

THE KERK

St. John's Reformed Church, 126 Old Post Road North, Upper Red Hook, New York 12571

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JUNE 2024

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Minister's Musings

This month, ministry has run the gamut - from Eastertide, to two very different weddings to one very tender funeral. It made me reflect on the beauty and gift of time that we share with each other. Here's part of that reflection:

Time comes to us in the Genesis context, through the understanding of Shabbat or creation's crown, as some scholars write. Those same scholars write that, actually, the Genesis story of creation was written primarily to establish the centrality of Sabbath.

One of my favorite Jewish Scholars, Abraham Joshua Heschel, describes Sabbath as a "palace in time,"...and observes that this word, "qadesh - to make holy" is used for the first time on the Seventh Day. This "making something holy" does not refer to humans or any other element of this world, but to time as a created entity. In the Biblical chronology, "the sanctity of time came first, the sanctity of humankind second, and the sanctity of space (the rest of the world) last."

The beauty of this final day in the creation poem is that God blesses and makes time itself holy - God hallows a day, time itself. The words that jump off the page in this creating of time are, yevarek, vayeekadesh and shavuot..which in Hebrew mean, in that same order, to bless, to hallow and to sabbath, which means to cease, stop and then later translations turn to "rest and celebrate".

In our current culture, we often put our value on the things of space - the things that we can see, touch, hold, use, and people, humankind, those we come into contact with - our companions, family, friends, loved ones, and time last if at all. The Sabbath and our understanding of it engenders an orientation toward time, not space; it is an orientation toward the fundamental personhood and essential worth of all God's creation. The Sabbath teaches us that 'the higher goal of...living is not to amass a wealth of information,' or...of material possessions, but rather 'to face - to turn our faces toward - holy moments'.

This practice invites us to be in and understand the sacredness of time. To be simultaneously eternal and completely present. To literally turn your face toward.

My invitation to us is that as the days and weeks and months yawn into years, remember to, in the midst of the hurry and bustle of life, step outside that rhythm and sink, every once in a while, into the holiness of time. Allow yourselves to be completely present with one another. To behold one another in the entirety of who you are - to love one another completely, the parts that are difficult to deal with, the parts that are magnetic about the other, the parts that are a little annoying, the parts that are indescribably beautiful to each other. May you remember to value the time that you do get to share with one another, and most importantly, our creator. To behold God in God's glory and to realize that God, in turn, is beholding you in every moment of your life.

Rev. Alisha Riepma-Hosier
Minister of Word and Sacrament

Faith & Education



Bible Study will continue to meet on Wednesday mornings at 10:15 a.m. throughout the summer. The scripture readings are taken from Year B of the Revised Common Lectionary. Copies of the RCL readings for Bible Study are on the table in the fellowship hall or you may find the readings on the Church website. Everyone is welcome to attend. Thank you to John Roberts for his leadership and historical/biblical knowledge.



Children's Program

Teacher and Deacon Eileen Wambach has continued to have a nice size class of children this spring. Thank you to her for her dedication. The children's program will continue in the summer months.

Whitt Meek's completion of Confirmation Class led by Commissioned Pastor James Walrath will be recognized on June 9 during Children/Youth Sunday. Whitt will be providing the sermon that day. Thank you to James for taking on this responsibility for our youth. Whitt and he intend to continue meeting informally.



The Book Club's discussion of *Tom Lake* by Ann Patchett has been postponed until June 10 at 10 a.m. Book suggestions are always welcome. Anyone who has listened to or read the book is welcome to join in the discussion.



St. John's Monthly Prayer Service meets on the first Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m., in the sanctuary. The next service is June 4. Prayers are offered for St. John's missions, for the local community, for those on the prayer list, for those who are unable to gather with the congregation for worship, for personal prayers, and for anyone in need of God's love. See *James Walrath* for more information.



Blooming in Faith Women's Fellowship meets on the first Wednesday of the month in the Fellowship Hall. The next meeting is June 5, at 7 p.m. We gather for fellowship, prayer, and to create art. For more information, please see *Elizabeth Young*.



Scudder Circle's next meeting will be held at NOON on Thursday, June 2 with lunch (separate checks - order off the menu) at Savona's in Red Hook. The sign-up sheet is on the table in the Fellowship Hall. We will not have meetings in July or August and will resume meetings the 1st Thursday of each month starting in September. Have a wonderful summer! Please see Mary Bayer for additional information.

Baptism

Congratulations to **Lachlan and Richard “Rich” Riepma-Hosier** on their baptisms. Your St. John’s Reformed Church family rejoices with you as you celebrate your baptism. Congratulations on this most blessed occasion.



Mission and Outreach

Thank you to everyone who donated to April’s MOM, Save the Children USA. Through your generous gifts, \$457 was sent. A wonderful contribution to help them continue their work protecting children on our southern border.

The clothing sale proceeds were \$645. Mission and Outreach Committee voted to increase it to \$700, which will be given to JJ TenClay.

In June, as a church, we acknowledge Refugee Sunday and draw attention to the on-going struggle of refugees worldwide. Our church has invited JJ TENCLAY, the RCA’s Refugee Ministries Coordinator, to our June 2, Sunday service to speak about her role and what projects she is working on. A LUNCHEON will follow in Fellowship Hall. Everyone is encouraged to come for lunch and hear more about what JJ is doing and her direct experiences with refugees.

Plan to join us for this informative event.

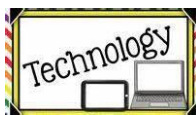
June’s Mission of the Month is South Sudan Refugee Care Project.

South Sudan Refugee Care Project, which is part of RECONCILE International, is partnered with the RCA. When we support RECONCILE, we are supporting the South Sudanese refugees in the Pagirinya and Rhino Refugee Camps in Uganda. Peace Ambassadors within the camps aide in trauma healing awareness training and community reconciliation dialogue forums to improve relations among refugees and between refugees and their host communities.

While new humanitarian crises continue to force the migration of marginalized people groups, the violent conflict in South Sudan has continued. The people of South Sudan are rarely in the current news cycle, but more than 4 million people are forcibly displaced, many of who live in the south Sudanese refugee camps in Uganda.

Please prayerfully consider helping these refugees and our Mission for June.

The Mission and Outreach Team



The Technology Team continues to fine tune the video and picture settings for worship services. Zoom viewers please give your feedback to Doug and Wayne through the chat feature on Zoom. They ask for your continued patience. If you would like to learn how to “run” Zoom and/or the soundboard, a training session is upcoming.

Did you notice the new speakers and TV in the fellowship hall? This will be used for meetings and possibly services with overflow crowds. Audio capabilities will also be included. Announcements and committee events can be posted too. Send your committee photos to the office email.

A discussion has begun about updating the church’s website. It is felt that our webpage does not reflect our mission statement. It looks old and representative of a very traditional church that does not feel vibrant or inclusive. Creating a new webpage takes months of work to do properly. A web page committee will be formed. If you are interested please contact Doug, Wayne, or Pete.



With prayers & condolences for the family and friends of
Benedicto "Ben" Albizu, Jr.
who passed away on Thursday, May 9, 2024 on his birthday.

Ben will be greatly missed by Desiree, his wife, his three loving daughters, Jaclyn, Jessica, and Monica Albizu, his loving grandchildren, Josephine & Benjamin; his siblings, along with his half siblings, nieces, nephews, cousins, colleagues, and friends.

Please comfort all those that are mourning.



We would like to thank you all for your love, support, and prayers during the last few months of Ben's life. We have received such lovely cards full of comforting sentiments and scripture, manageable gifts of food, practical items, and assistance that made it possible to get through the tough moments. It would have been much more difficult without you.

Please know you all hold a special place in our hearts.

With love and appreciation,

Desiree, Jaclyn, Jessica, & Monica Albizu



Fresh Flowers in the Church Sanctuary

The vibrant red poinsettias from Christmas and the pastel watercolor of Easter plants are long gone. How nice the sanctuary looks when we have lovely arrangements to focus on to enhance worship! If anyone is interested in placing fresh flowers in church on a Sunday, whether they are purchased from a florist or cut from your own garden, please let the church office know by calling 845-758-1184. We are happy to put a dedication in the designated Sunday bulletin if requested. If you wish to dedicate flowers for a special person, an occasion, or "just because" the summer color palette is so uplifting to those attending in person or on Zoom, all contributions are welcome.

The Worship Committee



Property Committee

Happy Spring from the Property Committee. During the rather mild winter, several necessary maintenance tasks were either worked on or completed. A new hybrid electric hot water heater replaced the leaky oil fired unit in the parsonage. Fortunately, the church received a one thousand dollar rebate from Central Hudson for this item. The parsonage dehumidifier also had to be replaced. Although pargeting was done on the worst section of the stone foundation, the basement is still quite damp, necessitating the use of a dehumidifier.

Stone wall repairs were done and many gravestones have been repaired or had new foundations placed under them. All the metal stair railings have been repainted and repaired. There are several repair and repainting projects that need to be done. Flower beds have been weeded and hedges trimmed. We already have many beautiful flowers blooming. The grass is already growing like mad which means there is constantly mowing and weed whacking to be done.

If anyone would like to help out with any of the spring and summer chores, please let any property person know. Many thanks from the Property Committee!

Draft Consistory Minutes May 16, 2024, Meeting

Present: President- Rev. Alisha Riepma-Hosier,
Elders- Glenn Countryman, Terry Laibach, Elizabeth Young, Deacons- Eileen Wambach,
Clifford King, Laurie De Ciutiis, and Mary Hennessy,
Absent: Elder Wendy Walrath, Deacon Pete Fenaroli, and Vice-President Desiree Albizu

Pastor Alisha opened the meeting, at 7:32 p.m., with a devotion, based on Colossians 3:12-17, followed by discussion and prayer.

The minutes and agenda were approved, M/S/C (motion, seconded, and carried) with one correction, remove Pete's name from attending Protecting the Houses of Worship Seminar.

Pastoral Report: Pastor Alisha reported that April was a meeting/visit heavy month. She led worship for 3 Sunday Services. Rev. Katie Alley led the service on May 5, so Pastor Alisha could baptize Rich and Lachlan. She led the Consistory Retreat on May 27. She visited with 6 parishioners at their homes and reached out to another to schedule a visit. Pastor Alisha met several times to provide premarital counseling for a couple getting married soon. She participated in a rehearsal at the wedding venue for the couple getting married on May 18. Pastor Alisha met with the Albizu family for prayer and to provide support as they prepared for Ben's funeral. She will be away May 23-30 to Minnesota for a family wedding. On May 26, Steve Young will be leading the worship service. June 9 is Children/Youth Sunday with the youth participating in the service. Whitt Meek will be preaching and receiving a confirmation certificate. Please See Pastor Alisha's pastoral report for additional information.

To approve Pastor Alisha's report as presented, M/S/C.

Financial Review: The Monthly Review, Balance Sheet, Profit and Loss reports were presented by Glenn. He highlighted that expenses are higher than income. He addressed questions pertaining to the reports.

To approve the Financial Reports as presented, M/S/C.

Committee Reports:

Faith and Education: Eileen reported that a nice size group of children has been attending Sunday School (Children's Program). Glenn stated that Bible Study is well attended and very meaningful. It will continue to meet in the summer. Whitt Meek's completion of Confirmation Class will be recognized on June 9, Children/Youth Sunday. The Book Club's discussion of Tom Lake by Ann Patchett has been postponed until June 10, at 10 a.m. Refer to the F & E report for more details.

Fellowship: In the month of April, there has been a strong attendance at our weekly coffee hour. Elizabeth and Mary stated that they appreciate everyone that has signed up to bring items in, set up and clean up Fellowship Hour. The committee is discussing the mission of what we want Fellowship to include.

Finance Committee: Glenn reported that Hop is attempting to retrieve information on the interest of the KeyBank CD, which matures in December. A \$1,000 rebate was received for the newly installed heat pump from Central Hudson. A letter and a check were sent to Janney Montgomery Scott to be deposited into the Endowment Fund Account. An auditor is being sought out. The flower budget line will be adjusted in next year's budget. It already exists on reports, one in income and one in expenses. The AmeriGas dispute has been resolved and honored. The church received an invoice stating that there's a negative balance. A huge thank you to Hop. There's was a proposal asking if St. John's would be interested in receiving incentives of \$500/signed household if we participated in the Sunraising Program. The Finance Committee does not want to participate. See FCR#1 on the agenda.

Mission and Outreach: Laurie reported that St John's raised \$457 for Save the Children USA, which was sent on May 3. The clothing sale raised \$645 and Mission and Outreach have voted to increase it to \$700, using discretionary funds. It will be presented to JJ TenClay on June 2.

Our MOM for June is to help South Sudanese refugees living in Uganda led by RCA local mission partner RECONCILE INT and missionaries Shelvis and Nancy Smith-Mather.

Terry stated that the Deacon's Food Pantry will be closed on Monday, May 20 and May 27. The families have been encouraged to fill out questionnaires concerning preferred garden vegetables as requested by the Sunrise Garden Group. They are hoping to plant the most preferred vegetables in the gardens at the church.

Property Committee: Glenn and Clif highlighted a few items from the minutes stating that there are many projects needing attention too. The property clean-up day was successful even with a small crew. There is a lot of mowing and weed whacking to be done. Glenn stated that volunteers are welcome. There are always projects to be completed. See the Property Committee report for details.

Worship: Terry reported that a coordinated effort between Worship, Mission and Outreach, and Fellowship Committees are in the works for the June 2nd service that will feature JJ TenClay. There will be a praise anthem; He is Among Us. The hymns will be coordinated with James Walrath who is leading the service (except for the sermon). Sunday Attendance for Sunday services has been around 60+ in person not counting Zoom, or YouTube viewers. There is a Worship Committee meeting tentatively set for June 9th. The focus of the committee will be the September Church Year service format, including musical content. Congregants are being encouraged to place fresh flowers in the sanctuary for specific occasions or "just because". Worship would like to thank Desiree Albizu and Peta Bartles for creating beautiful new liturgical cloths for the sanctuary!

Technology: In Pete's absence, Glenn highlighted a few items from the report. Doug continues to fine tune our sanctuary and zoom sound. A TV was installed in the fellowship hall to be used for meetings and possibly services with overflow crowds. The Tech committee continues to discuss revamping the church's website. More discussion to follow. See report for details.

To approve the Committee Reports as presented, M/S/C.

Working recommendations and special reports:

FCR#1: Finance recommends that St. John's does not participate in the SUNRAISING Program. In the past, St. John's has elected to avoid any type of endorsement or incentive programs such as a solar farms or group fuel oil proposals.

After discussion, a motion to accept FCR#1, was seconded, and passed.

To approve to adjourn the meeting after prayer, at 9:00 p.m., M/S/C.

The next regular meeting is June 20, 2024

Respectfully submitted,

Kristi Colburn,

Clerk of Consistory



Deadline for the July/August Kerk is June 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. If you would like to receive the Kerk by e-mail (a little more reliably on time than the paper version being mailed to your home) e-mail the church and let us know; office@stjohnsreformed.org.

Calendar

Worship Service

Sundays **10 a.m. in person** and you can also join live on Zoom.

You can continue to visit “**St. John’s in Red Hook**” on **YouTube** for the Sunday service also!

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88588306134?pwd=eW92WFgzUXdjSElwOG5KcFVBZGV6dz09>
Meeting ID: 816 2419 1012

To phone in: Dial by your location

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

The bulletin for each service can be found on the website: www.stjohnsreformed.org.

Click on the dropdown box for worship.

Children’s Ministry Program Sundays at 10 a.m.

Rev. Alisha Riepma-Hosier Mon., Tues., Wed., Thurs. (off site), Fri.-Sabbath Day

Kristi Colburn, Administrator Mon., Wed, Fri., 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.,
Tues. & Thurs. 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Michele Zagorski, Financial Consultant working remotely

Food Pantry Distribution Mon. 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Wed. 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Bible Study Wednesday at 10:15 a.m. in the fellowship hall

JUNE EVENTS/MEETINGS:

Men’s Breakfast Saturday, June 1, 8 a.m. at the Elizaville Diner

Prayer Service Tuesday, June 4, 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary

Blooming in Faith - Women’s Group Wednesday, June 5, 7 p.m., in the fellowship hall

Scudder Circle Meeting Thursday, June 6, 12 noon, at Savona Restaurant in Red Hook

Finance Committee Meeting Monday, June 10, 7:00 p.m., Room 4

Property Meeting Tuesday, June 11, 7 p.m., fellowship hall

Old Dutch Village Garden Club Thursday, June 13, at 12:30 p.m. in the fellowship hall

Boy Scout Leader’s Meeting Friday, June 14, at 7 p.m. in Room 4

Hudson River Housing Meal Prep Saturday, June 15, all day

Book Club Monday, June 17, at 10 a.m., in the FH to discuss Tom Lake by Ann Patchett.

Juneteenth Holiday Wednesday, June 19, Church Office & Deacon’s Food Pantry-**CLOSED**

Elders Meeting Thursday, June 20, 7 p.m. in Room 3

Consistory Meeting Thursday, June 20, 7:30 p.m., in the fellowship hall

Violin Concert Saturday, June 22, 3 p.m. in the sanctuary

Boy Scout Meeting Friday, June 28, 7 p.m. in Room 4



Shepherds Page

JUNE 2024

SEEDS

Recently at a dear friend's funeral, the scripture reading Ecclesiastes 3: 1-15 was read. Sometimes when I hear or read these words, it brings back childhood memories. Many years ago, on Children's Day all the Sunday school kids did the worship service. I don't remember how old I was, but I had to stand on a stool to see over the pulpit and my older brother, Mark and I had to read this same reading. Mark got to say the good stuff like time to be born, to plant etc. but sadly I got the bad stuff a time to die, time to reap etc. After every line he said, he'd poke me and then I had to give the "bad" lines. As a child, the "bad stuff" was depressing but as an adult I now realize we have to have some "bad" so we can appreciate the "good".

Talking of time to plant from Ecclesiastes, now is the time that we start thinking of seeds, plants, and starting to plant them. It reminds me of the Bible verse about the mustard seed. It's listed in both books of Matthew and Mark. I like the wording better in Matthew 13: 31-32 as Jesus told them another parable: "The Kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree so that the birds come and perch on its branches."

So, when thinking of seeds and planting, I'd like to share a guide to planting that I received from a Grange article:

Plant three rows of peas: 1. Peace of mind 2. Peace of heart 3. Peace of soul

Plant four rows of squash: 1. Squash gossip 2. Squash indifference
3. Squash grumbling 4. Squash selfishness

Plant four rows of lettuce: 1. Lettuce be faithful 2. Lettuce be kind
3. Lettuce be patient 4. Lettuce care about one another

No garden is complete without turnips: 1. Turnip for meetings 2. Turnip for for service
3. Turnip to help each other

To conclude our garden, we must have thyme:

- 1. Thyme for each other 2. Thyme for family
- 3. Thyme for friends 4. Thyme for prayer

Water freely with patience and cultivate with love. There is so much fruit In your garden because you reap what you sow.

Just a few quotes to share as well. "A garden is a grand teacher. It teaches patience and careful watchfulness: it teaches industry and thrift. Above all it teaches entire trust."

(Gertrude Jekyll-British horticulturist)

"To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow." *(Audrey Hepburn-actress)*

So thinking about Ecclesiastes and also Jesus's parable of the mustard seed, what seeds for your life are you planting this year? Don't forget to plant with love and plant extras for sharing.

Respectfully submitted-JoAnn Fisher-Shepherd

Happy Father's Day and Happy Children's Day – Eileen Zeliph, Shepherd Coordinator

Shepherds serving St. Johns Reformed Church

<i>Desiree Albizu</i>	<i>Amie Parker</i>	<i>Wendy Walrath</i>
<i>Kayla Bell</i>	<i>Linda Neilson</i>	<i>Mary Hennessy</i>
<i>JoAnn Fisher</i>	<i>Denise Gilhooly</i>	<i>Marie Votava</i>
<i>Terry Laibach</i>	<i>Eileen Zeliph</i>	<i>Stan Tremper</i>