

First Things

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

March,



Daylight Savings Time

Daylight savings time begins on March 8th. Don't forget to set your clocks ahead an hour.



Youth Group News

The Junior High Youth Group will be taking a ski trip on March 1. The destination will be dependent upon snow conditions, but will be either Stratton or Pico. This event is open to families - RSVP to Stacey! We will also be meeting on March 15 at 5pm in Assembly Hall.

The Senior High Youth Group just returned from their mission trip to Dulac, Louisiana! Stay tuned for updates, pictures, and the upcoming mission shareholders' dinner! The SHYG will also be meeting on March 15 at 7pm in the Mezzanine.

Ecumenical Choir Festival to be Held at FRC March 15

Nearly 200 singers from twelve different churches will be part of the Schenectady County Bicentennial Choir Festival on Sunday, March 15 at 7:30 p.m. in the FRC Church Sanctuary. Music from Bach to Gospel will be sung by the massed choir and accompanied by organ, brass, and other instruments. The event was conceived to foster a spirit of cooperation among Schenectady County churches and will benefit the Schenectady Free Health Clinic.

Julie Panke, Director of Music, has been working since September with participating choir directors from other churches on the musical aspects of the festival. Lyn Gordon has assisted in coordinating several logistical challenges, including parking, shuttles, and a meal for participants the day of the event.

The festival will be a part of the official Schenectady County Bicentennial Celebration and will feature a newly-commissioned arrangement by local composer Alfred Fedak of a tune named "Schenectady," written by Nehemiah Shumway in the mid-1800's. The festival choir will be accompanied by organists Barbara Adler, Dominick Giaquinto, and Charles Moose; the brass quintet from First Reformed Church of Scotia; musicians from Friendship Baptist Church; and "bluegrass" instrumentalists from our own congregation.

ASH

WEDNESDAY

Ash Wednesday Service
February 25 – 7 p.m.



Easter Memorial Flowers

Each Easter, members of Chancel Guild adorn our church with beautiful Easter Flowers. Your family can contribute to remember a loved one or honor a loved one. Please send your suggested donation of \$20.00 to Chancel Guild c/o Marlene Risseuw, 2140 Niskayuna Drive, Niskayuna, NY 12309 and contact the Church Office with the following information:

In Honor of _____

In Memory of _____

Even if you have donated in previous years please place an order for 2009 by April 6th. Thank you.

Lenten Wednesday Series

Beginning Wednesday, March 4 and continuing through April 1, our Lenten Series will follow the familiar format for WE @ FRC. Come as you wish and are able to participate in whatever your heart desires!

Dinner at 6 pm

Delicious dinners at 6 p.m. in Assembly Hall will include soup, salad, bread, and dessert. Folks will sign up to provide food.

Two Studies at 7 pm

1. **“Comparative Religion” Dr. Peter Bedford**, the John and Jane Wold Professor of Religious Studies at Union College, will be leading an exploration of the similarities and differences between Christianity, Judaism and Islam.

2. **“Why Memory Matters” Laura Lee Linder**, with guest speakers, will investigate how our faith and values have been influenced by the life in New Netherland; presentations will include consideration of our church heritage and the Quadricentennial Celebrations in 2009.

Guest speakers including Robert E. Bullock, New York State Archives and



President of their Archives Partnership Trust, and James D. Folts, Associate Archivist at the NY State Archives and Archivist at FRC Albany. The class will be looking for answers to questions such as, what about our Dutch heritage, its uniqueness, what difference it makes and how it persists? What does our background mean to us? What does our history teach us about our faith, values, and perspectives on life?



Wednesday Mission Option:

Mission in Action. A new noteworthy third option for the Lenten series will be led by Chris Daniels and Stacey Midge. Rather than giving up something for Lent this year, participants in this adventure will be deliberately adding something: Acts of Kindness. Each Wednesday evening, those choosing this option will serve people in need. On March 4 and 11 a meal will be prepared and shared with residents at the Salvation Army Booth Home, an emergency shelter for women and children in Schenectady. Due to the nature of this opportunity, it will begin at 5:30 p.m. and conclude by 8, in time to make it back for worship. Pre-registration for this option is required (church office, 377-2201; Chris Daniels 379-1213).

Worship at 8 pm

Contemplative Communion to sustain us on our Lenten Journey will be held at 8 p.m. This short service of song, prayer, scripture, silence, and the Lord's supper, shared in the stillness of the sanctuary chancel, illuminated by candlelight is a welcome way to end the evening.

Retreat to Fowler this Lent

Once again private rooms and shared meals in Chi Rho Lodge will be available March 29-April 3. Morning, midday, and evening prayers will be led each day by various pastors within Albany Synod, although participation is not required. The lodge's great room, basement, as well as the camp and retreat center's trails are available for use during these days. A significantly subsidized all inclusive price (\$35/day) as been maintained to enable those of varying financial means to participate. So, come away to this beautiful, deserted place in the Adirondacks for a day or longer to rest, pray, reflect, and be renewed. For more information contact Daniel and/or go to Fowler's web site, where registration is also possible.

Lenten Devotional Available

Copies of the 2009 Lenten Devotional, written and illustrated by members of the congregation, are now available. This resource will be available on Sundays and throughout the week in the church office. Those who are out of the area or unable to obtain one in person, may contact the church office for postal delivery.

Faith Bookshop News

What better time than Lent to expand one's understanding of the Bible. "The New Oxford Annotated Bible," New Revised Standard Version, is a respected ecumenical study Bible. (Our Rev. Carlson recommends it in his Bible study classes.) The annotations give helpful insight into the culture and language that surround the Biblical writings. Until Easter, the church Bookshop is offering this Bible at an additional discount.



New Church Directory Planned

Sign-ups for pictures for the new church directory will begin in February. You will be able to select your date and time after church services. Carol Troost is overseeing the sign-up process.

Olan Mills photographers will be here March 26, 27 and 28 and April 6 and 8. Please make every effort to be a part of the new directory. Should you be away during the photo dates, it is possible to have a picture taken elsewhere. Contact the church office for information

Address Change

Cards and letters for Dee Gravink can now sent to the following address:

Dee Gravink
c/o Sunbridge
1251 White Mountain Highway
P.O. Box 3417
North Conway, NH 03860

If you have a change we should know about, please let us know. We want to keep in touch with you. This is especially true since we are working on our new church directory.

Help Our Missioners

Randy Sparrow our missioner who works with Habitat and Home Furnishings tells us donations are down so much this month that Home Furnishings has had to cancel some truck runs for lack of items to pick up or deliver! Please call 346-2444 if you have household furnishings, large or small, that others could use. Most needed are beds, dressers, kitchen tables/chairs as well as flatware and cooking utensils including pots and pans and small appliances.

Art Hudak is looking for help with the successful Third Way program. If you are interested in serving as a Downtown Ambassador to work two hours outdoors to guide folks for Proctor's events, contact him. Art is also in need of some help serving evening meals at the City Mission Mondays through Thursdays. In addition, Art wants folks to come sample his cooking at the Wednesday Dialog lunches.

Installation of Synod Executive March 8



The Reverend Dr. Harold Delhagen will be installed as the Executive of the Synod of Albany on Sunday, March 8 at 1 pm at Scotia Reformed Church. The congregation is invited.

Process for Joining the Congregation

If you are interested in joining First Reformed, please speak to any of the ministers. We will tailor a process just for you.

Senior Moments

- Bill Levering

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 25. Lent is often the time when people make resolutions of devotion. I have a modest suggestion. Come to church. If attending the whole season is completely out of the question, make just one Sunday of Lent and then Easter. C'mon. I could give you plenty of silly reasons, but you know the deeper ones. Reach for something bigger in your life.

For Lent I am going to take the bus to work at least once. A modest goal, but I come to church too much already.

There seems to be a bit of unraveling happening in the world because of economic turmoil. The EU is fraying, political unrest is up. Partisan sniping fills the news. It is an important moment for the church to reassert the foundational values of human dignity and cooperation. Of course in times of uncertainty there will be religious voices of many timbres championing veiled self-interest. That is not who we are or what Christ calls us to be. Hold strong in hope and faith, especially when other shouts fill the air.

Brueggemann Lecture February 26

Dr. Walter Brueggemann, one of the foremost American theologians will speak at Union College at 7:30 pm on Thursday, February 26 at Nott Memorial. The lecture, "Two Steps Forward, One Step Back: Journey to the Common Good" is sponsored by the Capital Region Theological Center, Union College, and the Campus Protestant Ministry.

First Reformed Church

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Mar	Preach	Reader	Forum	Vespers at 5
1	whl	Bruno DePauli	Cornell Extension: "Garden Planning"	Jazz: Toigo, Phipps, D'Andrea
8	whl	Rae Forster	whl: Symbols of the Church	Chamber Ensemble
15	whl	Chris Fernandes	Vicki Brooks: Union College Chaplaincy	Jazz: Delaneys, D'Andrea,
22	whl	George Trimarco	Debbie Forester: Roots and Wisdom	Celtic: Cliudan!
28	whl	Joe Dolittle	Midge: Youth Ministries	Folk: The Rounders

Address Service Requested

March Birthdays

2 – Tom Burgoyne	22 – Jack Draffen
3 – Irma Moynihan	23 – Heather Kumta
3 – Jodi Rickard	24 – Nancy Passer
4 – Audrey Bain	25 – Jeffrey Merten
5 – Joe Gotwals	26 – Lindsey Beals
5 – Anders Ipsen	26 – Lawrence Mossey
7 – Karlyne Drimalas	26 – Bill Rochelle
9 – Kevin Richards	26 – Elyne Schulte
10 Constance Blair	27 – Richard Arthur
10 – Madison Di Donna	27 – Janet Crandell
11 – Alexis Wisniewski	27 – Jessica Rimany
12 – Emily Lnenicka	27 – Kristen Rimany
12 – Diana Wahid	28 – Peter Ipsen
13 – Joanne Arnold	28 – Hope Neikirk
14 – Phil Falconer	29 – Robert Allen
15 – Mary Alice Jewett	30 – Caleb Paine
16 – Linnea D'Andrea	30 – Carol Schweizer
17 – Judy Arthur	30 – Jayne Steubing
17 – Janet Gardner	30 – Linda Ward
18 – Chris Van Oort	31 – Alesha Breitenbach
19 – Greg Burgoyne	31 – Chad Greskovich
20 – Anna Ipsen	
20 – Christine Shultes	

Calendar

Every Sunday

Youth Orchestra – 9am
Choir – 9:15 am
Worship – 10 am
Church School – 10:20 am
Adult Bible Study – 11 am
Coffee Hour – 11 am
First Forum – 11:20 am
Vespers – 5 pm

Weekly

Monday:

Men's News Group – 9 am
Back Rx – 9 am
Klokken Ringers – 7 pm

Tuesday:

Morning Mom's – 9 am
Morning Prayer – 10 am

Wednesday:

Back Rx – 9 am
Kerygma – 9:30 am
Wednesday Dialogue – 12 pm
WE @ FRC – 6, 7, 8 pm

Thursday:

Chancel Choir – 7:30 pm

Friday:

Back Rx – 9 am

Events

1 – JHYG, Ski Trip
2 – Group V, 9:30 am (off site)
2 – Book Club, 2 pm
8 – Daylight Savings Time Begins
8 – Pot Luck Lunch, 12 noon
8 – Delhagen Installation 1 pm
9 – Concerned for Hungry, 7:30
10 – Standing Committees, 7 pm
10 – Consistory – 8 pm
11 – League of Women Voters, 7:30
12 – Sch'dy. Art Society, 7 pm
15 – Choir Festival 7:30 pm
16 – Stephen Ministry, 7 pm
17 – St. Patrick's Day
17 – Support & Care, 11 am
19 – Staff Meeting, 12 noon
20 – First Day of Spring
20 – Group VII, 9:30 am (off site)
26 – Church Directory Pictures
27 – Church Directory Picture
28 – Church Directory Pictures

