

THE KERK

St. John's Reformed Church, 126 Old Post Road North, Upper Red Hook, New York 12571
Phone: 845-758-1184; Fax: 845-758-3675; email: office@stjohnsreformed.org

JANUARY 2012

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From the Interim Minister's Desk

Dear Friends in Christ at St. John's:

It appears that my time with you is coming to a close, and with anticipation we should all look forward to the new pastor whoever that may be. Receive him or her with grace, love and your whole hearted support.

Consistory and the Elders have been working on who we are, what we are about, and how do we govern as St. John's church. A lot, in fact, most of the work has been done for us by the Book of Church order (BCO) and the Liturgy of The Reformed Church in America (RCA).

What are we about as a Reformed Church?

The purpose of the Reformed Church in America, together with all other churches of Christ, is to minister to the total life of all people by preaching, teaching, and proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and by all Christian good works. That purpose is achieved most effectively when good order and proper discipline are maintained... Three offices are employed in the governmental functions of the Reformed Church, namely, the minister of Word and sacrament (hereinafter referred to as "minister"), the elder, and the deacon. The purpose of church government is to aid the church in the development of its own life, in order that it may carry out the mission of its Head – to announce the good news of his Saviorhood and extend his Lordship throughout the world. *The Head of the Church*: The Reformed churches confess that Jesus Christ is the only Head of his church. The Scriptures call the church his body, and our Lord the Head of that body. (BCO Preamble p. 1, 2)

The Church's mission statement is: "*St. John's Reformed Church strives to welcome all, to know and proclaim God's word, to seek God's will and to live by Christ's example through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.*"

How a Reformed Church Governs

The Consistory and Church operates under the direction of the Book of Church Order (BCO) of the Reformed Church in America.

1. "The consistory is the governing body of a local church." (BCO p. 11, Sec. 1) The elders, deacons and pastor compose the consistory. They are elected by the congregation and serve on their behalf, and in fulfillment of the mission of the church.

2. Elders have oversight over the conduct of the members of the congregation and seek to bring that conduct into conformity with the Word of God..." (BCO p.12, Sec. 8)
3. "The consistory shall have the care and supervision of the church's property and financial interest. They are the trustees..." (BCO p. 16, Sec. 13)
4. "A member of the consistory shall not have the right to protest against any act or decision of that body, but shall have the right to redress by appeal or complaint to the classis." (BCO p. 19, Sec. 4)
5. Committees of consistory serve at the pleasure and on behalf of the consistory. Therefore it follows that committee members' right to appeal matters that pertain to their committee is only to consistory and if not satisfied to the classis. They should serve under the same constraints as members of Consistory. (BCO p. 19, Sec. 4)
6. Consistory and policy making committees or groups within the church, such as Worship, Education, Finance and Personnel, to name a few, shall be composed with the approval of Consistory from the regularly worshipping membership of the church.

The Pastor:

1. The pastor is "called", not hired. (BCO p. 18, Sec. 1) The pastor is the president of the Consistory and he/she should be respected for the office held in the church.
2. The pastor is the resident theologian, has studied the scripture and has vowed to be faithful to the Reformed faith.
3. The pastor is called to lead, with consistory, the church in fulfillment of the church's mission in the world. We should expect, encourage and welcome new ways to meet the future ministries of the church.
4. The consistory and elders are committed to assist and protect the pastor and others from divisive or personal attacks.

The Congregational Rights:

1. The final authority in the church is the consistory, not committees or gathered groups. However, the congregation has a right to know regarding actions of the consistory; its finances, etc. with exceptions only where actions or information is confidential.

If one has a question, ask it of the pastor, consistory member or appropriate person in charge.

1. All members have a right to ask or express their opinion, unless restricted by the BCO.
2. No one has the "right" to enjoin in personal attack or innuendo.
3. The congregation has a "right" to attend meetings without anxiety, fear, or to leave in tears. Aggressive and hostile attitudes have no place in the church.

Congregational Commitment

Each member of the church has "promised to exhibit joy of the new life in Christ; to share fully in the life of the church; to be faithful in worship and service and to offer prayers and gifts." They also, "promised to accept the spiritual guidance of the church; to walk in a spirit of Christian love with this congregation; and to seek those things which make for unity, purity and peace." (Liturgy of the RCA – Profession of Faith, p. 35)

It is my hope that in proper order, St. John's will move forward in unity and peace; doing what the Lord would want His church to do.

God Bless you. Be faithful to Christ alone.

Yours in His service,

Pastor Dave

FROM DESIREE'S DESK BEING CALLED TO PRAY

In early December we completed the course based on the book Praying in the Messiness of Life. We readers learned to pray with our bodies, our breath, our minds, our senses, the silence, the surroundings, and with circumstances. It was a very comprehensive yet basic book on prayer. The author, Linda Douty, put into words ideas that readers may have thought but never shared with others, such as when she thought about "praying without ceasing." She envisioned monks. However she went on to help us understand that prayer is our on-going conversation with God.

When we are in a relationship with someone, we get together with them. We make time for them in our busy schedules. We think of them throughout our day. We share with them our concerns and our joys. Isn't that the kind of relationship that God would like to have with us? Doesn't he want us to spend time with him sharing our troubles and coming to him in gratitude when we have an occasion to celebrate? Wouldn't it honor God if we set aside time to speak to him?

Oftentimes we feel we don't know what to pray, especially when the need for prayer seems urgent. In just such a situation, the author had a revelation. Wondering "How shall I pray for her [friend]?" she realized that by merely thinking about her dire situation, it felt like God was saying, "You just did!" She went on to state that maybe the words were more for her than God when she prayed. She wrote, "I no longer need to figure out what I think will be best and then ask God to grant it." In the epilogue she summarizes this idea with a simple little phrase:

"We're not called to get it right; we're called to PRAY."

May you accept this call in the new year.
May you be inspired to pray without ceasing

and not fear that you don't have the right words.

Desiree Albizu,
Associate in Christian Education

There are yet a few copies of "At Home with the Word" if one of your resolutions is to begin reading the Bible on a regular basis. You will be surprised at how little time it takes each day. You may even find yourself reading beyond the daily scripture passage.

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

On a snowy Sunday morning you may be wondering whether or not there is Sunday School. A number of teachers live close enough to come in no matter the weather. If you can get to church, we will have someone there, too, for Sunday School.



If you have run out of the special Sunday School offering envelopes, or if you need them, there are some in the fellowship hall. You may also see your child's Sunday School teacher or Desiree Albizu for them. We encourage your child to use them as our offering is separate from the adults' which is collected during worship. We have our own treasury to pay for the curriculum, Sunday School supplies, children's Bibles, and gifts. Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

There will be no Sunday School classes on January 1 but we will have a children's program that morning during the 9:30 service downstairs in the assembly hall. On January 8 Sunday School will resume and we will celebrate Epiphany when the wise men brought gifts to young Jesus.

MONDAY BOOK LOVERS' CLUB



January's meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 23 at 11 a.m. in room 3 in the education wing. We will be discussing Claude & Camille by Stephanie Cowell. Suggestions for future readings are always welcome. The group is open to anyone who has read or listened to the selected book.

EMMAUS ROAD YOUTH MINISTRIES

The Middle School students will meet January 29 from 6-7:30 p.m. at the church.

We are also anticipating volleyball to begin in January. It is not just for youth group students, but it will become an on-going activity for all ages. More info to come on when it will begin again at Devereux.

The annual Friendship Tea is scheduled for March 18 so put that date on your calendar now and you don't miss it. Students in grades 6-12 are encouraged to help with baking, food prep that morning, and to participate as servers. It's one of our largest fundraisers, and the students have as much fun baking and working together as the women who attend the tea.



It is not too late to join in the fun or to join in our summer mission trips. The Senior high students will be traveling to Brockton, MA for another GROUP Workcamp to repair or do building projects at the homes of those less fortunate who need our help. This group will leave July 29 and return August 4.

We hope to get a trip or two going to help rebuilding in the Reformed churches affected by Hurricane Irene. Contact Desiree Albizu at

albizu@valstar.net or (518) 537-4221 if you or your student would like to join either kind of trip this summer.

We have a new case of greeting cards and 2012 calendars available for purchase any Sunday in the fellowship hall. Proceeds go to the mission trips.

Coming in February – Gertrude Hawk Chocolates for Easter!

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL DATES ANNOUNCED

Vacation Bible School will be held August 13-17, 9 a.m. to 12 noon. All children ages 4 years to sixth grade are welcome to attend. Older children are encouraged to assist in the program. So mark those new 2012 dates in your calendar to avoid double-booking yourself and your children that week.

WWF TO BEGIN PLANNING FRIENDSHIP TEA

Women with Faith will meet Friday, January 20 at the home of Mary Ellen Mann to begin planning the Friendship Tea scheduled for Sunday, March 18. Bring a snack if you can and all or any ideas for the tea and party favors. We were thinking of a theme with butterflies.

OLD TESTAMENT COURSE TO BEGIN IN FEBRUARY

The School for Christian Living & Serving will be offering a six-week course on the Old Testament at the Hurley Reformed Church on Tuesday evenings beginning February 21. The course instructor is the Rev. Jay Vogelaar, minister at the Ellenville Reformed Church. Tuition is \$100. Scholarships are available. For more information, contact Desiree Albizu albizu@valstar.net or (518) 537-4221.

PLEASE RETURN THE BCOs

The Church Library is missing all five copies of the Book of Church Order. They have orange binders. If you have borrowed a copy, please drop it in the library book return box in the education wing. Thank you.

SEARCH COMMITTEE NEARING A DECISION

After looking at 22 profiles and 5 Skype interviews, two being second ones, we have arranged a neutral pulpit in January; weather permitting, we hope to make a recommendation to the Consistory by the end of January. If the committee's recommendation is accepted, then Consistory will issue an invitation to the candidate to preach in or pulpit.

On that day there will be one worship service and a brunch to follow where people in the congregation can meet the candidate. The congregation will have an opportunity to vote yea or nay on issuing this candidate a call. The vote is an advisory vote. Consistory will have the final vote shortly thereafter.

A letter will be sent to the members of the congregation when such a date is confirmed.

There will be a farewell reception for Pastor Dave and Marvelle after their return from FL. Pastor Dave will also have an interview with the Consistory before he departs.

Once Consistory issues the candidate a call, it must be approved by the Classis of Mid-Hudson. A date for the candidate's installation would be set for late spring.

Thank you for your patience as the committee has worked diligently to discern God's will for us at St. John's.

MISSION OF THE MONTH

JANUARY

REV. DOUG LEONARD'S MISSION

Having grown up in our church while his father was our pastor, Doug is dear to our hearts at St. John's. We began supporting his mission in Oman in December of 2009 where he is currently the Director of the Al Amana Centre. The centre fosters cooperation and understanding between people of the Muslim and Christian faith with courses and opportunities to learn from each other, with the support of the Sultan and religious leaders. This tiny country at the southern tip of the Arabian peninsula might be considered an oasis in a very troubled region; which makes the work being done there very important.

The following information from the alamanacentre.org website gives a good representation of Doug's professional life. Doug is ordained in the Reformed Church in America and is a graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary. He has served as President of a Westchester County Collegium of 100 houses of worship and as an international envoy to China. He has studied Arabic in Jordan and will soon teach a course in classical Arabic in Oman's Institute of Sharia Sciences. Doug is planning to begin a Ph.D. in Muslim-Christian relations in the near future.

Your prayers are most important in supporting Doug's sensitive work, but your contributions to the January Mission of the Month will also help support his mission.

-Mission and Outreach

HEALTH MINISTRY

Dear Members of St. John's,

As of December 31, 2011, I will be leaving my position as Program Secretary for the Health Ministry Program here at St. John's. My last day in the office will be Tuesday, December 27th. It is my intention to continue teaching the Senior Exercise class on Thursday mornings, play in the bell choir and sing in the church choir.

At this time, I would like to focus my time and energies in other areas. Although I'm not sure of my exact plans yet, I do know I will be busy getting my daughter Gianna ready for college, yikes, etc., and I would like to finish/do some home projects.

Thank you all for your support over the years. This has been a very positive and rewarding experience for me.

Jackie Fenaroli

Health Ministry Hours

Office hours - Wednesday, 9 AM – 1 PM.
Visitation as needed.

If you would like a visit, please call the Church office.

Contact Information: Coordinator – Beverly Kipp
Call church office – 758-1184; e-mail church office –
office@stjohnsreformed.org
or Beverly home – bkipp@frontiernet.net

Watch the Kerk and Sunday bulletin for program related or last minute changes in schedule.



Congratulations to **Lindsay (Matthews) and Matt Williams** on the birth of their daughter, **Emma Leanne**, on November 29. The Williams family live in Jacksonville, NC.



BAPTISMS:

Joseph Nicolas Wyant was baptized on November 13. Joseph is the youngest son of Michael and Tanya Wyant.

Luke Christian Hineman was baptized on December 11. Luke is the son of Eric and Anna Hineman and Elsa's baby brother.



“Dear Friends,

Please forgive the lengthy delay in thanking you so very much for the lovely reception after Richard's service on October 6.

It was appreciated beyond words.

Sincerely with love,
Liz”



Elizabeth Kenny for all the folding, stapling, collating, stamping and stuffing she has done! **John and Karen Roberts** for folding stuffing bulletins. **Cary Robinson** for folding and stuffing envelopes and bulletins. **Gary Finkle** for his expertise with the candle lighters. **Jack and Alexia Doyle** for taking the crock (and overflow) of change to the Poughkeepsie branch of the Rhinebeck Savings Bank for counting. **Denny and Judy Doyle and Don and Joy Peterson** for putting together the December Kerk and getting it ready to mail.

Karen Roberts and Elizabeth Kenny for putting names on the offering envelopes and getting them ready to be handed out. **Pete Lawson and Denny Doyle** for fixing the roof leak and replacing the ceiling tiles in the fellowship hall.

Gloria Trezza for donating the fresh turkey to the Food Pantry for Christmas.

The Red Hook Retired Teachers Association for their donation of \$250 to the Food Pantry and **John Roberts** for taking the money and doing the shopping for the needed items to keep the shelves stocked.

Luire DeCiutiis for labeling the January Kerk and folding Christmas Eve bulletins.

Terry Laibach and Cary Robinson for folding Christmas Eve bulletins.

Karen and Bruce McCord for putting the candles "together" for the Christmas Eve services.

Thank you to **Mary Belliveau** who organized the Christmas Concert and **all the musicians and singers** who provided the inspiring music. We also want to thank

those who helped in the kitchen and who provided food for the reception which followed.

Croatia Update

Stuff purge shows substance of our lives not stuff

By Nancy Titus

Personal effects. Stuff. Things. Objects. Odds and ends. Some (increasingly my husband) might even say, well, junk.

I've got it. As I write this, still before our return to the United States in a few days, I'm trying to get rid of *a lot* of it.

As I do so, I am beginning to notice some interesting things from the culture around me. People are perplexed by what they see as a cavalier attitude toward what is really a huge investment of time and money done over our five years here. The reality is we can't take it with us. We are giving most of it away for free not so much because we are noble but because we recognize that the people we serve cannot afford to pay and we would like to see our stuff go to good use somewhere, especially to people we know and love. Besides that, as a practical matter, we have been too busy with our work to organize a massive sale.

Colleagues here have seen lots of missionaries, mostly Americans, come and go. They have seen the big buy-up of things when they arrive and the big dumping of things when they leave. This only adds to the perception that I recently heard from a close friend who was surprised by how emotional I am about having to decide what to keep and what to get rid of.

I told her that most people looking at the object in my hand see a casserole dish. I see Nancy Overgaard, a friend and fellow missionary who gave it to me when she left Croatia a few years ago. Every time I have reached into my cupboard for that type of dish, I selected from among a few options, often choosing this one specifically because of that connection with my friend. Even so, it didn't make the cut because the dish is heavy and I have one I kept in storage in the United States specifically because another close friend I miss had given it to me.

The reason my friend said she was surprised by my emotion is that she did not think that Americans were attached to their stuff, an odd perception based on what I know of Americans. Seen in the light of Americans that come and go, that buy and dump, it makes a little more sense and it feeds the general misbelief that Americans are, by definition, wealthy. After all, they give away things the people around them cannot afford to buy in the first place or do not even have space to take.

We have heard it said that you can have stuff as long as stuff doesn't have you. In many ways, that might be one of my biggest personal lessons of life as a missionary. I am not saying that I understand all that lesson is. I do know the lesson is not that you must purge everything. Modern living requires modern accoutrements for which I am not complaining, but even if we lived as hermits in a cave somewhere, we would need supplies for survival that we don't have.

Neither is the lesson that you must always sacrifice and do without because sometimes children far from home need chunky peanut butter or homemade cookies in a special tin mailed at great financial cost by caring friends or to have their rooms re-decorated.

I do know that you cannot let issues about stuff keep you from doing whatever God calls you to do. I also know almost as soon as the plane touches down in my hometown, stuff will start attaching itself to my family and me like iron shavings to a magnet. It is inevitable. God help us to hold it all lightly!

Many of you have asked about our personal plans. We will visit family members in Oklahoma and Texas and then drive to New York, where we will stay in the Koinonia House of the Pultneyville Reformed Church as we did before we left for Croatia and during our home assignment in 2009. We will continue as missionaries through the first part of April and will visit churches whenever possible. We do not know yet what door God will open for ministry beyond that, so we appreciate your prayers about this uncertainty.

Eric and Nancy Titus are RCA missionaries in Osijek, Croatia, where they work at the Evangelical Theological Seminary and with the Reformed Christian Church in Croatia. They have three children: Samuel, 17, Valerie, 14, and Penny, 12.

January Helpers

Flowers: If you would like to place memorial or special remembrance flowers in the Church, please sign the Flower Chart in the narthex, complete a form and leave in the slot AND call January Flower Chair Barbara Spencer, 331-8940.

Greeters & Ushers: If you cannot serve on the Sunday assigned, please phone, Captains Gary and Nancy Finkle, 758-8372.

January 1

Greeters: Cliff King and Harry Craver
Ushers: John and Christina Staubi
Shepherd: Nancy Finkle
Nursery: Barbara Rhynders

January 8

Greeters: Denis and Judy Doyle
Ushers: Peter and Janis Lawson
Shepherd: Linda Neilson
Nursery: Denise Gilhooly-Partrick

January 15

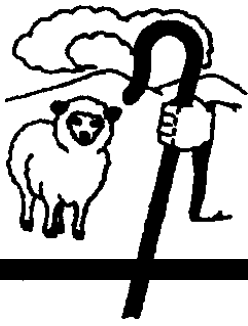
Greeters: Eric and Anna Hineman
Ushers: Don and Joy Peterson
Shepherd: Terry Laibach
Nursery:

January 22

Greeters: Nancy Jordan and Mary Ann Berns
Ushers: Linda and Doug Search
Shepherd: Joy Peterson
Nursery:

January 29

Greeters: Cliff King and Harry Craver
Ushers: Mike Tuggle and Ralph Douglas
Shepherd: JoAnn Fisher
Nursery:



The Shepherds Page

January 2012

the time for talk.

A Time for Everything

*Everything that happens
in this world happens at
the time God chooses*

2 He sets the time for birth and the time
for
death, the time for planting and the time
for pulling up,

3 the time for killing and the time for
healing, the time for tearing down and
the time for building.

4 He sets the time for sorrow and
the time for joy, the time for mourning
and the time for dancing,

5 the time for making love and the
time for not making love, the time for
kissing and the time for not kissing.

6 He sets the time for finding and the
time for losing, the time for saving and
the time for throwing away,

7 the time for tearing and the time
for
mending, the time for silence and

8 He sets the time for hate, the time
for war and the time for peace.

9 What do we gain from all our work?

10 I know the heavy burdens that
God has laid on us.

11 He has set the right time for
everything,

ECCLESIA TES 3:1-11

***Is it time for you to have a Shepherd or
to be one?***



Sink or Swim

People's stories about learning to
swim often sound like this:

"My dad tossed me into the water. I
didn't have a choice --- I flailed around until I found
myself swimming!"

But an elderly Christian tells a variation of
this story:

"Wanting to teach me to swim, my father threw me off
the dock into the lake. I sank." But then he goes on:
"So my father jumped in with me."

The storyteller's wisdom shines in this application:

"God doesn't toss us into life and leave us alone to
sink or swim.

By sending Jesus, God jumped right in with us to
save us from death, hold us protectively and help us
navigate 1life."

Shepherds Serving St. John's

December 2011

Desiree Albizu - Jo Ann Fisher - Nancy Finkle - Denise Partrick - Amie Parker - Stanton Tremper - Joy Peterson -

Eileen Zeliph - Linda Neilson - Carolyn Carr - Michael Carr -Marie Votava -Ruth Cole Kristy Koerner Wendy Walrath -Bruce

Unson - Nancy Castillo -Terry Laibach - *Priscilla Tremper Shepherd Coordinator*

ADDRESS CHANGES

Cheryl Hayes

116 Vosburgh Rd.
Red Hook, NY 12571-2256

Carrie Searles

2336 Sate Route 9
Hudson, NY 12534-4724

Sympathy to:

the friends and family of
Shirley Kipp, Beverly
Kipp's mother in law,
who died 12/10.



the family and friends of **Mary Jane
Hughes** who died on December 29.



Deadline for the
February Kerk is
January 10.

Personal ads of no
more than 3 lines will
be accepted for \$1
per issue.

Business ads in the form of a business card
to be photocopied will cost \$5 per issue.

Plumbing, Heating and Repairs

Todd Abrahams Plumbing

235 Fraleigh Lane
Red Hook, NY 12571

Business & Fax 758-3867

Cell 389-2661

Mary Hennessy, LMSW
Licensed Master Social Worker

Specializing in Children and Families

8 Garden Street

Rhinebeck, NY 12572

Tel (917) 971-6892

By appointment only