

The Church Herald

Stony Brook Community Church (United Methodist), Stony Brook, New York



NYAC VISION STATEMENT

**The New York Annual
Conference, through the
grace of God, embodies a
beloved community of hope,
building up a healthy Body of
Christ, with heartwarmed
United Methodists
in mission for the
transformation of the world.**

STONY BROOK COMMUNITY CHURCH

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OUR WEB SITE AT:**

stonybrookcommunitychurch.org

The Pastor's Column

"Take It To Heart"

From a sermon preached 9-7-08

As much as I love vacation, I also love returning. I'm excited as we enter this fall and move into our ministries together for another season. I've always thought of Labor Day as New Year's Eve – this is when the real year begins in my life. Maybe it's left over from school days, but this is when it feels like everything gets started.

So, my New Year's sermon for you this morning is about getting to the heart of the matter: What is the Heart of Christianity, and then how do we take it to Heart?

Thinking about the heart is a great metaphor for our faith. It has several nuances: To begin with, it suggests what is most central – what is the core of our faith – the heart of the matter.

It also suggests what is it that drives our faith: What is the heartbeat without which our faith would cease to live?

Thirdly, it reminds us of our center – we have the phrase "head and heart." It reminds us of a faith that goes beyond the world of ideas – it must connect with our deepest yearnings.

Last, but not least – the Heart is the metaphor for love.

Paul approaches our faith this morning with the words, "Owe no one anything, except to love one another: for one who loves another has fulfilled the law. Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law."

Now that's getting to the Heart of the Matter - or IS IT? Is it enough to say our faith is about loving our neighbor, that if we just do no harm we have reached to the heart of our faith? How often we ascribe love and compassion to being "Christian" virtues. It is certainly tempting to go there, but frankly it is arrogant! Christianity has no corner on the capacity for living ethically. Buddhists, Islamists, Jews, Unitarians, Ethical Societies, tribal religions all hold as their core the call to love and compassion. It is certainly primary to our practice but not exclusive.

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Meet the “Bad Girls of the Bible” at UMW meeting

The UMW program originally scheduled for September 9 – featuring the video, "Bad Girls of the Bible" – instead will take place at the October 14 meeting. Come see and hear the Good News of God's grace from author, speaker and "encourager" Liz Curtis Higgs on her video, followed by a discussion with Rev. Liz Braddon. Meet bad-to-the-bone Jezebel and bad-for-a-moment Lot's wife. Share a rebellious snack with Eve and a delicious drink of water with the woman at the well. Toss out a red cord with redeemed Rahab and snip a new "do" with Delilah. Learn lessons from Sapphira, Michal and Potiphar's wife on what not to do, while the sinful woman who anointed the feet of Jesus shed timeless tears that still touch the heart today.

The Oct. 14 meeting will take place at 7:30 p.m. in the downstairs Community Room.

After hearing guests from the Eastern Farm Workers Association speak during Michele Dexter's Sunday sermon (presented while Rev. Braddon was away), the UMW decided to invite the EFWA to their Sept. 9 meeting and to reschedule the "Bad Girls" program for this month. At the meeting, the women voted to make a donation to the EFWA. Representatives of the group presented an interesting and informative program. Clothing, food and volunteers are needed. Please notify me or Michele Dexter if you can provide any of these items or donate some time.

Also on Sept. 9, the UMW voted to contribute to and join the "Friends of Hobbs Farm," a group of local people who seek to share and support the vision of the Bethel AME Church in Setauket. The church, as owners of the property and caretakers of the legacy of the Hobbs family, hope to re-establish a viable agricultural center that will preserve this open space and be a source of pride for the entire community.

Submitted by UMW President Virginia Sassano

United Methodist 101:

An Ongoing Series by Pastor Elizabeth Braddon

Global and National Missions are an important part of the United Methodist Church. One way this work is supported is through our World Service apportionments (about \$.04 of each dollar given). Because of the historic missions, there are United Methodist churches in Africa, Europe and the Philippines as well as relationships with independent Methodist churches in South and Central America that grew out of the work of United Methodist missionaries.

The main agency that oversees this work is the General Board of Global Ministries, including the Women's Division and the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR). There are a variety of ways that people serve in mission. There are about 515 people who are currently commissioned for service. That includes 237 full-time missionaries serving outside the United States, plus another 52 who are serving as church and community workers in the U.S. There are two- and three-year mission intern opportunities for young adults (ages 20-30). All of these programs are supported by our World Service Apportionments, United Methodist Women and the Advance (local churches that commit support funds).

In addition, several thousand people participate in very short-term "Volunteer in Mission" programs usually through their annual conference. Our annual conference is currently sponsoring many Volunteer-in-Mission teams to Biloxi, MS; Mozambique; Costa Rica; Haiti; Bolivia; and Ghana. Over the past 15 years, I have gone to Mozambique, Bolivia and Biloxi, MS, through these programs. It is a life-changing event. For more information, go to www.umc.org

Apple Festival is coming Saturday, October 4!

This year's Apple Festival is almost here. We're hoping for another great year with fine weather and good crowds. Plans are going well and details are being handled capably by fair committee members. We are excited to be coordinating our efforts to plan an event that reaches far and wide, not only to our immediate community but also to folks all across Long Island.

The Apple Festival bulletin board is up in the downstairs Community Room. Please take a look at it and find ways you can be involved. Don't forget to sign up to work the day of the fair. Look on the bulletin board for apple theme recipes you could try for yourselves or to donate to the bake table.

It helps enormously if everyone bakes one or more items for the bake table. It's always nice when there's a great selection of goodies for fairgoers to choose from, and, practically, it's a good money-maker for the fair.

Our Pie Making Extravaganza will be held on Sunday, Sept. 28, beginning at 1 p.m. We need you that day. There's a job for everyone, so please don't feel that if you're not a pie maker, you won't be needed. The more people who come, the faster the work gets done. It's always very satisfying when, at its completion, our cooperative efforts have produced 125 apple pies and we've had fun doing it!

Tell everyone you know about the fair—you are our best advertisers. While announcements are placed in newspapers and on local TV, word of mouth is the most effective way of getting the news out. Also, consider placing an ad in the festival pamphlet this year. The cost is \$25 for a business card size ad. A lot of people will see it!



Waveney Bowman prepares caramel apples at last year's festival.



From left: Henry Poor, Joan Cutler, Virginia Sassano and Kathy Martin man the crafts table at the 2007 event.

There is still a need for a person or persons to make quantities of pulled pork. This has been a great seller at the barbecue, and we need person-power to make it happen again this year. Speaking of needs, there is always a need for donations of \$\$\$ for supplies.

Set-up is scheduled to begin at 6 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 3. Again, the more people who can help, the easier and faster it goes. Your help will truly be appreciated. The same goes for clean-up on Saturday after the fair. Please plan to spend some extra time so it can go as efficiently as possible.

Okay, here goes – let's make this the best Apple Festival yet!

Thank you all, Pat

Charge Conference set for October 27

Our annual meeting with our district superintendent will take place on Monday, October 27, at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Room. This is a meeting for all who are involved in the church, not just the church officers. Along with our annual elections and reports of activities, we will be asked to evaluate how we are doing at reaching a younger and more diverse population and to make some plans for the coming year. This is a subject near and dear to our hearts and one which could use everyone's input.

The evening also will be an opportunity for you to meet our new district superintendent, Adrienne Brewington. Rev. Brewington comes to the district superintendency from serving as pastor of the Westbury UMC, but also following a first career as an assistant district attorney in the Bronx and with a theater background as an undergraduate. She has wonderful gifts for leading us both spiritually and administratively, and I hope you will take this opportunity to get to meet her.

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What then is at the Heart of our faith? It is our relationship to God as we have come to know God through the life and death of Jesus. Because it is the relationship formed – it means we are called to work at it. There are some core practices of faith that will bring the faith we assent to – that is, say we believe in – to being the faith that we live.



My “New Year’s” resolutions for this year to come are:

- 1) **To offer more ways for us to come together as small groups exploring the foundations of faith through Bible studies and book discussions. The purpose is to begin with knowledge – get beyond Biblical illiteracy – and also to move to the practical: What does it mean for our lives and the life of the world?**
- 2) **To deepen our worship experiences together on Sunday mornings, but also to explore how we might reach others through Taizé or other alternative worship opportunities.**
- 3) **To link our Sunday School, Sunday worship and youth experiences through our “Seasons of the Spirit” curriculum.**
- 4) **To expand our opportunities for serving the community and beyond with mission groups – like Habitat, but also serving meals at a soup kitchen, or going to Biloxi.**
- 5) **To strengthen our church through wider church leadership development within and ways to reach outside our doors to invite others in.**

To practice our faith is to pay attention to God, to be clear about our Christian identity, to nurture one another, to reach out in compassion and justice, and to live the way of Jesus, passionate about Love.

I hope you will join me in this New Year’s set of resolutions, and as we come to the table today, seal our commitment to and relationship with the God of Love who has invited us to partake in this feast and seal our commitment to and relationship with one another because we know what it is to be loved.

Peace,
Elizabeth

October 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
SEPT. 28 Pie-Making Extravaganza 1 p.m.			1 Taizé Candlelight Service, 7 p.m. Lay Leadership Comm., 7:45 p.m.	2	3 Set-up for Apple Fest, 6 p.m.	4 APPLE FESTIVAL 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.
5 Worship, Sunday School, 10 a.m. Fellowship, 11 a.m. MYE, 6 p.m.	6 Bible Study, 10:15 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. 7 p.m., AA	7	8 Taizé Candlelight Service, 7 p.m. Lay Leadership Comm., 7:45 p.m.	9 6 p.m., AA Finance Comm., 7:30 p.m.	10 10 a.m., Al-Anon	11
12 Worship & Sunday School, 10 a.m. Fellowship, 11 a.m.	13 Columbus Day 7 p.m., AA	14	15 Taizé Candlelight Service, 7 p.m. Lay Leadership Comm., 7:45 p.m.	16 6 p.m., AA	17 10 a.m., Al-Anon	18
19 Worship & Sunday School, 10 a.m. Fellowship, 11 a.m. Confirmation, 5 p.m.	20 Bible Study, 10:15 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. 7 p.m., AA Youth Activities Council, 7:30 p.m.	21	22 Taizé Candlelight Service, 7 p.m.	23 6 p.m., AA	24 10 a.m., Al-Anon	25 Children's Halloween Party, 4 p.m.-5:30 p.m.
26 Worship & Sunday School, 10 a.m. Fellowship, 11 a.m.	27 Bible Study, 10:15 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. 7 p.m., AA Charge Conference, 7:30 p.m.	28	29 Taizé Candlelight Service, 7 p.m.	30 6 p.m., AA	31 Halloween 10 a.m., Al-Anon	

UPCOMING FALL EVENTS!!

Apple Festival
Saturday, October 4
11 a.m to 5 p.m.



Children's Halloween Party
Saturday, October 25
4 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Pizza dinner served. Wear costumes!