

SCARBOROUGH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

NEWSLETTER

www.scarboroughchurch.org

Articles Invited from Members & Friends

November 2008

Rev. Timothy Ives, Pastor
 Mr. Kenneth Potter, Choir Director & Organist
 Mrs. Barbara Devir, Commissioned Lay Pastor
 Ms. Florence Fletcher, Office Administrator
 Mrs. Katya Montelbano, Director Children's Center

P.O. Box 8835, Scarborough, N.Y. 10510
 Church (914)941-1142; Fax (914)944-0027
 e-mail: office@scarboroughchurch.org
 SPChildren's Center (914)941-0025
 SPCC e-mail: spchildrenscenter@yahoo.com

WORSHIP CALENDAR

10:30am Worship

Communion 1st Sunday of the Month.
 Childcare provided for 1st grade + younger

- Nov. 1 (Daylight Savings-turn clocks back 1 hour)
- Nov. 2 **Who Sent You**
 Matthew 22:1-14
New Members Reception
- Nov. 4 *Election Day*
- Nov. 9 **Rev. Bill Shaw Guest Preacher**
 5:00pm *Organ Design for AGO by Ed Odell*
- Nov. 11 *Veterans Day*
- Nov. 15 **Annual Joint Elders & Deacons
 Leadership Retreat 9-11 am**
- Nov. 16 **Make Us Wise**
 Matthew 25:14-30
- Nov. 23 **What to Do?**
 Matthew 25:31-46
Consecration Sunday
Baptism Fenley Reilly
Annual Thanksgiving Dinner
- Nov. 27 *Thanksgiving Day*
- Nov. 30 **The Beginning of the End**
Advent Begins
 Mark 13:24-37

LOOKING AHEAD

- Dec. 6 **Greening of the Church**

From the Pastor's Pen....

A Precious Kind of Thanks

"Happiness at its deepest and best is not the portion of a cushioned life which never struggled, overpassed obstacles, bore hardships, or adventured in sacrifice for costly aims. A heart of joy is never found in luxuriously coddled lives, but in men and women who achieve and dare, who have tried their powers against antagonisms, who have met even sickness and bereavement and have tempered their souls in fire. If we were set upon making a happy world, then we would not leave out struggle or make adversity impossible. The unhappiest world conceivable would be a world with nothing hard to do, no conflicts to wage for ends worthwhile; a world where courage was not needed and sacrifice was a superfluity."

-Harry Emerson Fosdick

"Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. (1 Thessalonians 5: 16-18)"

Thanksgiving is upon us and for me it ushers in a lovely time of year. Thanksgiving is a warm and wonderful event in my memory. Thanksgiving calls forth family times when I was a kid. We would gather with my cousins and other relatives. We would eat ourselves silly and no one was in a hurry to go or do anything. I don't even remember being interrupted by a football game. Dad and Uncle Bud would tell stories usually the same old stories we had all heard many times, but that was okay because it meant we belonged. And of course we would laugh. They were great story tellers. Thanksgiving also ushered in my favorite time of year .Christmas. In my high school years Thanksgiving was the weekend that the hockey season started. In college it was a time to see old friends and hang out with people I missed. Now that I am a parent I find myself very happy to have my family together though these days we usually chase off to a hockey tournament. No greater joy for Abbie but a little tough on the rest of us! The truth

is that Thanksgiving is a favorite holiday. I like the idea of it and the way it is celebrated. Gratitude may be the most important element in creating happiness in our lives and so we are wise to make a holiday out of it.

All of us of course have much to be thankful for and it is worthwhile to do so. However, giving thanks out of our abundance, though a healthy practice, hardly resembles the moment that we believe we are commemorating. We forget that the Mayflower reached these shores in December .they were supposed to land further south but ended up in what came to be known as Plymouth at a very inopportune time of year. No one would draw it up that way. Starting a new settlement from scratch that far north with winter coming on was not good planning. And predictably that first winter did not go well. More than half of the company died in those first few months. The summer came but did not bring great fortune. The first harvest was meager at best. As fall set in and winter loomed another group of pilgrims arrived and so they faced another devastating few months without enough food. It was in this precarious circumstance that the first Thanksgiving was celebrated. Gratitude is easy with abundance all around but gratitude in deprivation demands a very special kind of faith.

This was not the first attempt at colonizing the new world. Two previous efforts had failed and I wonder if it wasn't this incredible spirit that helped this one succeed. They did not have much at all but they had a powerful faith. Sometimes that is the most precious kind of gratitude .a faith in God that will not let go. Happy Thanksgiving!

Many Blessings,

Tim

WORSHIP SUPPORT TEAMS

	<u>Ushers</u>	<u>Readers</u>	<u>Coffee Hour Host</u>
11/2	Bob Pierce Kathy Shaffren	Tom Davis	Meegan Hammond Camille Lane
11/9	Joel Cambron Bonnie B-Smith	Linnea Carnes	Lisa Pavlik Catherine Savell
11/16	Don Swartout Peter Chapman	Ed Payne	Lisa Cerny Nary Kim
11/23	Gene Croft Terri Zuckerberg	Will Ingraham	Annual Thanks- giving Dinner CLC
11/30	Jay Sutterlin Malcolm Kostechenko	Patty Chapman	Sandy Evans Danielle Reilly

We need volunteers. If you are unable to serve on the assigned dates, please arrange for a substitute and/or call the office; you will receive a reminder call the week prior to your date of service. Guidesheets are posted at the Pastor's Study and Kitchenette. Thank you, in advance, for your willingness to serve in this way.

MEN! MEN! MEN!

The senior choir continues to inspire our congregation (and ourselves!) with beautiful music. Our greatest need is to have more men in the tenor and bass sections. Please consider making choir participation an important part of your ministry at Scarborough. It only involves a 45 minute rehearsal before church each Sunday.

WESTCHESTER AGO PRESENTATION

On November 9 at 5:00 p.m. the American Guild of Organists' Westchester Chapter will meet at Scarborough Church to hear a presentation on organ building and maintenance by Edward Odell. This will be followed by a brief demonstration recital by Ken Potter. Refreshments will follow. All are welcome. You haven't lived till you've heard Sir Arthur Sullivan's "The Lost Chord" played on our organ. Maybe we'll find that chord.....

JUNIOR CHOIR

We are so happy with the growth of our Junior Choir this fall. Four exceptionally talented newcomers have recently joined the choir and are making themselves heard. Our next performance will be on November 23rd when we will sing "Promised Land" by Natalie Sleeth. The Junior Choir will also be prominently featured in the Christmas Pageant. All youngsters are welcome and needed in this group. Rehearsals are each Sunday during coffee hour. Junior Choir is lots of fun!



ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

During Advent a different family is asked to do the honor of opening worship each week with **lighting of the Advent candle(s)** If you would like to participate in this tradition on any particular week, please call or e-mail the office or speak with Tim. Advent begins on Nov. 30th this year.

NEWS FROM THE
SCARBOROUGH PRESBYTERIAN
CHILDREN'S CENTER

The school year is off to a great start. The children are a joy and a delight! They are busy playing, learning, creating beautiful works of art, cooking scrumptious snacks, singing and moving their bodies during Music and enjoying wonderful children's stories at circle time. As each day passes, we see the children becoming more and more comfortable with the classroom routines, with their classmates and with the teachers. The days are finally getting cooler; the leaves are changing colors and falling to the ground. Fall is finally here. The children have enjoyed nature walks around the school - collecting leaves, twigs and acorns that have been used to create wonderful collages.

On October 8th we had our first visit from "The Nature of Things". The Nature of Things is a wonderful organization that brings in a variety of animals to our school. The children have the opportunity to pet each animal and learn about where the animal lives, what they eat and what is unique about each animal. The children enjoyed meeting a dove, tree frog, guinea pig, snake, and a gecko. Our next visit will be on Nov. 6th.

On October 16th we had a visit from the Briarcliff Manor Fire Department. The children enjoyed climbing into the truck, climbing through the ambulance and watching as Firefighter Alex put on all his gear. All of our classes learned important fire safety rules.



On October 19th we had our annual SPC & SPCC Halloween Party. We had a fantastic turn out this year. Each class was set up with crafts and games. Everyone enjoyed the prizes too. At 5:00 we all joined together for a lovely dinner. Thank you to Tim Ives, pastor at SPC and the SPC Congregational Life members that helped make this event possible - Camille Lane, Terri Zuckerberg, Debbie Wenninger, Kathryn Wenninger, Catherine Savell, Karin Chaudhari and Signe Seelinger. A special thanks to Don Swartout for all his help with set up and Steve Cho for his help with clean up. Also, special thanks to Connie Curran, Patty Chapman, Caroline Cho and Linnea Carnes for all of their hard

work with our Haunted Walk - once again it was a creative masterpiece. Thank you to all the parents that attended. All had a great time.

Halloween is coming up and the children have been learning about pumpkins and practicing our spooky songs. Each class will have a costume parade and party on the 31st. In November we will be discussing giving thanks and Thanksgiving.

November will be a busy month at SPCC. **November 17th through the 21st** we will have our **annual Food Drive for the Ossining Food Pantry**. We will celebrate Thanksgiving with a Feast on November 25th.

Registration for the 2009-2010 School year, which begins in September 2009, will open on November 10th. Classes being offered include:

- " Tuesday / Thursday morning 2's
- " Monday / Wednesday / Friday morning 2's
- " Monday through Friday morning 3's
- " Monday / Wednesday / Friday morning 3's
- " Tuesday through Friday afternoon 3's
- " Monday through Friday morning 4's
- " Tuesday through Friday afternoon 4's

Anyone interested in registering his or her child should call 941-0025, ext. 17 for more information.

Enjoy the beautiful fall weather

Katya Montelbano
Director SPCC

SPCC ANNUAL FOOD DRIVE
Themes Little Acts of Kindness can
make a difference and Helping Hands.

Items will be received through Nov. 21 in the Parish House hallway. Please help feed the hungry in our neighborhood. Sunday school children may bring their gifts of food forward at Word to the Children/Childrens message time. All donations will be taken to the Ossining Food Pantry for distribution. Canned goods (fruit, vegetables, soup, juice, meats such as spam and tuna fish, etc.) are especially needed in addition to Thanksgiving traditional foods.



CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

Address change for Bob & Meg Pierce
(as of 11/3) The Pines #308
19 Narragansett Avenue
Ossining, N.Y. 10562

OUT AND ABOUT

The Presbyterian Church of Mt. Kisco will host a free screening of the film, "For the Bible Tells Me So" on Sunday, Nov. 9 at 5:00pm.

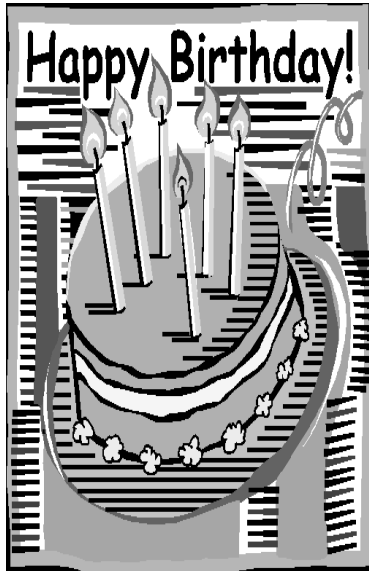
This insightful film confronts literal interpretations of the Bible and reconciles scripture and homosexuality through the experiences of five American families- including those of former House Majority Leader Richard Gephardt and Episcopal Bishop Gene Robinson. It offers healing, clarity and understanding.

For the Bible Tells Me So was a Grand Jury Prize nominee at the 2007 Sundance Film Festival, and has received many other awards and honors. A panel discussion featuring local clergy and family therapists will follow the screening.

People of all faith traditions are welcome to attend. For more information contact Rev. Jim Poinsett at 914-666-7002

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 1-Karin Chaudhari
Helen Langsam(SPCC)
- 3-Alex Kostuchenko
Chuck Ramsey
- 4-Pia Chaudhari
- 9-Lance Nelson
- 10-Meegan Hammond
- 11-Barbara Devir
- 14-Doris Anglin
- 15-Lee Green
- 16-Rory Anglin
Don Swartout
- 18-Ed Schuster
- 19-Cory Ethridge
Debbie Wenninger
- 21-Kathryn Wenninger
- 22-Andrea Norene
- 30-Praveen Chaudhari



Please let us know if we missed listing your birthday. Is there a special event or success (graduation, birth, engagement, new job, etc.) coming up or just past? We'd love to celebrate with you!

RUMMAGE SALE SUCCESSFUL DAY

We had a great rummage sale this year. The day started slowly with a damp chill in the air; however, by mid morning the sun was peaking out from behind the clouds, the food was cooking on the grill and people were busy going from one section of the sale to another looking for a bargain. At the end of the day, the tally showed a net of \$10,675 dollars - a very successful day!

An event like this takes a lot of work and volunteers. Again, as in the past, most members, as well as some friends of the church took part - pitching in and doing whatever they could - be it baking, cooking, sorting, setting-up, selling, or cleaning-up. We extend a great big thank you to each of you for all your support, help and your donations.

We would like at this time to acknowledge the members of the rummage sale committee and thank them for their time and effort in making this such a success: **Inge Vought, Linnea Carnes, Lisa Pavlik** (white elephant); **Claire Payne, Pia Chaudhari** (boutique); **Lisa and Jim Cerny** (toys); **Lucy Milne** (bake sale); **Don Swartout, Karin Chaudhari** (furniture); **Tom Davis** (books); **Debbie Wenninger, Mary Helen Davis** (clothing); **Camille Lane** (publicity); and **Don Copans** (accounting).

We would also like to give a special thank you to **Joel Cambron, John Codman and Peter Chapman** for grilling perfect hamburgers and hot dogs; to **Nary Kim** for again preparing her delicious spring rolls and chicken strips for our food stand; to **Jim and Kelly Simmons** for donating the water and sodas to sell; to **Catherine Savell** for doing all the food shopping; to **Michele Croft** for the maps and signage; to **Jerry Lane, Ken Vought, Steven Cho and Jay Sutterlin** for spearheading the clean-up; to SPC friends, **David and Tiffany Black**, for their help in picking up furniture and helping out on the day of the sale; to friends **Kitty and Matt Burruss** for all their help; and to **Flo Fletcher**, the SPC Office Manager, for doing whatever was asked.

Finally, a big thank you to **Don Swartout**, SPC's Buildings and Grounds Manager, for all of his hard work in (1) setting-up for this event, (2) picking up furniture and other donations, and (3) cleaning up after all is said and done. His dedication to this church is *much* appreciated.

from
Connie Curran & Kathy Davis, Co-chairs

JUST A REGULAR GRAPE

As I read the parables about the vineyard, I realize that I am one of the followers of Jesus, the current fruit on the vine, and so one question I ask myself is "What kind of grape am I?"

I like to think that I am a good grape. I try to be, but things are always a matter of perspective. Recently, I had an experience that changed mine.

I took a trip to Buenos Aires. I booked the flights using frequent flier miles, and found a wonderful hotel for only \$80 a night. Taxis were cheap, the entertainment good, and the sights exciting. A steak dinner cost about \$10, a bottle of wine even less. A ride on the subway was only 30 cents. Everything was unbelievably good until the last morning, when my wallet was stolen. I was angry and frustrated. There went two credit cards, as well as the cash for a super splurge lunch at a restaurant that only took cash. I was pretty angry. Things were no longer going the way I had planned.

In the end, two toll free phone calls to report the cards stolen and a visit to a cash machine repaired the material damage. With perspective, the incident became more minor frustration than catastrophe. There was still steak and wine and a taxi back to the hotel.

What remained was my feeling of violation and my sure knowledge that, at least, I was a better grape than they guy who took the wallet. And then I began to think.

Why am I such a good grape? Is it because I have been given enough of the material things in life so that I can have credit cards and a bank card to give me ready cash? Is it because I am in a position to take lovely vacations? Is it because God has given me much more than I need, even when some of it is taken away?

And then I realized that I wasn't such a great grape after all. I was just a grape who, like those in the vineyard Bible stories, had been given many blessings by the Lord.

On this trip I had walked by people begging on the streets and even congratulated myself when I gave some of them a few coins. One peso, the smallest coin, is worth about 33 cents. There are 100 centavos in a peso. You do the math. While I was enjoying my steak and wine, I was being remarkably uncharitable.

It is a long plane ride home from Argentina, eleven hours to be exact. There is plenty of time to think, and think I did.

I thought about how much I have been given, and

remembered that it is God who puts me in this time and place and gives me so many opportunities. I realized that God may expect more of me than I usually produce.

If I am a good grape, it is because God has lavished much care on the vineyard. I realized that I am not so very different from the people in those Bible stories. I sometimes expect blessings because I am a child of God. I do not always think of what is expected of me in return.

I thought of how I might, perhaps, become a better grape, more like the person God has given me the potential to be.

I remembered that Jesus told me to love my neighbors, even the one who "steals my wallet." I remembered who made me who I am and whose fruit I bring forth.

Barbara Devir, CLP

STEWARDSHIP

The Scarborough Presbyterian Church is a community of faith. It is gathered for faith and it exists because of faith. In that it is an institution based on faith, it is different than any other institution. Faith is something different. Faith according to Paul is one of the only three essences in the entire universe that has lasting value. (Can you name the other two? Look at 1 Corinthians 13) This makes the church essential to this world. What is more needed in this world than the clear assurance and power of faith? If faith was the rule in this world then fear could not overwhelm us and despair would not stalk us. And many, many poor decisions would be avoided. I dare say we would not be in the mess that we are.

I am asking every member of the congregation to make a pledge to the church. I am asking this because the very act of approaching God and working through your pledge to the church is a spiritual discipline. It is all about faith and growth in faith. It is a blessing to you and the church. So please do consider your pledge. What is faith worth?

Consecration Sunday is November 23rd. We will be giving our pledge cards during the service and enjoying a shared Thanksgiving dinner after the service. Sounds like a perfect way to start Thanksgiving week.

Tim

A Message: SPC Energy Task Force

God said, "See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." Genesis 1: 29-30

New York Interfaith Power and Light is an excellent resource for information and tips on ways to take care of one of our most precious gifts from God - The EARTH. In her opening statement of the September 2008 issue of News from New York Interfaith Power & Light, Executive Director, Nicola Coddington, says "September ushers in a season of renewed activity on behalf of the earth". In this spirit, an article from New York Interfaith Power and Light's newsletter is being included in our SPC newsletter. Should you desire to explore ways to lighten your carbon footprint on the world, there are websites and links to be explored.

Peace,
Beth Henriques & Terri Zuckerberg

News from New York Interfaith Power & Light
September 2008

In this issue:

- * Why is 350 the most important number?
- * Last chance for IPL discount on Renewal DVDs!
- * Resource update
- * Greenbuild Conference
- * How could our website help you better?

Get Inspired to Act!

September ushers in a season of renewed activity on behalf of the Earth; I'm amazed and inspired by what congregations of all faiths are doing and planning this fall! For news and resources to help you and your faith community to take action, please see the items below, and don't forget to visit our website at www.NYIPL.org!

Blessings,
Nicola Coddington
Executive Director

Have You Heard About 350 the Most Important Number on the Planet?

That's because 350 is the red line for human beings. According to the most recent science, unless we can quickly reduce the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere to 350 parts per million (ppm) from its current level of 385 ppm, we will cause huge and irreversible damage to the earth. Please see www.350.org to learn about the huge, fast-growing movement to focus attention on the urgent need to get humanity out of the danger zone and how you can participate! As an example of how members of the faith community

are taking action, see <http://www.350.org/en/category/action-categories/faith>.

As it says at <http://www.350.org/en/sound-hope-and-spirit>, It's essential that our movement convey the moral and spiritual implication of fighting climate change. Faith communities have the unique capacity to communicate and address those deeper elements of this movement. In Massachusetts and elsewhere in the United States, churches have begun a campaign to ring their church bells 350 times and spread the 350 call to action.... We're inviting all faith communities around the world to add their voices or noises of any sound really. Whether it be chanting, drumming, bells, or horns, consider how your congregation, temple, mosque or spiritual community might publicly make 350 prayerful, hopeful sounds.

Some congregations in New York State, including some NYIPL members, are already planning bell-ringing (whether church bells or handbells), blowing the shofar, or other such actions for the fall. How about yours? Let us know at NYIPL@earthlink.net and, if you like, we can help publicize your event on our website! (And of course be sure to post it on the www.350.org website!) Here's what Archbishop Desmond Tutu, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, has to say about 350: Climate change is a reality. Life depends on a sustainable environment. With no world, there can only be nothing--no birds, no animals, no trees, no us. That's why getting involved in Project 350 is so important - it's an effective way to take action to turn around the climate crisis.

ADULT EDUCATION NEWS

LECTURE SERIES: has begun with Rev. Dr. Tim Ives first two lectures in a series of six on "The Second Death of Christ." This series looks at the diversity and tolerance that was part of the church in the first three centuries of existence. Then the series examines the change that came with the first Christian Emperor Constantine. The question is, "Did the resulting orthodoxy help or hurt the ministry of Christ?" Please come, ask questions and join the lively discussion to follow. The next Friday evening meeting will be Dec. 5th at 7 p.m. with refreshments provided. Please contact the office at 941-1142 with any questions.

BIBLE STUDY: Rev. Tim continues weekly Bible study of the Sunday Lectionary Readings every Wednesday at 11 a.m. Come for discussion only or bring a bag lunch if you can stay a little longer. Please contact the SPC office at 941-1142 or Amy Kitahata-Sporn at amyks@optonline.net with any questions. Everyone is welcome to join at any time and can find the Lectionary Readings online at www.PCUSA.org then by selecting: Devotions and Readings, Read Them Online, Next Sunday.

ADULT EDUCATION COURSE: Tom Davis and Joel Cambron continue to facilitate our Sunday lecture and discussion course on Martin Luther: Gospel Law & Reformation in the Carriage House conference room at 9:15 a.m. before the Sunday service. We started at the beginning of the summer and are continuing with DVD lecture viewing and discussion. Outlines of the study course are available in the office on the table outside the Administrator's office. Copies of transcripts of any of the lectures can also be obtained if requested. For more information contact Amy K-S at amyks@optonline.net .

DINNER & A MOVIE GROUP: will meet Friday, Nov. 14th, at 7:30 p.m. to share potluck dinner, movie viewing and discussion. Please contact Kathy Davis at 941-5537 with any movie preferences.

SPIRITUAL LIFE DINNERS: continue to meet every first and third Thursday of the month at 6:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. Dinner is provided by regular participants and all are welcome to come and share in the meal and conversation about our spiritual journeys. Please contact Karin Chaudhari at 941-5736 or Amy at amyks@optonline.net for more information. The fall schedule is: Oct. 2nd & 16th, Nov. 6th & 20th, Dec. 4th & 18th.

THE SPC LENDING LIBRARY: is open and located between the Sanctuary and Chapel in The Pastor's Study. Please feel free to sign out & in any books on the shelves stamped "Scarborough Presbyterian Church."

Lecture Series at St. Theresa's Church 7:30pm
Mon., 11/10 The Spiritual Life of Dorothy Day
Speaker: Robert Ellsberg
Tues. 12/2 A Poet on Poetry Speaker: Sam Hazo

A New Earth by Eckhart Tolle: A Continuing Discussion

How do we conceive of God? In an exchange with a friend about some of Eckhart Tolle's ideas in his book *The New Earth*, I share with you the response: "As you know, I do have deep reservations about the book, and the philosophy in general that undergirds Tolle's worldview, as it seem to come out of a pantheistic view but it is one which I am not sure is compatible with my own more pan-entheistic/monotheistic worldview. I have benefited greatly from Tolle's insights as to how we identify falsely with our thoughts/emotions etc, but I do not agree that all is One and I have never found that to be a sufficiently grounding or nourishing worldview for me. I didn't know why until I came to understand and believe in the deeply loving 'I-Thou' relationship as a reality of the created world, rather than a monistic world of oneness where all separation is an illusion. I believe God created us to have loving relationships

with the 'other,' rather than all notion of 'other' being an illusion "

I must admit I had to go look up the definitions of these words: pantheistic, pan-entheistic, monotheistic, and monistic before responding. The American Heritage Dictionary defines the following: Pantheism: 1) A doctrine of identifying Deity with the universe and its phenomena; 2) Belief in and worship of all gods. Monotheism: The doctrine or belief that there is only one God. Monism: 1) The view in metaphysics that reality is a unified whole and that all existing things can be ascribed to or described by a single concept or system; 2) The doctrine that mind and matter are formed from, or reducible to, the same ultimate substance or principle of being.

I couldn't find pan-entheism in the dictionary so I asked my friend to clarify what it is. Here is the response: "In my understanding it is the belief that God both created, and is present in, the material/created world. Traditional monotheistic beliefs sometimes make the world sound as though God is absent from it - that he created it, but is not present in it except through occasional "divine intervention." So I don't find 'old fashioned' monotheism satisfactory. Pan-entheism, as I interpret it, says that God transcends His creation, while also being present in it. He is both immanent and transcendent, personal and creative. My understanding of pantheism, on the other hand, is that there is no ultimate difference between God and the created world, and God does not transcend the created world."

I do not think that Eckhart Tolle is negating the I-Thou relationship that I believe exists between us and God. Perhaps we can come from the same source and return to the same source but while we are in this life/form have a relationship with God and know that God is here to engage with us. The problem of Tolle's work is that what he is pointing to cannot be understood by the mind. His writing seems to be saying contradictory things. But, I believe that this is the paradox of some truths and of God. These things the mind cannot fully comprehend. More often we know or feel the truth of these paradoxes in our hearts. So in a way I guess I believe both in monotheism and monism even though they seem contradictory. Can we believe in one God and believe we are all part of a unified whole or come from the same ultimate substance or principal of being?

On the issue of pantheism I do not believe Tolle is saying that our lives have no significance or that all life is an illusion. But perhaps life is temporary and awareness of this temporariness gives us an awareness of our essence. I was glad to learn the term pan-entheism since it acknowledges my belief that God is creator of and participant in the world. How do you define God?

In peace & love, *Amy Kitahata-Sporn*
with many thanks to Ken Vought, Pia & Karin Chaudhari. *A New Earth* is available in the SPC Lending Library.

THOMAS FAMILY NEWSLETTER - NOVEMBER 2008

To our friends and supporters,

Communal violence in Orissa is still ongoing. There are still houses being torched, and thousands of Christian refugees in that state, while two southern states also experience some mob violence against churches and parish-houses. The cash offering from the Thanksgiving Service at Union Brethren Church here went to a relief organization aiding the Orissa refugee camps. Barb's elementary students wrote letters of encouragement to the children of the strife-torn area. We are safe on our mountaintop here, but the tension in Orissa is something we think and pray about every day. Some of our students' parents are church workers there.

St. Paul's (Church of North India), our local church, will complete renovations for our own Thanksgiving service on Nov. 9. We will honor the major donor, the contractor and all the laborers with a special service and reception. The entire community will be invited to rejoice with us-many non-Christians will come just to see the beautiful work. Pray that they will see the joy in our relationships, outreach and worship and that they will want to know more.

Relationship with students is what Woodstock School is all about-and hosting students at our house helps keep those relationships strong. Jeff invited the fifteen Japanese students for Sunday afternoon lunch and viewing of the film "Spirited Away". High school girls cooked a wonderful meal, eaten handily with chopsticks, over Japanese conversation that Jeff tried hard to keep up with! Most of their parents are in India or Bhutan or Nepal, doing church or government aid work. But some Japanese parents send their children here simply because of the good reputation of Woodstock School.

Barb's work with the women's help project on the campus of the school, is gearing up in time for Christmas sales. Stuffed toy "Monsters" are the brain-child of a Woodstock dorm parent, and they sell as quickly as they are made by women who are working their way out of debt. They make wonderful gifts for kids of all ages.

Son Chris went to the first of the school's STAR --Senior Transition & Assimilation Retreat -- events aimed at helping high school seniors make a successful transition to life after high school. Fun activities and serious talks provide the structure for this program, especially important for these Third-Culture Kids. Chris is also trying to put together a trek with school friends to Everest Base Camp. Pray for Chris as he works to finish his high school experience on a high note and prepare for college.

Coleman has auditioned for a Bollywood-type movie being filmed at Woodstock by an alumnus. He also is in rehearsals for the school's production of Peter Pan. Wish him luck! And we ask for your continued prayers as we try to discern our future at the end of our four-year contract with Woodstock School.

The following list are those persons elected by the congregation who are willing to serve in a leadership capacity. Please do not hesitate to call or e-mail if you have a prayer request, an idea, a joy, a concern, a resource or a talent to share.

SPC Leadership 2008

Rev. Timothy Ives	645-1482	Pastor TIves4932@aol.com
Elder Barbara Devir	923-3517	CLP Prison Ministry barbdevir@yahoo.com
Elders		
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