

First Things



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

February 1, 2008



Lenten Dinners and Classes

February 6 through March 12 dinner will be served each Wednesday in Friendship Hall at 6 p.m. A donation of \$6 per person or \$12 per household is requested, though all are welcome whatever they can contribute! Classes taught by Dr. Levering, Rev. Stacey Midge, and Oona Edmonds, a psychotherapist at the Samaritan Counseling Center will begin on February 13.

Historic Events

Adult Forum February 3: The Onrust Project:

Don Rittner, Schenectady County and City of Schenectady Historian will present the story of building a replica of a 1614 Dutch Yacht.

Friday Evening Program:

"If the Stockade Walls Could Talk" is an evening of many events and presentations in our church Friday evening, February 8th at 7:30PM.



Chili Cook-off and Auction

A whopping \$5,192.25 was raised for the Senior High Youth Group's trip to Oaxaca, Mexico. Congratulations to Heather Chestnut (1st place), Joan Lindsay (2nd place), and Joe Gallagher (3rd place) for their award winning chili. Thank you to all who helped in any way or attended. The youth did a terrific job soliciting donations from local businesses and helping at the dinner.

Ash Wednesday Service February 6

On February 6 a 7 p.m. service of worship marking the beginning of the holy season of Lent will be offered. It will again include an opportunity to receive the ancient Christian symbol of the imposition of ashes.

Jazz Vespers Line Up

Every Third Sunday in our Sanctuary you are invited to a relaxing mix of holy words and bright jazz sounds. Tom D'Andrea has lined up some of the best professional musicians in the area for us. Here is the lineup for the next few months:

February 17:

Brian Pateneau, sax,
Lee Shaw, piano

March 16:

Peg Delaney, Maika Canonico,
Bill Delaney, Tom D'Andrea

April 20:

Tim Olsen, Eric Walentowicz,
Mike DelPrete, Tom D'Andrea

May 18:

Teresa Broadwell, Mike Novakowski,
Pete Toigo, Tom D'Andrea



Bookshop News

Focus

Afghanistan:

The Kite Runner, by Kahled Hosseini, is the novel chosen by the Schenectady County Library for this year's One County, One Book Reading Program. A Thousand Splendid Suns, a more recent book by the same author, is also set in Afghanistan. In non-fiction, Three Cups of Tea, mountaineer Greg Mortenson describes his efforts to establish schools in Afghanistan and Pakistan. All are available in the church bookshop. (Do you know why the shop is named Faith Bookshop?)



Renewing Retreats at Fowler

Visit our web-site for pictures of the Epiphany retreat. You will see folks enjoying conversation, hikes, good cooking, prayers at the beach, and a communion service around a blazing hearth.

Save the dates in 2008 for our annual congregational retreat to Fowler over Labor Day weekend. A grand time was had last year by all who attended, both those who stayed for the long weekend and those who came up just for Sunday.

Fowler Summer Camper and Volunteer Forms Available

Use the electronic forms on Fowler's site www.campfowler.org, or pick up a paper copy on the Fowler bulletin board outside of Assembly Hall, and sign up for a week of basking, serving, and growing in the fire of God's love at our camp. Scholarships are available; just ask Bill, Daniel, or Stacey.

Stephen Ministry

Stephen Ministry will meet on Wednesday, February 20, 2008 at 7:30 p.m. We will begin with Continuing Education in Assembly Hall followed by Supervision. Stephen Ministers with Care Receivers are required to attend and all others are encouraged to participate.

There will be no Stephen Ministry meeting in March due to Lenten classes.

2008 Schenectady - Nijkerk Adult Exchange April 27- May 6

An adult trip to Nijkerk, the Netherlands will depart Albany Airport April 27. This year's exchange will end May 6 and participants may return directly to Albany; or on May 10 via Paris with an optional tour to D-Day sites at Normandy. If interested in joining this year's exchange, please contact Ellen McNett (372-1270) right away.

February Birthdays

2 Laura Smith
5 Elsa Hjelmar
7 Michael Della Pia
8 Ryan Conover
9 Jamie Herrington
9 Linda Pommerer
10 Leslie Ellis
10 Beverly Mc Lane
13 Bruno De Paoli
14 Lorraine Aumic
16 Courtney Conover
16 Amy Robbins
18 Jessica Allen
19 Roy Hershey
20 Don Kleiber
22 Nicole Breitenbach
22 John Hewitt
26 Peggy Anderton
28 Katie Anderton
28 Alexander Bzdell

Glorious Church Hikes

The church van took a hearty group of hikers on a trip up and down the trail of Vroman's Nose in January. The group enjoyed the clear skies and warm sun and the view from the flat top of the Nose.



A more challenging Sunday afternoon hike with a scenic view of Lake George is scheduled for March 2. On a Sunday after worship in April we'll take an urban hike to our church plot in Vale Cemetery.

Daniel's Email

Daniel Carlson enjoys talking to people on the phone, getting mail, and in-person chats. If you would like to email him, use his new church email pastordanielcarlson@gmail.com.



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.

Senior Moments

Lent is almost here! It doesn't seem right to get excited about lent, but it always brings the opportunity to experiment with some new discipline. Abby and I are committing to rid ourselves of a box of 'stuff' in our lives every week in lent. We're going to give away clothes, books, hoarded appliances, you name it. One box a week. Per person. Where does all this stuff come from anyway? Some stranger must buy it and sneak it into the house.

I have some recommendations if you are thinking about a trial run at some new spiritual discipline in lent:

- Take the bus just once in lent.
- Buy nothing but food.
- Pray before each meal.
- Write a letter a day.
- Become a vegetarian.
- Read a book from the New Testament every day.
- Say only nice things about people.
- Ask for forgiveness from another person once a day.
- Anonymously clean a little corner of the church.
- Learn the name of one church member a week.
- Come to church twice a week.

It might be difficult to tackle all of these at once, but one or two might be fun. Or at least rewarding.

The Lenten tradition of sacrifice is not to make us unhappy, but to bring to our consciousness a different way of being. The remarkable path of Jesus is not gloom and doom, but is certainly a challenging trail that brings surprising insights.

Happy lent.

Bill Levering

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Address Correction Requested

Calendar

Every Sunday

Youth Orchestra - 8:30 am
Bible Study, Church School and
Parents Group - 9 am
Choir - 9:15 am
Worship - 10 am
Adult Forum & Kirk Singers - 11 am
Sr. High Fellowship - 7 pm

Weekly

Mon.: Men's News Group - 9 am
Klokken Ringers - 7 pm
Tues.: Tuesday Morning Mom's
Group - 9 am
Wed.: Kerygma - 9:30 am
Wednesday Dialogue - 12 pm
WE @ FRC:
6 - Dinner
7 - Worship
7:30 - Classes
Thurs.: Chancel Choir - 7:30 pm

February

4 Membership Comm. - 7:30 pm
5 Book Club - 7 pm
Vote
6 Ash Wednesday
6 - Dinner
7 - Worship
7 Chancel Guild - 9:30 am
8 Colonial Festival - 7:30 pm
10 New Minister Recept. - 11 am
10 Story Telling Workshop - 1 pm
11 Cancer Support Group - 11 am
12 Standing Committees - 7 pm
12 Consistory - 8 pm
13 Lenten Dinner and Classes
17 Jazz Vespers - 5 pm
19 Pastoral Care - 11 am
20 Lenten Classes and Dinner
20 Stephen Ministry - 7:30 pm
25 Cancer Support Group - 11 am
27 Lenten Classes and Dinner



Donna Bundy - 782-7878
Claire Hughes - 381-9241
Terry & Dale Koskowski - 346-1649
Linda Malgieri - 423-6906
Keri Martinez - 831-9155
Crystal Mongillo - 399-3380

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