfield University, and Yale Divinity School is a certified Professional Chaplain and serves as the Oncology Chaplain as part of the Spiritual Care team at Greenwich Hospital. In this role, she visits in-patient oncology patients and families, makes out-patient visits in the Bendheim Cancer Center, and facilitates groups.



"Henna Hands"

Women's Association

The Women's Association had a lovely Ladies Night Out at Tandoori Taste of India in Port Chester on January 10th. Twenty-six women attended and enjoyed the delicious food and interesting con-

versation. A henna artist painted henna blessings on some of our hands and the women had the opportunity to shop for beautiful Indian-inspired jewelry by Pyria Tambe.

Homeless Overnight Volunteers Needed

Originally the word sanctuary was used to describe a sacred place set aside for the worship of God. In time the meaning of this word grew to include a place of safety and protection. The word is now frequently used in this way to describe not only the place, but the act of providing safety.

About one night each month RPC provides overnight shelter to a group of men through a program of the Open Arms Shelter in White Plains. These men arrive after dark to sleep on cots in the Assembly Room, and they are gone at day break rarely seen by many of us. During those few hours when they are asleep under our roof, we have literally reunited the two meanings of this word.

Each night that we provide sanctuary for these men, in addition to staff from the homeless shelter, a volunteer member of our church stays here in the church. We need a volunteer to spend the night for one Saturday each month for the rest of the year. We also need help washing the linens.

Won't you please consider helping just one night? Following are the dates which RPC has volunteered to serve: March 19, June 18, July 16, August 20, Sept. 17, Oct. 15, Nov. 5, Dec. 17

A sign up sheet for our nights throughout 2011 can be found on a clipboard in the reception area. Thanks to David Walker, Wayne Atwell, Davidson Gordon, Scott Cannell and Peter Bennett for their help in 2010. Also thanks to Becky Ruegger, Barbara Niss, Susan Eggers, Tyler Jenner, David Walker and Katrin MacLaury with the laundry.



Sundays in February Special Events

February 6, 2011

8:30 Holy Communion, Crawford Chapel
 10:00 Communion Worship, Sanctuary
 10:00 Regular church school. Children attend worship through children's message.
 11:00 Annual Congregational Meeting
 3:00 p.m. Mother Daughter Tea

February 13

8:30 Holy Communion, Crawford Chapel
 10:00 Morning Worship, Sanctuary
 10:00 Regular church school. Children attend worship through children's message
 4:00 p.m. Confirmation (M-Z) and
 5:00 p.m. (A-L) in the Westminster Room
 8:00 p.m. Men's Bible Study, Library

February 20

8:30 Holy Communion, Crawford Chapel
 10:00 Morning Worship, Sanctuary
 10:00 Enrichment Sunday. No Church school.

February 27

8:30 Holy Communion, Crawford Chapel
 10:00 Morning Worship, Sanctuary,
 10:00 Regular church school. Children attend worship through children's message
 6:00 p.m. Youth Group baking dog treats for the Elmsford Animal Shelter/ Westminster Room/Pizza provided.
 8:00 p.m. Men's Bible Study

Please join us for coffee hour in the Assembly Room after ten o'clock worship.

*The 7th and 8th grade classes
and the Youth Choir present...*



*Sunday, February 13th, 4:00 p.m.
In the Assembly Room
Potluck to follow.*

RPC Family Fellowship

Mother Daughter Tea

Sunday, February 6th
3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
In the Assembly Room



RSVP by Feb. 2: efoon@ryepc.com
~Ruffles and Frills Suggested~
White Gloves Optional



The Women's Association cordially
invites you to its

Annual Progressive Dinner

Saturday, February 12 from 6:00 – 10:30 p.m.

**Special Valentine's Theme:
"Famous Love Stories"**

Appetizers at the home of Kerry Hatch,
dinner at the Church
Cost: \$60.00 per person

Please sign up at the reception desk or
email kristinjautz@verizon.net

P.S. Don't wait - this event fills up quickly.

Join the Keenagers for

"Hearts and Humor"

a belated Valentine's Day Celebration on

Wednesday, February 16 at 2:00 p.m. in the Library.

The Nursery School children will be present to entertain us.
All Keenagers are invited!

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Sunday, February 6, 11:00 a.m.

**Following the 10 o'clock
worship service**

February Schedule of Meetings, Events and Programs

BOARD MEETINGS

Deacons: Wednesday, February 16, 7:30 p.m., Library
Session: Wednesday, February 23, 7:30 p.m., Westminster Room
Trustees: Wednesday February 16, 7:30 p.m., Youth Room

WORSHIP AND STUDY

Worship on Sunday:
 8:30 a.m. Holy Communion in the Chapel and
 10:00 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary.
Church School on Sunday: Regular Church School on February 6, 13, and 27.
 Enrichment Sunday will be held on February 20.
Confirmation: February 13, 4:00 p.m. (M-Z) and 5:00 p.m. (A-L),
 Westminster Room
Winter trip to Vermont: March 4 -6 (Registration Forms due Feb. 6)
Men's Bible Study: February 13 and 27, 8:00 p.m. in Library
Wednesday Morning Bible Study: February 2 and 16, 9:15 a.m., Library

YOUTH

Boy Scouts Troop #2: All Tuesdays in February, 7:00 p.m., Assembly Room.
Cub Scouts: Pack Meeting: Wednesday, February 2 at 7:00 p.m., Assembly Room
Girl Scout Leaders: Wednesday, February 2, 1:00 p.m., Library
Connection: Wednesdays, February 2 and 16, 5:30 p.m., Westminster Room.

MUSIC

Chancel Choir Rehearsal: Choir Room, Sundays, 9:15 and 11:15 a.m. and
 Thursdays, 7:45 p.m.
Children's Choir Rehearsal: Thursdays at 3:45 p.m., Choir Room
Youth Choir Rehearsal: Wednesdays, 6:45 p.m., Choir Room

OTHER CHURCH MEETINGS, EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

Christian Education Committee: Wednesday, February 9, 7:30 p.m., Westminster Room.
Mission and Outreach Committee: Wednesday, February 2, 7:30 p.m., Library.
Sandwichmakers: Thursday, February 17, 11:00 a.m. Kitchen and Assembly Room.
Lives in Transition: Thursdays, February 3 and 17, 7:00 p.m. Assembly Room
Stephen Ministry:
 Stephen Leaders: Dates to be announced.
 Continuing Education and Supervision: Tuesdays, February 1 and 15
 at 7:00 p.m., Westminster Room.
Thrift Shop: Thursdays, 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., Downstairs.

OUTREACH AND SUPPORT GROUPS

AA Rye Harrison Group: Mondays, 7:30 p.m., Assembly Room, (except February 21).
AA Group: Thursdays, 7:30 p.m., Westminster Room.
Homeless Overnight: No February date. The next homeless overnight is on March 19.
Dinner at Noon: Saturday, March 5, 11:00 a.m. at Carver Center
Mr. Westchester/Al Anon Group: Mondays, 7:30 p.m., Library, (except February 21).

PHONE: 914-967-0842 FAX: 914-967-0267

Email: RPC@ryepc.com Web Site: www.ryepc.com

Please note that the Church office and building is closed on Monday, February 21 in honor of President's Day.

Rye Presbyterian Church

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RYE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH • GRACE NOTES • FEBRUARY 2011 (6)

RPNS

Rye Presbyterian Nursery School



To the Rye Presbyterian Church Community from Kathy Price, RPNS Administrator, curriculum coordinator, Studio Teacher

What is the RACE TO NOWHERE?

Race to Nowhere is a documentary film first shown in this area at Rye High School two months ago to a standing room only crowd. It is now being screened in communities all over the country. One of those screenings was at RPNS on January 27 where more than 250 parents were in attendance. At a second screening we invited faculty and administration from the four area preschools and Rye Country Day's pre-k program. The filmmaker is a parent who was moved after a series of wake up calls in her family and community. **Race to Nowhere** points to a silent epidemic in our schools of students building extensive resumes and becoming involved in myriad extracurricular activities with no free time and without developing the life skills they need, all the while often struggling with stress-related illness and depression. By college we have youth people who are both unprepared and uninspired.

Why did we show **Race to Nowhere** to parents of young kids?

RPNS administrators, Board and teachers believe it is imperative to discuss these concerns with families who have young children. We wished to start the conversation in the preschool years about patterns and practices that lead up to the issues highlighted in the film. We want to address questions about how to raise well-adjusted children when we are hearing that the educational systems are inadequate. This film is a call to action for families, educators, and policy makers to challenge current assumptions about growing up in America and to re-define success and achievement from an early age. Following our screening we had a panel discussion with teachers, a clinical psychologist, and parents entertaining questions and comments from the audience. Also in attendance were members of the Rye Youth Council steering committee on Race to Nowhere issues.

