



The Bellringer



Nicolls Memorial Presbyterian Church

MAY 2011

PO Box 605, 228 Crosby Blvd., Old Forge, NY 13420

Phone: 369-3475 email: nicolls@frontiernet.net web site: www.nicolls.org

Mountain Meditations *by Rev. Lawrence Bartel*

Holy Week. I walk carefully through this time. I pray my way through these days filled with awe. I tremble when I think of Jesus' great demonstration of love for us... for me.

I also turn to music. I most often turn to Brahms' German Requiem, Beethoven's Missa Solemnis, and Handel's Messiah. It's the Messiah I'm listening to right now as I think of the words of the Irish poet and former priest John O'Donohue. O'Donohue once shared that *music is what language would LOVE to be – if it could*. The Messiah, even the story of Handel's writing of this masterpiece, helps us glimpse the Easter message in a new perspective.

In 1741, George Frideric Handel was 56 years old and teetering on the brink of failure. His patrons had been dukes and kings in both his native Germany and adopted home of England. But deep into middle age he was nearly bankrupt, living with great physical pain, and becoming reclusive.

Threatened with debtor's prison and deeply depressed, Handel moved to Dublin. There, a friend who had written a script about the life of Christ, visited him. The friend was curious. Would Handel take the text and compose the music for it? Handel had few options. Without studying the libretto in depth, Handel answered that he would and estimated that the music would be done in about a year.

Then a little while later – a collection of Dublin charities approached Handel to compose a work who would help free men from debtor's prison. Just a step away from debtors prison himself, Handel became inspired by this cause and enthusiastically welcomed the commission.

Handel now had a text and a motivation. He set about the inspired act of composition. Within six days, Part One of the Messiah was finished. In nine more days, Part Two. Six more days and Part Three was done. He completed the entire orchestra score in two additional days. In just over three weeks, Handel had composed 260 pages of music.

This legendary burst of creativity has many beautiful stories to help us appreciate the feat. I still clearly remember my childhood piano teacher, Mrs. Berg, telling me in the middle of a lesson that Handel left his room on only the rarest occasion and barely touched any food for that three week period.

In another story, an assistant walked into Handel's room. The assistant had been shouting outside the door for several minutes with no response. The assistant found Handel in tears. When asked what was wrong, Handel held up the score of the Hallelujah chorus and said, *I have seen – the face – of God... I do think I did see all Heaven before me, and the great God himself*.

As I study the gospel of Matthew for Easter Sunday, I wonder if this vision is what the gospel writer is trying to describe surrounding the events at the tomb. As I listen to the Hallelujah chorus, the sopranos are the voices of the angels reaching higher and ever higher. In their soaring voices, I too strain to articulate the indescribable joy of resurrection.

When the last note fades, I wonder what could possibly follow such an ethereal chorus. In his wisdom, Handel gives the moment to a single voice. A soprano simply and beautifully sings, *I know that my Redeemer liveth*. The moment is sublime.

If the Hallelujah chorus is the exuberant joy of Easter Sunday, *I know that my Redeemer liveth* is a perfect affirmation of faith throughout the Easter season.

Once, Handel conducted a performance of the Messiah at Bristol Cathedral. The great church reformer John Wesley was in attendance at the concert. Afterward, Wesley is said to have remarked, *I doubt if that congregation was ever so serious at a sermon – as they were during this performance*.

George Frideric Handel died on Holy Saturday, the day before Easter. He hoped in his own words *to meet his good God, his sweet Lord and Savior, on the day of his Resurrection*.

Transitions

Each month we share "transitional experiences" within the Niccolls family. Please call the church for more information or if you have an individual to add.

Compassion

Barb Gribneau – home
Terry Lehnen – home
Mary Moore – home
Lorraine Stripp – home



Condolences

Margaret Getaz – wife of the late former pastor of Niccolls Church, James L. Getaz, Jr.; mother of Joan, Marie, James and Betsy
Bob McAleese - husband of Helene
Bill Skinner - husband of Jane, brother of Sherm
Jane Skinner
101 Ridgeview Circle
Williamsburg, Iowa 52361

Elders and Deacons

Elders currently serving on Session:

Judy Barker	MaryAnn Nelson
Jean Bird (winter)	Caroline Pepper (winter)
Olin Eddy	Mary Petrie (summer)
Darwin Johnston (summer)	Tom Ryan (summer)
Jeff Livingstone (winter)	Nadine Sanders
Lois Lowenberg	Ken Strike
Sue Mahoney	Patrick Venetz

Currently serving on the Board of Deacons:

Katie Boesché	Patty Mahardy
Mary Durfee (summer)	Ann Powley
Kristin Frymire (winter)	Kathy Riehle
Linda Hippisley	Linda Ryan (summer)
Marilynn Hurlbutt (summer)	Betty Stem (winter)
Therá Levi (winter)	Nancy Venetz

Please lift all of our church leaders up in prayer as they cultivate grace-filled ministry and mission throughout the entire Niccolls family.

Memorial Weekend GIANT Tag Sale



The Annual Niccolls Church Giant Tag Sale will be held Memorial Day weekend, May 27th, 28th and 29th.

This benefit sale provides shopping fun from "name your own price" to "silent auctions" for larger items. The youth will once again man a tent in the front yard of the church, selling food and drinks to provide energy for shopping.

Donations of items for this sale – furniture, working appliances, tools, sporting equipment and electronics (no computers, please!) in working condition – are needed. Items may be delivered to the Niccolls Fellowship Hall starting May 22nd. However, if storage is needed before then, call the church office (369-3475) or Therá Levi (369-5126) for assistance. (All clothing donations should still be made to the Thrift Shop – which will be open for extended hours over the weekend.)

Proceeds from this year's sale will benefit the Community Transportation Services, Ltd. (CTS), Home Aide Service of the Central Adirondacks (HASCA), the Niccolls Food Pantry, the Youth Group, and the Niccolls Church Renovation Fund.

Volunteers for set-up, sale and/or breakdown are welcome. The sale will take place on Friday and Saturday from 9-4 and Sunday from 11:30a.m. to 2pm. For further information, please call the Niccolls Church Office at 369-3475.

Church Library

Pick up the current edition of Presbyterians Today on the coffee table in our church library. The cover story "Good News to the Poor" reminds us of scripture's call in our lives to live out God's vision of a world in which no one is poor or hungry.



One Great Hour of Sharing Offering

by Ken Strike for the Mission Committee

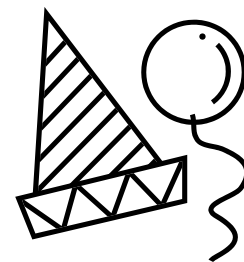


The theme of this year's One Great Hour of Sharing offering was *Sharing resources, changing lives*. Taken on Palm Sunday the offering has (so far) generated \$917.98. The One Great Hour offering supports three programs: the *Presbyterian Hunger Program*, *Self-Development of*

People, and *Presbyterian Disaster Assistance*. Thank you for your concern for meeting the needs of the world poor, displaced, and hungry and helping to change their lives for the better.

May Birthdays:

Sarah Kelly	5/1
Timothy Ritz	5/2
Caroline Pepper	5/6
Mackenzie Smith	5/16
Zach Brombacher	5/22
Howard Weiman	5/23
Margo Boylan	5/24
Dave Pierson	5/25
Colleen Brombacher Parker	5/30



Thrift Shop News

by Deborah Elmer

Wow! Thrift Shop volunteers have been busy during the past few weeks. The entire shop was emptied and scrubbed clean from top to bottom, the outer areas were freshly painted, and all the shelves were recovered. Bargain hunters will find the shop stocked with spring clothing and accessories, jewelry, and seasonal household items. Readers will find the bookshelves reorganized and filled with interesting titles, old and new. Newly acquired toys and other items for children are also on display.

All are welcome to stop by and see what's blooming! New merchandise will be added every week, so become a regular visitor – and be sure to thank those wonderful volunteers who quietly donate many, many hours to make Niccolls' Thrift Shop the best place in town to find gently used treasures.

Continuing Faith and Fellowship Groups

All are welcome to join one of the Faith and Fellowship Groups at Niccolls. These groups meet to encourage each other to grow in faith and for fellowship and support. You are cordially invited to join one of these groups.



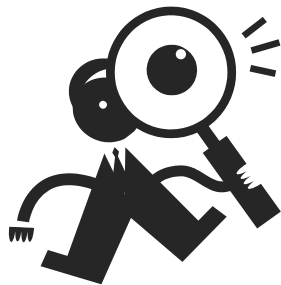
Deep Waters: This faith and fellowship group for men, explores the depths of men's lives beyond the surface of external appearances. This intergenerational group meets for breakfast, dialogue, and prayer. Come join the group on Saturday, May 14th, at 7:00a.m. at Walt's Diner.

DVD Discussion Group: Rob Bell has produced very thought-provoking DVDs which lead to helpful discussions on various faith related topics. All are welcome to come to this interesting group, and it is especially good for families as child care is provided; the children have a good time while their parents discuss important topics. The group will meet on Friday evening, May 6th at 6:00pm.

Living the Questions Group: This group listens to various opinions about points of faith and then discusses them, adding our own perspectives. None of us has all the answers, so how do we live with questions? Come for a casual evening with friends on a Friday evening to think about questions of faith, challenges facing Christians, and to expand our knowledge and understanding of our faith. Plan ahead and put June 10th on your calendar for the next meeting.

Stay tuned for summer events ahead: Sabbath Walks, discussions after church on Sunday mornings, and an exciting new group which will begin a different kind of mid-week experience.

The Find It Box *by Judy Barker*



Where can I find the square glass trays for the luncheon? Where can I find the flowered tablecloths? Where is the Advent table? Where are the Christmas wreaths? Where are the usher's boutonnieres? Where are the permanent flower arrangements for the sanctuary? Unless you can answer all these questions and many more, you need The Find It Box.

The Find It Box is on the counter in the main office and is the brainchild of Linda Hippisley. In it are 5x7 cards, arranged alphabetically, of many of the items in the church and a notation of where they can be found. Conversely, they also list where items should be put back after use.

It is hoped that everyone will help reactivate the Find It Box by updating the location of all of the many items we use in the church. If we all help to keep the Find It Box full with the current locations of things it will help all activities run more smoothly.

Nicolls Women's Fellowship *by Ruth Brussel and Ginny Milton*

April wasn't the nicest weather for our women to come out for meetings but come they did.

We settled on the date for the Fashion show – Wednesday, July 20th and it was agreed to hold it again at the North Woods Inn.

We chose April 27th to visit Bess Folsom at the Presbyterian Home in New Hartford. We will carpool from the church and eat at the cafeteria with Bess. We hope to have a time of sharing news and sing her favorite hymns.

Keeping with the Easter season we listened while Ellen read scriptures about the Easter Story from Palm Sunday to the Assention of Christ while we opened eggs containing symbols of Easter.

We welcome all folks at our meetings. Our next meeting will be May 2nd. Hope to see you in the Social Room at 10 a.m.

Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery of Utica

Presbyterian Women Spring Gathering
Wednesday, May 11th, 2011
Three Steeples Church, Paris
4:00 PM

“Will a Fighting Spirit Save Our Lives?”

All women are invited to the Presbyterian Women's meeting for a social time with other women, to hear what Women's Fellowships are doing in other churches in the area, to install new officers, and to worship together. Our speaker following dinner will be Rev. Kirk Hudson of Hope House. Nicolls supports Hope House through mission funds each year and many of us have helped prepare meals for Hope House over the years. Many women may have met Rev. Hudson, who is a very dynamic speaker, full of energy and blessed with great wisdom and a joy for life. Come to hear him speak about the value of the Holy Spirit in our lives. The title of his presentation is: “Will A Fighting Spirit Save Our Lives?”.

Dinner will be provided by the women of Three Steeples Church for a small cost of \$5.00, so please make your reservation with Vivian Brucker by calling 942-4251 or e-mailing her at vivbrucker@yahoo.com by May 4th.

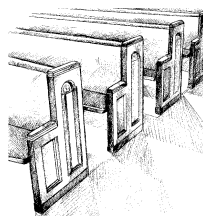
USHERS THIS MONTH

May 1

Linda Hippisley
Sheila White
Olin Eddy
Lori Eddy

May 22

Kathy Riehle
Jordan Levi
Matt André
Lizzie Riehle
Ella Mitchell



May 8

Carolyn and Greg O'Hara
Lynda and Tom Ryan

May 29

Dave & Deb Langworthy
Danielle & Wayne
Beckingham

May 15

Betty Stem
Caroline Pepper
Amy Bartel
Katie Kelly