

First Things



The celebration of Pentecost this year will feature

- Confirmation
- New Member Reception
- Annual Meeting with elections

Pentecost is a highlight of the church year right up there with Christmas and Easter. Folks are encouraged to wear red and great pageantry takes place. This year we will bring in new members of all ages and have the celebration of the church we call the annual meeting following the worship service.

As you plan your calendars, note that this is not Memorial Day weekend, so everyone can make it.

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FINANCE REPORT

We have just ended the first quarter of our fiscal year (March 31), and I am pleased to report that all is financially well at our church. Our operations expenses are in line with the budget, and our endowment funds have recovered somewhat, especially during the month of March.

We are carefully watching two revenue items. The first is our pledge payment status, which is lagging just a bit. You should have recently received a quarterly statement from the church office, which I hope will encourage you to stay current with your pledge payments.

The second is the Classis Assessment request. This was tucked into the April mailing of First Things and included a return envelope. While this is a voluntary gift, I hope that you will consider participating with an assessment contribution. Your gift offsets an expense of \$72.35 per person which the Church must pay, and so your gift helps our budget stay on track.

Thank you for all you do.

Fred Daniels, Treasurer



The Annual Spring Cookout is May 17 after worship and will have games and relays and face painting and karaoke and hamburgers and hot dogs and veggie burgers and bugs and a great time. Invite friends!

and....and....

Final Day for Directory Photos June 1

Many folks were not able to make the last set of sittings, so we have scheduled another time. Call the church office now to schedule an afternoon or evening.



The worship service on May 17 is being led by the youth of our church. Our preachers will be the graduating seniors.



“Can” You Believe this Butterfly?

Since the start of Church School, last September, children have been bringing in cans of tomato sauce. Can by can we watched the shelves in the Children & Worship room fill to the edges. During Lent we added cans of pear halves, chicken broth and black beans. No, we weren't making exotic soup. We used the cans to "canstruct" a beautiful Easter butterfly on the stage in Friendship Hall. Many thanks to all the parents for their weekly commitment to our project! The butterfly will be dismantled and the cans will be delivered to the Bethesda House and the Jonesville Food Pantry. Keep watch for next year's similar project. We can hardly wait! Thank You!



Stephen Ministry

Take a minute to peruse the Stephen Ministry bulletin board (next to the bookstore). If you do, you'll "Think Spring." Once again, Linnea D'Andrea has done a wonderful job portraying the work of the Stephen Ministry program. For further information regarding the program, or if you would like a Stephen Minister, call Daniel Carlson, 377-2201; Ruthellen Philips, 346-1791; or Linda Ward, 377-2377.



Reduce Your Carbon Footprint

The Greening Team of FRC invites anyone interested in learning how to progressively go carbon neutral to join us for a collaborative series of monthly meetings. We will meet in Assembly Hall from 6-8 p.m. on May 19, June 18, and July 21. Come whenever you can, attendance at each session is not required. For more information contact Wales Brown at 382-1249, or email at wbrown6@nycap.rr.com.

Nominations

The Nominating Committee of First Reformed Church is charged to nominate Elders and Deacons to serve two-year Consistory terms. The Committee will begin its work this month including soliciting recommendations from the congregation for candidates for Elder and Deacon. Those being recommended and those making recommendations must be active members of First Reformed Church. Candidates for Consistory should be representative of the congregation, have leadership vision and skills, and be active participants in the worship and activities of this church.

Elders and Deacons together with the Ministers form the Consistory, which is the governing body of this congregation. Elders exercise particular concern for the spiritual life and programs of the church (worship, education, and congregational care). Deacons exercise particular concern for the outreach and temporal programs of the church (Mission and Benevolence, Finance, Pastoral Concerns, Property). Elders and Deacons will be elected at the annual meeting of the congregation on May 31, 2009.

Youth News

The Junior High Youth Group will meet on May 3 and 17 at 5pm. Our meeting location has moved to the Church School classrooms upstairs! Dinner is provided; feel free to invite friends!

The Senior High Youth Group will meet on May 3 and 17 at 7pm in the Mezzanine. This month we will be getting ready for Youth Sunday and planning for an end of the year activity, along with continuing our service opportunities.

Youth Sunday will be on May 17.

The graduating seniors will deliver the sermon, and junior and senior youth will lead the service. Youth, please plan to be at church on May 17 at 9am for last minute preparations!

Confirmation Class

We will gather in the Walton Conference room at 6:30 pm on May 3 and 17. Confirmands will be taken into church on Pentecost (May 31) and will be meeting with Consistory on May 12 at the regular meeting which they will attend in its entirety. Info at: sites.google.com/site/frconfirmation

WE @ FRC

Our Wednesday evening opportunity for fellowship, education, and worship has resumed--with Easter festivity. Dinner in Assembly Hall begins at 6 pm. Two new learning opportunities start at 7 pm and are as follows. Brad Lewis and Joe Doolittle lead a study and discussion of the ground-breaking Belhar Confession which originated from churches in South Africa. This confession will be voted on this year at General Synod and is included April issue of First Things. Abby Norton-Levering facilitates a group of those who wish to knit (or learn how) and those who do other handwork, while listening for the Spirit of God. The

evening concludes with a brief contemplative Communion service in the sanctuary chancel at 8 pm. Newcomers and old timers are most welcome to any part of any Wednesday evening; no registration is necessary.



Bus Trip to New York City

A bus trip to New York City for the First Reformed Churches of Albany and Schenectady is planned for **Saturday, May 16**. First stop, guided tour of Quadri-centennial exhibit at the Museum of the City of New York, *Amsterdam/New Amsterdam: The Worlds of Henry Hudson*. Following lunch, visit West End, one of the four Collegiate Churches of New York, to learn about the Reformed Church's 1628 Dutch roots, multi-lingual and multi-ethnic history, and diverse and embracing congregations of today. Our guide will tell us about the New Amsterdam History Center, co-located with the Collegiate Church Archives, and Henry Hudson 400 New York and Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Then to lower Manhattan's historic Fraunces Tavern to view *History Panorama: Salmagundians Illustrate Manhattan's 400-Year Founding by the Dutch*, and walk a few blocks where New Amsterdam used to be. Or make your own plan for the day in the city. Interested? Sign-up sheets are on church bulletin boards, or call Laura Linder at 882-6866. We need at least 40 people at \$45 each for bus (includes tip, snacks). Museum admissions with guided tours for our group will total \$25 adults, \$16 seniors (65+) and students. Price coming for optional box lunch.

Entered into Eternal Rest

Marcia Todd
Tuesday, April 21, 2009

Group 5 May 4

The next meeting of Group 5 members will be on May 4th at 9:30 a.m. at the home of Ilah De Paoli, 1321 Hawthorn Road, Niskayuna. The program will be "Mothers." The speaker is Nancy Barrett.

Wednesday Dialog

May 20: China Today

On Wednesday, May 20, 2009, Bill Chu will be returning to Wednesday Dialog to speak on the current financial relationship between China and the rest of the world. Bill has spoken to this group on several occasions and his talks have been most interesting.

Bill was born and raised in China and accepted the Christian faith during WW-II. He came to the U.S. after the war to continue college and graduate studies, becoming a U. S. citizen in 1957. He worked for GE for 33 years and has made several visits to China from 1983 through 1993 as an invited advisor to universities and industry sharing his expertise on R/D management, technology programs, and technology transfer projects.

Bill has frequently returned to China with his family. He is married with 2 daughters and 3 sons. To date, there are 8 grandchildren. Mark your calendar; this will be a memorable presentation.

Back Rx Goes Top Tier

We are springing into this season by transitioning into the most rigorous series of back stretching and strengthening. The meditative mood supported by the peacefulness of the Dirck Romeyn Lounge persists, thus enabling our workout to include a closing movement prayer and preparation for the day the Lord has

made. There's still some room for any who've just been waiting for this more aerobic routine borrowing from pilates and yoga. Join us any Monday, Wednesday, or Friday from 9-9:20 a.m.

Lake George Fifth Sunday Frolic

After worship on May 31st we'll be carpooling to the Schadler's camp for a scrumptious lunch followed by a moderate few-mile favorite hike of Margie's that offers a view of the lake. Thanks to the Schadler's hospitality, the Fellowship Committee is pleased to publish the news that this frolic is not limited to those who plan to hike, but also open to those who wish to enjoy a Sunday afternoon drive and lunch with friends. Please sign-up for this frolic by calling the church office.

New Director of Library Search

The church has been blessed by Ginny Laumeister's long tenure as director of the Johnson Memorial Library – one of the finest in the denomination. She is now ready to gently guide another member to serve in this volunteer capacity. We are looking for someone who will provide enthusiasm, ideas, and leadership to the capable and committed library staff. Please see Christine Daniels, Chair of Adult Education and Nurture Committee, or Pastor Daniel Carlson if you sense that this may be a way in which God is inviting you to minister.



Reports are due on May 12 from committee chairs, staff, and project leaders.

Mission News

October Mission Trip to South Africa



Missioners from First Reformed have planned a trip for

October 2009 to Tapologo, in Rustenburg, South Africa and are inviting others to make a commitment to join. The trip provides a chance for travelers to work at the Tapologo Hospice and Children's Home supported by First Reformed and to get to know partner churches in the area. An extended option to travel to Cape Town at the end of the trip is also being planned. An estimate of cost per person includes lodging at a Bed and Breakfast near Tapologo and R/Tairfare JFK/Johannesburg. While airfare and rooms need to be reserved soon to assure current pricing cost estimates are below:

Flights:

10/8-10/18 \$1600
10/8-10/22 \$1700 (Cape Town)

Lodging:

With shared room for 9 nights
\$360

Costs for ground transportation, food and side trips are extra.

Some scholarship support may be available but we need your commitment now to go forward. Please contact Stacy Midge now with your interest and Carol DeLaMarter for trip details. Additional opportunities to support this effort through small projects will be presented as the planning continues.



Habitat for Humanity Opportunities

This spring and summer, two Habitat houses will be built entirely by women! The Women Build project empowers women while helping to eliminate substandard housing in Schenectady County. The two houses on Gerling St. provide an opportunity to learn construction skills and help others in a non-threatening environment. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Stacey or see the Women Build website at www.hfhscny.org/womenbuild.htm.

Household Donations Needed

The Home Furnishings Program is in need of donations for the following items: twin beds, kitchen tables and chairs, end tables and coffee tables.

Volunteers are needed for: drivers for Wednesday and Friday morning truck runs (9 am – noon); people with skills in marketing, website maintenance, grant writing, office work, volunteer coordination, and possible new Board members.

Please call 346-2444 if you can help out in any way. Leave a message and we will get back to you.



Missioners' Garden Project

Our gardens are starting to get underway, with exciting opportunities all over Schenectady! Our first planting will take place on May 1st at 6 pm when we will install plants in front of the Dirck Romeyn entrance to the church. All are welcome! We also have a scheduled planting day on May 16th at 9 am to garden in front of the Schenectady Police Station and Liberty Park. Meet at the corner of Liberty and Lafayette Streets.

Additional planting days can be found on our Google calendar. To access this calendar, please provide Dan Butterworth with your email address by calling 201-213-1222 or emailing dbutterw82@yahoo.com.

We are still looking for people to take the lead on several of our garden sites. These include our West Glenville plot, the Brudos' field, the YWCA, the City Mission, the Front Street pool, the Lighthouse in Mont Pleasant, and Riverwalk Park.

If you are interested in getting your hands dirty, or if you have materials or plants to donate, please contact Art at 518-424-9526 or email at hudiaph@gmail.com.

Christ
the Power of
GOD and The
WISDOM of
God

1 Corin. 1:24



Slow Down...You Move Too Fast

I love Sunday, especially at FRC. Singing in the choir is a privilege. Listening to sermons helps me grow. Praying with our community enables me to get the big picture. Wendell Berry once wrote, "When we work well, a Sabbath mood rests on our day, and finds it good." I think the observance of the Sabbath helps me to work well as a Missioner.

I love to send cards snail mail! Most often they are cards that were made by my friends at the Weston Priory, in Vermont. Sometimes I just like to write with a pen. Licking a stamp, going to the mailbox can be holy stuff. During May, I want to ride my bike to work during "National Bike to Work Week." Daniel observes this week all year long; surely I can incorporate this into my pattern this month!

The seeds are growing for our plants. The gardens around town are being tilled. Soon, growth will begin. On Sundays in May I'll sing, pray, listen and observe Sabbath rest so that I can be a good steward and productive during the growing days of spring.

Art Hudak
Third Way Missioner

Group 7 May 15

The members of Group 7 plan to meet at 9:30 a.m. on Friday, May 15 at the home of Janet Gardner, 1927 Townsend Road in Hexam Gardens, Niskayuna. Co-hostesses will be Betty Kleiber and Ruthellen Phillips.

Nancy Peterson will present a program, which is called "The Schenectady Aquifer: Our Water."



Applications are currently being accepted for the 2009-2010 Al Smith Education Fund

scholarship. Please contact the church office for an application and contact Sara Erickson 374-4161 or ericksonhs@aol.com with any questions. Deadline is June 1st.

Summer Internships

Bethesda House and SICM have summer internships available for high school and college students! Bethesda interns work at the Hospitality Center/Day Shelter or the Lighthouse, helping to carry out the day to day mission and ministry of Bethesda House, serving the poorest and most vulnerable members of our community. SICM interns work with the Damien Center, Food Program, Summer Lunch, Computers for Kids, or Weed and Seed, along with aiding in the general tasks of serving residents of inner city Schenectady. Full and part-time positions are available. Some funding is available, but those students who do not receive paid internships can earn scholarship money for college by volunteering. Please talk to Stacey if you are interested in applying for one of these internships.

Synod Executive at Forum

Share the energy Harold Delhagen has in his new role as the executive of the Synod of Albany. He will talk about his new job, his recent visits to South Africa and the Belhar Confession at the Sunday Forum on May 10.



To all those at First Reformed who provided hospitality on March 15!

What a delightful time you gave us choristers that past Sunday! We were all well taken care of from beginning to end – people giving directions to coat facilities, rest rooms – to the generous and delightful supper – you did it all with grace and generosity. Thank you so very much for such a memorable time!

Sincerely,
Alicia and Phil Hermance
First Reformed of Scotia

Senior Moments

When you exercise, your muscles get stronger. When you get the mumps, the body fights it off and is ready the next time. Our biologies are full of examples that the basic nature of human life is healing and positive adjustment. Our minds are the same. People recover from terrible experiences and great pain. One of the basic ideas of our faith is that people can change; they can be renewed and transformed. What good is judging folks then, except as a way to help them grow? Understanding this basic idea can help our feelings as well as the formation of social policy.

As Christians who believe in the power of new life, we need to work for more healing and fewer prisons, more jobs for fewer acts of desperation.

What spring does God have in mind for Schenectady? What renewal is in store for the United States?

Peace.

Bill Levering

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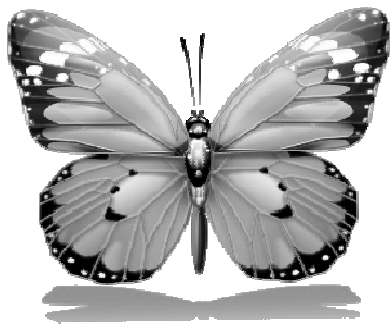
Sunday Schedule

May	Preach	Reader	Forum	Vespers at 5
3	Dr. Levering	Chris Fernandes	Dan Butterworth	Jazz: Toigo, Phipps, D'Andrea
10	Dr. Levering	Rob Dickson	Harold Delhagen	Chamber
17	Youth	Barbara Draffen	Picnic!	Jazz: Delaneys, Tom D'Andrea,
24	Dr. Levering	Bruno De Paoli	Cookies and Conversation	Celtic
31	Rev. Carlson	Joe Doolittle	Confirmation Reception	Hymn Sing

Address Correction Requested

May Birthdays

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 – Trevor Falconer | 15 – William Dotter |
| 1 – Virginia Moore | 18 – Brenda Spencer |
| 3 – Benjamin Crair | 19 – John Chequer |
| 3 – Kelsey Mc Dermott | 19 – Dave Schweizer |
| 3 – Nancy Teichner | 19 – Stacey Shultes |
| 5 – David Hamm | 25 – Erica Kuntz |
| 6 – Eleanor Brudos | 27 – Nancy Hershey |
| 6 – Elinor Herman | 27 – Kirby Vosburgh |
| 7 – Jamie Ipsen | 28 – Linda Richards |
| 8 – Donald Flom | 29 – David Mitsche |
| 10 – Parker Brown | 30 – Nathaniel Foote |
| 11 – Matthew Mc Dermott | 30 – Ashley Kerwin |
| 12 – Joseph Little | 31 – Madison Hewitt |
| 13 – Dee Gravink | |



May, 2009

Calendar

Every Sunday

- Youth Orchestra, 9 am
- 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

- 2 – Marcia Todd Memorial Service, 11 am
- 3 – JHYG, 5 pm
- 3 – Confirmation Class, 6:30
- 4 – Group 5, 9:30 am (off site)
- 10 – Pot Luck Lunch, 11:30 am
- 10 – Mother's Day
- 12 – Committee Mtgs., 7 pm
- 12 – Consistory, 8 pm
- 13 – Community Hospice, 5 pm
- 15 – Group 7, 9:30 am (off site)
- 17 – Annual Congregation Mtg.
- 17 – Annual Spring Picnic
- 17 – JHYG, 5 pm
- 17 – Confirmation Class, 6:30
- 17 – SHYG, 7 pm
- 18 – Stephen Ministry, 7 pm
- 19 – Support & Care, 11 am
- 21 – Staff Meeting, 12 noon
- 26 – Stephen Ministry, 9 am
- 31 – Confirmation
- 31 – New Members Join
- 31 – Lake George Frolic
- 31 – Pentecost