

# 2<sup>nd</sup> January First Things

A Newsletter of the First Reformed Church, Schenectady, New York

January 15, 2008



## Chili Cook-off and Auction January 19

The annual Chili Cook-off and Auction will take place in Friendship Hall on Saturday, January 19<sup>th</sup>, 4 p.m. A contest for the best chili and silent auction start us off. Following that, there will be valuable, beautiful, experiential, and creative items to bid on at the not-at-all silent auction. You will get to know your church family in a new way and help raise money for the youth mission trip at the same time.

## First Hosts Colonial Festival Opening February 8

FRC will host the opening program for the 2008 Schenectady Colonial Festival Friday, February 8, 7:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. It will review what's known of the Schenectady Massacre 316 years later. The program will feature poetry, stories, music and re-enactors. Refreshments and a historical display will be in Assembly Hall following.

Newsletter  
**DEADLINE**

## First Things Deadlines

This newsletter is published at least monthly, but as you can see, occasionally a mid-month edition is required. **The deadline for the monthly edition is the 20<sup>th</sup> of every month.** It is our goal to get the newsletter into your hands by the first of the month. First Things is produced by the staff of the church and is always looking for brief articles concerning upcoming events and issues in the life of the church. When we have room, we will also give space to community events.



## Martin Luther King Sunday Forum Features SUNY Prof

Janell Hobson, Assistant Professor of Women's Studies at the University at Albany, will be speaking after worship on January 20. She received her Ph.D. in Women's Studies at Emory University in 2001 and is a pioneer in the discipline. She will speak on "How Will This Free Us? Looking Back and Moving Forward on the Issues of Race and Gender." Dr. Hobson will be alluding to the current presidential race how we might move forward from symbolic acts of race and gender progress to actualities.

## Stewardship Report for 2008

Thanks to the efforts of many hosts and presenters and committee members, the Stewardship drive for 2008 had unexpected success. Over \$400,000 was raised, which is an increase of well above \$50,000. This success and a financially healthy 2007 enabled the "asking" budget that was presented in the fall to be approved for 2008 without significant modification.

## 2008 Schenectady - Nijkerk Adult Exchange April 27- May 6

An adult trip to Nijkerk, the Netherlands, will depart Albany Airport April 27. If interested in joining this year's exchange, please contact Ellen McNett (372-1270) right away.



## Jazz Vespers Every Third Sunday Forever

January 20<sup>th</sup> at 5 p.m. is our next one. Here's the lineup:

Lew Petteys, tenor sax  
Rennie Crain, piano  
Mike DelPrete, bass  
Tom D'Andrea, Drums



## Game Night February 2

The Youth Education and Nurturing Committee is sponsoring a Game Night on February 2 (Ground Hog's Day) in Assembly Hall. The event will start at 5 p.m. People of all ages are encouraged to come and share their favorite game with others. It will be a great opportunity for fellowship, pizza and fun. Please contact Eric Evans (372-1888) if you need transportation. Bring along your favorite board game, a snack or drink, and a friend or two for a great night out.

## Adult Forum Opportunities

**January 20<sup>th</sup>** - Janell Hobson, PHD, Professor of Women's Studies at University of Albany, will present a program about race and gender.

**January 27<sup>th</sup>** - New Member Reception

**February 3<sup>rd</sup>** - Don Rittner, Schenectady County Historian, will present a program on "The Onrust Project: Dutch History and Education Plans involving the historic ship reproduction being built."



## Rev. Stacey Midge Begins

Stacey Midge is the new minister for Mission, Outreach and Youth and she begins on February 1. She will be working with our youth, but most of her time will be spent outside of our building. She will be helping with local mission and assisting us to stay in touch with our community as well as providing services for folks beyond our doors. Stacey is a gifted singer and leader. There will be a reception for her following worship on February 10, where you can meet her.

## Lent Starts Early: Ash Wednesday on February 6

Mark your calendars now to attend our first Lenten Dinner at 6 p.m. followed by the Ash Wednesday service in Poling Chapel at 7 p.m.



## 2007 Sermon CD Available

Every sermon from 2007 is currently available on one CD. Some are in text form, but most are in audio MP3 format. This disk is available in the library to borrow and transfer to your computer. A "greatest hits" version is planned that will work on regular CD players. All the sermons as well as some entire services are also available online at 1stReformed.com. Many thanks to Dick Blackmer for his diligent work on the Sunday services each week to get them in electronic shape.

## Sunday Forum Speakers Sought

George Trimarco is now scheduling speakers for the Sunday Forum that takes place after worship. If you have a great idea for a speaker, chase down contact information and let him know. Aim high.

## Elders Membership Meeting January 29

Once a year the church goes over the membership rolls to try to keep them accurate. You can help us. If you have moved on and are still on our rolls, help us by letting us know. On the other hand, if you have recently become active again, we would be happy to update your membership status.



## Give Flowers

There is a new Flower Chart for 2008 on the left-hand side-wall in the hall leading to Assembly Hall, just as you leave the sanctuary. You can sign-up to give flowers for the chancel on a Sunday morning as a celebration of a particular event or anniversary, or as a memorial for a loved one. There are simple directions telling you how to do this, placed above the chart. You are encouraged to participate in this expression of thanksgiving. If you have further questions, the church office will be glad to help you.



## Special Offering Report

Thanksgiving and Christmas turned out the generous spirit in our congregation. We collected about \$1,400 at Thanksgiving for Concerned for the Hungry and about \$3,300 at Christmas for the Samaritan Counseling Center's Project Recovery. Thanks again for your continued support of our mission work.



## Children and Worship Training

Two workshops are open to anyone interested on Friday, February 8<sup>th</sup>, 5-9:00 p.m. and Saturday, February 9<sup>th</sup>, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Sign up prior to February 2nd with Tani Breitenbach at 399-6116.

## Church School Teacher Training February 10

Before worship on Sunday, February 10, teachers and anyone interested in teaching will gather for a workshop on curriculum and techniques. Join us at 8:30 am. Contact Tani Breitenbach at 399-6116 or [tjbreitenbach@gmail.com](mailto:tjbreitenbach@gmail.com).



## Missionary Visit

Carolyn and Dick Otterness are Reformed Church missionaries and members of First Reformed whom we financially support. They are coming from Hungary to the U.S. very soon to meet people who might be interested in a unique opportunity for a year abroad in service. They work with young adult volunteers from a number of countries serving in Roma ('Gypsy') communities in Hungary and Carpathia, Ukraine. They are hoping that beginning this fall a few of these volunteers will be coming through the RCA to work with them there.

## New Clinic Dedicated

The new clinic of the Planned Parenthood Mohawk Hudson will be dedicated in an inter-faith ceremony on January 22 at 5 pm at the facility located at 1040 State Street.