

Sandcastles

Jesus and I don't always see eye to eye, especially when it comes to building in the sand. I grew up singing the Sunday School song about the wise man and the foolish man:

*"The wise man built his house upon the Rock, (repeat 3X)
And the rains came tumbling down.*

*The rains came down and the floods came up, (repeat 3X)
But the house on the Rock stood firm.*

*The foolish man built his house upon the sand, (repeat 3X)
And the rains came tumbling down.*

*The rains came down and the floods came up, (repeat 3X)
And the house on the sand went crash!"*

This song is based upon Matthew 7: 24-27, where Jesus says that only the foolish build upon the sand. Well, call me foolish then, because that is one of my most beloved hobbies – building sandcastles. Now that the summer is upon us, you may find me on one or more of the weekend days at Oakland Beach with my sand toys, building a sandcastle. I've been doing so since my high school days on the beaches of California.

Over the years I learned some important life lessons as I've played in the sand. I'd like to share a few of them with you.

- 1) When asked by an observer, "Are you working off of a plan?" the answer is "No." No two are ever alike. It is a reminder to me that sometimes we need to allow space for God's Spirit to be at work within us, leading us to new things and places and ways of being that we may never have planned for.
- 2) When asked by children if they can help (even my own over the years), the answer is "No, thank you." I learned that I need some things in my life in which I can take refuge and be renewed and refreshed, and that it's okay if that is an individual activity and not shared.
- 3) People sometimes say, "That's a lot of work, only to have it washed away." Sandcastles remind me that nothing in life, even my own life, is permanent. As the hymn says, "Time, like an ever rolling stream, bears all our years away..." Just because it will be washed away, doesn't mean that it isn't worth investing in, whether it is a sandcastle, a relationship, a life.
- 4) When I am finished building, I like to sit in my chair and look at what I have created. There is some sense, for me, of it feeling like, "and on the seventh day he rested..." As Kohelet writes in Ecclesiastes 3:12-13: ¹²"I know that there is nothing better for them than to be happy and enjoy themselves as long as they live; ¹³moreover, it is God's gift that all should eat and drink and take pleasure in all their toil."
- 5) The final lesson that I've learned over the years is to share. While I may not want others to share in the building process with me, I do enjoy sharing the fruit of my labor. So what I most often do, when I am done looking at my sandcastle and as I prepare to leave the beach, is to find a child, or some children, who have been watching me build.

I tell them that they are welcome to play with the sandcastle. Parents often tell the children not to touch it or break it. I tell them that it's okay. For there is also joy to be found on the face of a five-year-old who runs full speed to jump into the center of a sandcastle. While the waves may lap at the walls, and slowly bring it down, they cannot match the joy of a child creating a new mound of sand out of an old sandcastle.

May God give to you an opportunity for re-creation and renewal this summer.

Peace,




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Coming Home Graduation, Stephen Ministry, Murdoch Award

Coming Home Celebrates Graduation

On Sunday afternoon, June 3, about 55 people gathered in the Assembly Room to celebrate with the eight graduates of our Coming Home program. The eight who completed this 18-week life skills program are:

Nikiya Bryson, Shirelle Howard, Julian Lloyd, Dannie McQueen, David Small, Donte Walker, Andrew Waul, and Rob Wooley

A special word of thanks to this year's leadership team: Charles Lewis, Program Coordinator/Peer Facilitator; Claire Hurst, Social Work; and Linda Otness, Meals Coordinator.

Thank you also to our dedicated mentors: Doug DeStaebler, Sue DeStaebler, Lars Ernst, Bob Gay, Heather Miller, Owen Nee, Adrienne Rogers, Tony Savarese, Bob Steed, and David Versfelt.



A deep word of appreciation from all of our participants to the many people who, under Linda Otness' direction, helped to prepare, cook, and serve fantastic dinners week after week; and to the many people who helped "taxi" our participants from and to the train station – especially Heather Miller and Davidson Gordon.

And a word of thanks to the many congregants who attended the dinners and helped to enrich the table fellowship each week. We averaged 35-40 people at dinner each Thursday evening. Over 75 church members were engaged in this ministry! Thank You!



**stephen
MINISTRY.**

Caring Connections Fall 2018

Caring Connections is based upon the Stephen Ministry curriculum which has been equipping participants to give faithful, trustworthy, skilled, compassionate care for nearly 15 years at RPC. Participants have relayed that the content offered by Rye Presbyterian Church has encouraged their relationships with one another, enriched their spiritual life, and strengthened their care-giving skills which reach well beyond the one-to-one relationships in Stephen Ministry Friendly Visitors.

The fall program promises to be a unique and encouraging experience! Caring Connections 2018 is bookended by two Saturday retreats (September 15 and November 17) and in between we meet on Monday evenings plus one Saturday morning midstream. RPC's clergy and trained Stephen Leaders facilitate each class.

For more information, please contact the church office or:

Carol Love (cloveny@optonline.net).



Murdoch Award presented to Gabby McCree

On Sunday, June 10, the Richard E. Murdoch Award for outstanding community service was presented to longtime RPC member Gabby McCree by Dinah Howland and Sam Dimon, representing the Mission and Outreach Committee of Rye Presbyterian Church. Gabby's generous spirit and deep concern for others have led her to become involved in a wide variety of efforts to bring better opportunities and improve life prospects for both children and adults.

Gabby was very touched by this recognition and would like to share her appreciation to all: "The church, my fellowship there and in the greater community of faithful friends and family and those inspired by their own faith, have informed my outreach work, daily. I have the ultimate privilege of loving this kind of work and being able to do it because I am just that privileged. And, of course, I'm grateful to my husband, Don, and friends like you, who have encouraged me in so many ways."

The Murdoch Award, established more than a decade ago, is given annually to a member of our church or the community at large who has shown exemplary concern for and service to people in need. It comes with a grant of \$2,000, for which the honoree designates a recipient charity. This year Gabby has asked that the grant be given to Furniture Sharehouse. In addition, the name of the honoree is listed on the special plaque displayed near the reception desk.

Christian Education, Rise Against Hunger Update



This summer our children will engage biblical stories through our summer curriculum, *An Illustrated Invitation: Joining God at Work in the World*. This curriculum is designed to draw children ages Pre-K to 5th

grade into conversations with biblical stories from both the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament, showing them what God is doing, and inviting them to consider how to join in that work. All children will meet as a multi-age group in the Youth Room during the 10:00 a.m. service.

Each lesson focuses on a specific biblical story and provides opportunities to focus on hearing and reflecting on the story with wondering questions, creating meaningful art, sharing in an interactive

activity based on the story, and providing an opportunity to share God's love. The curriculum is broken down into three modules:

Module 1: God's Invitation in the Hebrew Scriptures

June 17: God Invites Abram and Sarai (Genesis 12:1-3; 15:1, 5-6)

June 24: God's Love for Hagar and Ishmael (Genesis 21:5-21)

July 1: The Place God was In (Genesis 28:10-19)

July 8: Five Daughters Demand to be Included (Numbers 27:1-11)

Module 2: God's Invitation in the New Testament

July 15: God's Wisdom is with the Child (Luke 2:41-52)

July 22: Jesus Surprises Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10)

July 29: Love God, Love Your Neighbor (Matthew 22:34-40)

Aug. 5: Lydia Extends an Invitation (Acts 16:13-15)

Module 3: Accepting God's Invitation

Aug. 12: Everywhere You Go (Deuteronomy 6:4-9; 24-25)

Aug. 19: Jubilee (Leviticus 25:8-10)

Aug. 26: The Gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-12; 37-47)

Sept 2: Remember Me (1 Corinthians 11:23-26)



Also, we will hand out copies of *An Illustrated Invitation For Families*, the family devotionals that companion with our summer curriculum. These devo-

tionals are meant to be easy ways for parents to engage with scripture and talk with your children about faith at home.

We hope this is a way that the biblical stories of invitation can come to life for you and your family!



Following is an update we received from Rise Against Hunger regarding the over 12,000 meals packaged in two hours by RPC church members in April . . .

"It is with great pleasure that we announce the destination of the Rise Against Hunger meals you helped package on 4/15/2018. A shipping container, holding 285,120 meals, has been sent to Uganda for our partner, Salesian Missions.

Salesian Missions is an organization that nourishes lives through food assistance and other services in Uganda. To learn more, please visit our partner/country spotlight on the Impact Stories tab and click and drag on our World Aid Map at <https://www.riseagainsthunger.org/world-aid/>.

Ending hunger is only possible if we continue to grow the movement. We encourage you to share the news about this shipment. Since 2005, volunteers like you have helped us distribute over 310 million meals worldwide. **We can end**



hunger by 2030, but we can't do it without you.

Please visit our website—www.riseagainsthunger.org—and continue your involvement. Consider making a donation, planning another meal packaging event (at your place of worship,

school, company, civic club, etc.), joining our advocacy efforts, or even inviting us to speak to a group. Share your experience with us at newyork@riseagainsthunger.org.

Keep up the great work and spread the word—#2030IsPossible.

Gratefully,

Stephen Reiss, Program Manager
Rise Against Hunger New York City
newyork@riseagainsthunger.org"

Thank you to everyone who participated in a wonderful day of service here at RPC.

The next Rise Against Hunger Day of Service is scheduled for the fall.

Baby Box, Prison Ministry, Music Notes



Following is a thank-you from Open Door to RPC for our support of the Baby Box project.

Dear Friends at RPC:

As we close out this successful season of partnership and good work between Open Door and RPC, we wanted to thank you for your shared commitment to helping those most vulnerable in our community. Baby Box has been an important project for Open Door — a means of providing our patients with greatly needed “new baby” items and critical prenatal and pediatric education and information. You have taken this project on and integrated it into the life of your church community... so much so that we now have over 400 items purchased from church members for our registry on Buy Buy Baby, plus very good quality thermometers, which are so greatly needed. These will go a very long way in helping to fill the Baby Boxes. In addition, we thank you for your continued, and very generous financial support, which helps support the programs that go “behind the box” to provide the additional services our patients need.

Our doors are always open and we hope you will take us up on the invitation to take a tour of one of our facilities, to participate in the Baby Box distribution day, or just pay us a visit. We look forward to continuing this very valued partnership.

In friendship,

*Amy Wolfson (Chief External Relations Officer) and
Alicia Ward (Manager of Volunteers)*



Clothes, Clothes, and more Clothes!

One unpublicized part of RPC's extensive prison ministry is the collection of clothes for distribution to men when they are released from prison, often with not much more than a couple of pairs of jeans and some work shirts. Due to extremely generous donations of clothes from the people of RPC we are able to give them clothing fit for interviewing for a job, working, and for leisure time.

It is a wonderful sight to see a man come in with slumping shoulders and bowed head and, after finding a suit that fits him, go out standing tall and proud. Clothes may not really make the man, but they do help make the man feel better about himself.

The clothes are given to men from Exodus Transitional Community, a leading re-entry program RPC has supported since its inception over 20 years ago, as well as to participants in our own Coming Home program—who have their own “Dress for Success” night as part of their program.

On June 14, Exodus came to RPC and left with dozens of suits, jackets, and slacks plus work and dress shirts, ties, and an occasional belt and shoes. Enough clothes to fill a car full to the brim. On the same day, Claire Hurst, Social Worker for Coming Home, took another carload for “Navigating Fatherhood,” a program in Mount Vernon and Yonkers helping young men 16 to 24 being released from County Jail. For the generosity of the RPC congregation, Exodus, Coming Home, Navigating Fatherhood and their returning citizens are deeply grateful.

Now that our “Clothes Closet” is depleted, we would welcome additional donations to replenish our stock. You can bring them to the church and hang them on the rack opposite the men's room; or contact Bob Steed—914-328-9658 or bsteed55@aol.com--for further information.



From Jason Charneski

A Look-Ahead to the 2018-2019 Program Year: Some Save-the-Dates

An exciting year lies ahead for the RPC Music Ministry! Here are some items to have on your radar screen.

- **Thursday, September 20:** Children's Choir (Grades 1-6) rehearsals resume (please contact Lisa Rawson, lrawson@ryepc.com, for more information). *Note:* Youth Choir (Grades 7-12) rehearsals follow a per-unit schedule. Please contact Lisa if you have interest in this group.
- **Sunday, September 23:** Chancel Choir (high school juniors and older) resumes rehearsals and its role in worship.

- **Sunday, October 14:** CONCERT – Organ and orchestra (strings and horns), featuring organist Simon Thomas Jacobs (www.simonthomasjacobs.com). This concert will be in collaboration with the Chamber Music series.
- **Sunday, December 9:** Cantata Sunday – a work for choir and orchestra presented within the 10:00 a.m. service.
- **Sunday, December 16:** Christmas Pageant
- **Monday, December 24:** Family Christmas Eve Services (with Live Nativity) at 3:00 and 5:00 p.m.; Candlelight Lessons and Carols (with choir, string quartet, and sermon) at 10:00 p.m.
- **Sunday, March 31:** CONCERT – The RPC Chancel Choir, the Choir of Christ's Church, and orchestra will present the Mozart *Requiem*.

Summer Church Picnic, WA Grant Awards & Luncheon

Summer Church Picnic



Sunday, June 10—A perfect day for the RPC Annual Picnic.



Women's Association Grant Awards & Luncheon

\$63,000!

**Given to local charities
this year!**

A wonderful luncheon in the Grape Arbor was enjoyed as we honored 21 Westchester organizations that serve women, children, and other under-served populations. The grants are made possible through the success of the Thrift Shop. Thank you to all of the volunteers and donors for a record year! The luncheon was a great time to see first-hand all the good work that our Thrift Shop does for our community. We appreciate the continued support of donations, volunteers, and shopping!



Sundays in July & August

July 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29

- 8:30 a.m.** Holy Communion in the Sanctuary
9:30 a.m. Summer Choir Rehearsal / Chapel *
9:40 a.m. Prayer Gathering / Library
10:00 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary
 Summer Sunday School in the Youth Room.
 Children Pre-K through 5th grade attend
 worship through Children's Message.
- * July 8: Summer Choir does not meet
 ** July 22: Summer Brunch following 10:00 a.m. worship

August 5, 12, 19, and 26

- 8:30 a.m.** Holy Communion in the Sanctuary
9:40 a.m. Prayer Gathering / Library
10:00 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary
 Summer Sunday School in the Youth Room.
 Children Pre-K through 5th grade attend
 worship through Children's Message.

During July and August, please join us for coffee hour in the Grape Arbor after 10:00 a.m. worship.
(Westminster Room in event of rain.)

BIBLE STUDIES

Men's Bible Study

Men's Bible Study is taking a break for the summer. Will return in September. If you'd like to be on the email reminder list for this gathering, please contact [Rev. Love](#).

Wednesday Morning Bible Discussion

This summer we will pause for the months of July and August, but we look forward to regathering for this ongoing reading and discussion in September.

Please contact [Rev. Love](#) for more information.

Women's Bible Study

Women's Bible Study is taking a break for the summer. We will start back up in September when a warm welcome and hot coffee will await!

For further information, contact [Cynthia De Santis](#).



Please keep all those journeying to New Orleans this summer in your prayers! A first group of 25 high schoolers were there in June. A second trip of 6 youths, along with Jean-Paul and Susie Marshall will be traveling during the week of August 5-11.

NOLA Instagram Updates

Want to know what goes on during our NOLA mission trips? Follow our Instagram account, [ryepresyouth](#), to see some highlights of our trips.



Jason Charneski performed an organ concert on the Kilgen Organ Recital Series at St. Patrick's Cathedral on Sunday, May 27. To listen to and watch the concert, click [here](#).

Reminder

This summer, while away enjoying vacations and family summer activities, a reminder that . . .

- You can catch up with the latest sermons online: <http://ryepc.com/worship/sermons/>
- You can give online: <http://ryepc.com/give/>

July & August Schedule of Meetings, Events, and Programs



Beginning Monday, July 2, through end of August, the church office will be open 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

**CHURCH OFFICES AND BUILDINGS WILL BE CLOSED
ON INDEPENDENCE DAY, WEDNESDAY, JULY 4.**

WORSHIP AND STUDY

Worship on Sunday:

8:30 a.m. Holy Communion in the Chapel

10:00 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary

Prayer Gatherings: Sundays in the Library at 9:40 a.m.

Summer Sunday School: July 1, 8, 15, 22, 29; August 5, 12, 19, 26, in the Youth Room.

Men's Sunday Bible Study: Taking a break for summer—starts back up in September.

Wednesday Morning Bible Discussion: Taking a break for summer—starts back up in September.

Women's Bible Study: Taking a break for summer—starts back up in September.

Women's Discipleship: Tuesdays, 1:00-2:30 p.m., Library

OTHER CHURCH MEETINGS, EVENTS, AND PROGRAMS

3 Ts: Tuesdays, July 17, and August 21, 10:00 a.m., Library

Stephen Ministry:

Continuing Education and Supervision: Mondays, July 9, and August 6, 7:00 p.m., Westminster Room

Stephen Leaders: Monday, August 6, 6:00 p.m., Library

Summer Sunday Brunch: Sunday, July 22, following 10:00 a.m. worship under the Grape Arbor

Thrift Shop: Closed until September 15

OUTREACH AND SUPPORT GROUPS

AA Rye Harrison Group: Mondays, 7:30 p.m., Chapel

AA Group: Thursdays, 7:30 p.m., Westminster Room

Mr. Westchester/Al-Anon Group: Mondays, 7:30 p.m., Library



THRIFT SHOP NEWS

The Thrift Shop is closed for the summer (*reopens September 13*).

Donations will be accepted during the summer. **Please Note:** Due to storage constraints, we will not be accepting books, floral glass vases, drapery, or electronic equipment this summer. Children's books will be accepted again in September.

Drop off downstairs on the left hallway. Any questions, contact [Suzanne Davies](#).

*The Ladies at the
End-of-Year Thrift Shop
Volunteer Luncheon,
hosted by Sally Tobin.*



Rye Presbyterian Nursery School

Greetings to the RPC Community from Kristin Bassett Kumar

This year some of our three-year-old class investigations shared a common thread: An interest in different parts of the animal kingdom!



Arachnophobia! No way . . . not at RPNS! Back in January, the afternoon threes in Mrs. Fiore's and Mrs. Zambrano's class discovered baby spiders in our outdoor space trying to escape from the cold.

The children put the baby spiders in a bowl that traveled back to their classroom so they could watch them develop. They discovered that if they touched the protective plastic on top of the bowl, they could see the spider's legs move. The children were very curious about the spiders and had so many questions that they wanted answered. Mrs. Fiore and Mrs. Zambrano eagerly placed non-fiction reading material about spiders on a table in the classroom for the children to explore. Throughout the day, the teachers sat with small groups of children to find out different facts on spiders. Mrs. Fiore and Mrs. Zambrano recognized that the students were satisfied with the reading materials since they were gaining lots of knowledge on spiders, but also realized the children's excitement was at the highest level when they were observing the baby spiders in the jar!



Mrs. Walter, the RPNS Studio teacher, learned about the children's interest in spiders and she discovered a program that could travel to our school to provide a hands-on experience for the children. The class was very excited about their visit from the naturalist, and they brainstormed questions they had for "The Spider Lady." The day arrived for the spider visit and "The Spider Lady" joined the children in their classroom and shared several different spiders with the class. They varied from stick bugs, Madagascar cockroaches, snails, scorpions, and TARANTULAS! The children continue to be very passionate and knowledgeable about spiders. It was a rich adventure for the class!

Animals are a fascination for so many young children. In Mrs. Mytych's and Mrs. Wardle's class, an interest in woodland creatures was discovered. It all started with a baby fawn that was introduced to the group of classroom puppets. This new addition created a curiosity about creatures in the woodlands. In order to support this interest, the teachers placed some small play animals in a box displayed with grass and rocks. The children were very excited about their play with this special box. The teachers recognized that the students would benefit from extending the woodland creature play to the larger sensory table space. They added pieces of real bark from trees, and recycled materials such as spools were used to create elevation spaces for the woodland creatures' adventures!

The class continued to study the woodland creatures and their habitats. The teachers used literature to teach the children different



facts about their animals of interest. The children shared favorite animals and they each selected one to explore further. Each child had the opportunity to be an author of their very own woodland creature story. They drew a picture of a woodland creature of their choice, and the teachers documented the children's words about the animal. The children combined their knowledge of their woodland creature with their creativity! The students shared their stories with their friends at meeting time and the group actively listened to one another.

Throughout this investigation, the classroom environment transformed into a woodland forest! The dramatic play area included a tent, trees, birds, stumps, moss, and forest creature puppets. It was a magical place for the children to explore! In order to provide a hands-on experience with real life animals, Ms. Courtney from Nature of Things visited the students. The children were able to see (and sometimes touch) some animals that live in forests across the world. A quail, hedgehog, milk snake, and a bunny were some of the creatures that visited RPNS. The children were thrilled with this opportunity to engage with real animals, and they vividly remembered the experience as they talked about it with their peers, teachers, and parents. Creating classroom experiences that leave lasting memories for children is something that is important to us at RPNS. The children will look back at this woodland creature study and know that their ideas were valued.



The Rev. Daniel Love, Co-Pastor
The Rev. Dr. John Miller, Co-Pastor
Jason Charneski, Director of Music and Organist
Lisa Rawson, Director of Choirs for Children and Youth
Maida Robinson, Chief Administrative Officer
Peggy Berretta, Administrative Assistant
Denise LeVan, Pastoral Assistant
Nancy Lavelle, Interim Director of Children's Ministries
Yvonne Zuk, Sunday School Supervisor
Juan Velasquez, Head Sexton/Building Manager

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