

# First Things

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

November, 2009

## New Members

Betty Bumgarner  
838 Huntingdon Dr.  
Niskayuna 12309  
374-6746

Ruth Bergeron  
22 Washington Ave., Apt. D  
Schenectady 12305

Gail & Glenn Blinckmann  
6 Fairway Ln.  
Schenectady 12304  
382-5651

Mary Russell  
413 Saratoga Rd., Lot #21  
Glenville 12302  
649-5353

Flora Casallas  
4509 Foxwood Dr. S  
Clifton Park, NY 12065

## Report from Pakistan at Wednesday Dialog Nov. 18

On November 18, the noon time meeting of the Wednesday Dialog will feature Lon and Helen Penna. The Penna's are frequent travelers to Pakistan on behalf of Rotary International and have interacted with many of the 'regular' people. This is an opportunity to get an unbiased account of the situation in a country we hear about in the press daily.

## Celebration Luncheon November 1 after Worship



You are invited! It has been many years since our congregation had a celebration luncheon. This year we welcome Philip Morris, the CEO of Proctor's, to speak to us briefly about the future of creative collaborations in Schenectady. The chancel choir will also sing some Broadway tunes, and Joe Doolittle will tell one and only one joke. The children's choirs will sing a piece or two, and a good time will be had by all. We will start eating at noon and be done by 1:30 at the latest.

Although sponsored by the Stewardship Committee, there will be no heavy-handed pitch, and pledge cards will **not** be collected at this lunch. Please bring them in to **Dedication Sunday on November 8** when we will put them in the offering plates.

The cost of the lunch is underwritten by the church, but a basket will be on the tables if you would like to help offset it.

## Stewardship Dedication Sunday November 8

## Harvest for the Pantry Fundraiser Dinner

SICM's Emergency Food Pantry will be holding its second annual Harvest for the Pantry fundraiser on Sunday, November 8, from 4-7 p.m. at the Bellevue Reformed Church. The event will be a served dinner donated from local restaurants and a silent auction. Tickets are \$25, and you can buy them from Stacey Midge or by contacting Janet Mattis from SICM at [jmattis@sicm.us](mailto:jmattis@sicm.us).



## Alternative Gift Fair Set for Sunday December 6th

What is an alternative gift? – A gift that makes a difference, a chance to buy once and give twice. Purchasing products from a large retailer will not provide the opportunity to make the impact you can make by purchasing fair trade and locally produced goods. Fair trade programs throughout the world have changed lives, giving people the means to make a living to support themselves and their families. Be part of the movement and find some truly unique treasures for your loved ones. We will have organic herbs grown in Schenectady, hand woven creations from Guatemala, and one of a kind earrings from Africa. Please mark your calendars and contact Jeanne Shoulder, 372-8647 or [jmshoulder@hotmail.com](mailto:jmshoulder@hotmail.com), with your ideas or if you can volunteer.



**Entered into  
Eternal Rest**  
Barbara Lawrence  
October 15, 2009  
**Varieties of Gifts**

## Stockade Walkabout Visitors Report

We had 374 people sign our guest list during this year's Walkabout. They came from 3 different countries – The Netherlands, Spain and USA; 9 states – MO, NH, NJ, NY, NC, PA, TX, VT, and WV; 6 cities in NYS; and 50 other NYS municipalities. 17 visitors didn't write down where they were from. Altogether we had a total of 743 tickets sold!

## Wednesday Table Talk

Opportunities for unhurried conversation with others while gathered around a dinner table set for six is one of the blessed benefits of WE @ FRC. It doesn't hurt that the savory soups are almost always home-made. Salad, bread, dessert, and coffee round out the feast, but that's just the first course of this three-dimensional adult-oriented program that happens every Wednesday beginning at 6 p.m.! Lively learning classes, such as Bill's *Preacher's Preview* and Daniel's *Journaling our Journeys*; *Sharing our Stories* begin at 7:15. A candlelight contemplative communion service is held in the sanctuary chancel at 8:30, concluding by 9. Reservations are never required for any of the above. So come and see what dimension(s) of WE @ FRC appeal to thee!

## Faith Bookshop

CD's of the Cantata sung by our Chancel Choir last Christmas Eve are now available in the Bookshop. To keep informed on what else is new in the shop, follow our weekly announcements in the Sunday bulletins. Better yet, stop in and look around!



**Sunday, Nov. 1** Junior High Youth Group meets at 5pm, Senior High Youth Group meets at 7pm

**Sunday, Nov. 8** Thanksgiving Pie Sales begin: order your pies during coffee time or from any Senior High youth! Youth, please plan to be at church to take orders.

**Sunday, Nov. 15** Pie Sales continue during coffee time. JHYG meets at 5pm, SHYG meets at 7pm.

**Saturday, Nov. 21** Pie baking at church: we will begin at 11am and bake until it's done! All Senior High youth who anticipate going on the mission trip are expected to attend; Junior High youth who wish to help are also welcome.

**Sunday, Nov. 22** Pie Pick-up during coffee hour after church. SHYG, please be there to pass out the pies! Friday, Dec. 4 - JHYG overnight from 7pm to 9am.

**Sunday, Dec. 6** Helping with the Alternative Gift Fair 11am - 4pm. We will be selling soup and sandwiches to raise money for this year's mission trip, and then preparing for the Christmas Eve Service.

**Sunday, Dec. 20** Living Nativity and Christmas Party! Meet at 5pm.

**Thursday, Dec. 24** 5pm Christmas Eve service led by youth.

## Group News

### Group V

Group V will meet Monday, November 2, at 11:00 a.m. in the Assembly Hall. Members should bring a brown bag lunch; dessert and beverages will be provided. The program for the meeting will be announced. All women of the church are invited to attend; new members are always invited to join us.

### Group VII Meeting

The ladies of Group VII will meet in Assembly Hall of First Reformed Church at 11:30 a.m. on November 20<sup>th</sup>, for a program by Jeanne Shoulder. The title of her talk will be "Why Fair Trade?" Co-hostesses are Gini McDermott and Anne Robb. Please bring your own lunch.

### Meeting Notes:

#### Schenectady Art Society

Thursday, November 12<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. in the Poling Conference Room.

#### Care and Support Group

Tuesday, November 17<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m. in the Poling Conference Room.

### New Addresses:

Ray and Jane Fisher  
Lyngblomstren Care Center  
1415 Almond Ave.  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

George and Karen Williams  
120 Greenbrier Drive  
Aptos, CA 95003

# Mission News

## **Midnight Run Brings Help to New York City**

The Midnight Run will be on Friday, Nov. 6. We will leave church at 7pm in the van to travel to New York City, where we will deliver clothes, blankets, hygiene items, and meals to homeless people in Manhattan. If you are interested in participating, please contact Stacey ASAP.

We also need to prepare sandwiches to bring along on the Midnight Run. If you are able to join us at church on Thursday night, or to prepare sandwiches at home and drop them off at church by Friday afternoon, please contact Stacey.

## **South Africa Mission Trip Returns Safely**

Thanks to all who gave their support and prayers for our travels! We made many useful connections with the churches in Rustenburg, Johannesburg, and Capetown, and learned much about the work of Tapologo Hospice. Thanks to your generous donations, we raised over \$2,800 for Tapologo to pay for food, school fees, and school uniforms for needy children. More information and stories about the trip will be told in the Forum on Nov. 15, and you can also read about some of our activities and reflections on the trip blog, [tapologobound.blogspot.com](http://tapologobound.blogspot.com).

## **Our Concerned for the Hungry Food Drive**

FRC's 2008 Thanksgiving food drive is a way to make sure all families in our community will have a bountiful feast on this day of Thanksgiving. Food and monies collected at our church on Sunday, November 15, will be delivered to Keane Elementary School (former St. Luke's School) by congregation members and packed into baskets by The Concerned for the Hungry volunteers. This enormous drive, with contributors from throughout the community, results in thousands of families receiving all the fixings for a traditional Thanksgiving meal. While most people are familiar with the food bags we collect, financial contributions are also greatly appreciated. The funds collected are used to purchase supplies in bulk at greatly reduced prices to help stretch the dollars. Checks should be made payable to "First Reformed Church" with "Concerned for the Hungry" in the memo line.

This year we are once again eligible for GE Matching Funds. For GE employees or retirees a donation of \$25.00 or more will be matched by General Electric. To make a donation with matching funds please contact the GE Matching Gifts Program at 1-800-305-0669, or access the Foundation's website at [www.gefoundation.com](http://www.gefoundation.com) and click on Matching Gifts Program. Make the check payable to "Concerned for the Hungry" with "matching" in the memo line. Thank you in advance for your generosity. Enjoy your Thanksgiving knowing that you have helped to bring joy to many area families this holiday.

## **Habitat for Humanity Celebrates National "Make A Difference Day"**

On October 24th Habitat for Humanity of Schenectady County celebrated "Make A Difference Day" by recognizing the many volunteers that have worked so hard to bring the two Women Build homes on Gerling Street near completion. The day was marked by dedications, participation of Union College volunteers, and other groups of volunteers who have contributed to the projects' success, as well as a ceremonial tree planting. A dedication for the Habitat's rehab project home, located on First Avenue in Schenectady, is planned for November.

## **Home Furnishing Program**

The Home Furnishing Program is in need of items for November. If you have any of the following (in good condition) that you would like to donate to "Elsie's Room" please call them at 346-2444 to arrange for pick-up or delivery.

**Elsie's Room Needs:**  
Kitchen Items like can openers, pot holders, dish towels, spatulas, and big stirring spoons. Linens like wash cloths and bath towels.

**Furniture:**  
BEDS! Single, double, or queen with mattresses, box springs and frames (in good condition, with no rips or stains). Also end tables, coffee tables, and nightstands are in short supply.



## RCA News

See Stacey's article in this fall's issue of RCA Today (page 19), "Garden Project Takes Root." Extra points for you if you notice that we used the wrong logo here.



## Stephen Ministers, the "After People"

Stephen Ministry is a ministry of compassion and healing within the congregation, providing skilled and confidential care to members and friends of the church experiencing loss, crisis, or other situations of distress. There are currently 11 Stephen Ministers visiting 12 persons. There are several other active Stephen Ministers available to help others also.

The next monthly Stephen Ministry will be held on Wednesday, November 11 in Assembly Hall at 7:15 p.m. Stephen Ministers are welcome to attend the WE @ FRC dinner portion before these Wednesday meetings.

Stephen Ministers are the "After People." We are ready to come alongside you, or your friends, neighbors, co-workers, or relatives, and provide comfort and support for as long "after" as we are needed. For assistance or more information, contact Stephen Leaders Rev. Daniel Carlson (377-2201) or Linnea D'Andrea (371-8313).



## Samaritan Counseling Center Now at First

All day Thursday, the Samaritan Counseling Center uses a room in our office complex for individual counseling. We are happy to host this important service in our church.

## Third Way Observations

Last night I was working as an Ambassador as 1,200 folks were working their way to Proctor's for "Color Purple." Up walks Philip Morris, CEO of Proctors, and we stand together talking for about ten minutes. "Thanks for being here, Art. You make a difference." Philip is a friend. Earlier in the week I was asked to lead a graveside service at Parkview Cemetery for "Sparkle." She was a 51 year-old street person who was found dead in a closet, in an apartment on Jay Street. We gathered around her casket, said prayers, and gave her a good burial. I listen to learn, and learn to listen. I am grateful this Thanksgiving season for folks here at FRC for making a difference. Thank you.

During November I'll be helping Heather Chestnut out by cooking at Bethesda. If you are good in the kitchen, come over. On our Thanksgiving Day I'll be serving at the City Mission. Join me as we serve and give thanks.

Art Hudak  
hudiaph@gmail.com

## A Fond Farewell



It is with mixed emotions that I bid you all a fond farewell as I embark upon another chapter of my life in God's book of life as He has written it for me. I have made many dear friends in the three plus years that I have been at the First Reformed Church. The acceptance and graciousness that has come my way as an employee of FRC's staff has been gratefully appreciated. Those of you that I've dealt with in the course of my job have been supportive, understanding, and extremely helpful as I "learned the ropes." I was made a part of the FRC family and for that I thank you all so much! I'll miss seeing all the smiling faces coming through the door into the office that I've encountered over these past years, especially those that I have come to know so well. I am finally ready to move in another direction and spend time with my home family. I know you shall all remain in my heart and memory forever. May God bless each and every one of you and keep you in His care.

*Pat Krawczak*

## Visitor Mugs

At the front of the sanctuary by the charter case is a small group of church mugs with some goodies in them. These are for first time visitors. Please feel free to offer them if a strange face shows up in your pew neighborhood.

## Camp Fowler Rental Promotion

The Fowler Ministries Board has approved several weekends in March and April 2010 to rent Pine & Troost Lodges at a discounted rate. They are offering this to families, youth groups, or special gatherings. For more information see the Fowler bulletin board or call 374-4573 to check dates and availability .

## Tuesday Morning Women's Group Mission Opportunity

Operation Christmas Child brings joy and hope to children in desperate situations around the world through gift-filled boxes and the Good News of God's love. People of all ages can be involved in this simple, hands-on mission project while focusing on the true meaning of Christmas – Jesus Christ.

Instructions for preparing your own box as well as gift suggestions can be found in the O.C.C. brochure – available next to the bulletins at the church entrances. Besides preparing your own box, there are other ways to help with this important mission.

- Donate appropriate gifts for boxes such as small toys, hygiene items, or school supplies (the website has a great list of suggestions).
- Contribute to the cost of purchasing items and shipping fees. Please make checks payable to FRC of Schenectady and indicate O.C.C. in the memo line. All gifts and donations are tax deductible – receipts are available.
- Pray. The most important way you can help is to pray for the mission and for the children who will receive our gifts.

For more information visit:  
[www.samaritanspurse.org](http://www.samaritanspurse.org).



## Men's Tie Exchange

Men! Bring in your poor ties, your huddled ties, yearning to be worn. The wretched refuse of your closet. Send these, the homeless, the hanger tossed to the church!

During the months of November and December, we will have a tie exchange in Assembly Hall. Bring in ten, take back two you like. At the end, we will give the leftover ties to a local artist to make a quilt.



## Christmas Plans

If Target can start selling Christmas stuff, we can start planning

as well. There will be three services on Christmas Eve. The early family service at 5 pm; the traditional candlelight and carols service at 9 pm; and a 11pm communion service.

The living nativity may have a different look this year as the youth plan out possibilities.

## New Office E-Mail Address for Publications

With the retirement of Pat Krawczak from our staff, we have a new (generic) e-mail address for bulletin, and other publication information. Effective **October 26<sup>th</sup>**, please use the following e-mail address for any information that you would have sent to Pat. **1streformedpub@gmail.com**

## Senior Moments

I bought a camera this month and it's quite something. It recognizes faces. In some magical way, it is able to figure out where two eyes and a mouth are and not only that, but it knows that faces are the most important part of the picture and it automatically focuses on them.

We are approaching a busy holiday time. The pageantry and frenzy of the time from Halloween to New Year's is overwhelming. There will be many colorful and entrancing scenes. But let's be as smart as our cameras and focus on the faces. It is the people of our lives that make the holidays, not the gifts, not the turkey, not the decorations. Have five extra minutes? Talk to them. It may be more important than the perfect gift.

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Well, it's pledge time and I am a little nervous. If we want to continue our vibrant ministry, everyone will need to step up, but I know that will be difficult this year. I'm not sure how it will turn out. I am sure God will be with us next year, just as in the last 330 years.

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As you know, I am ordained by the Presbyterian Church, so I was excited when the Schenectady Classis voted to ask the Reformed Church to investigate the possibilities of merging denominations. Think of all the interesting connections if the Presbys and the RCAs of this area were one voice.

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You may be interested to know that we have recently brought into membership a few people who will rarely be at worship on Sunday mornings. They have found a worship home at Vespers or on Wednesday evening.

*-Bill Levering*

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Sunday Schedule				
Nov.	Preacher	Reader	Forum	Vespers at 5
1	Bill Levering	Sarah Bobok	Luncheon!	Jazz: Phipps, Toigo & D'Andrea
8	Bill Levering	Nancy Wainwright		Classical: Yuko Kishimoto
15	Daniel Carlson	Tani Breitenbach	South Africa Report	Jazz: Delaneys & D'Andrea
22	Stacey Midge		Onrust	Organ!
29	Bill Levering		Cookie Tasting	Folk

**Organ Vespers on 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays!**

In November, our Vespers will begin a series of reflective organ music at 5 p.m. on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of each month. Local organ stars will hold forth in this service of mostly music. The music will be a variety of classical, sacred, and popular. Bill McColl will be organizing the effort with Dawn Emken helping. Dr. Levering will be leading most of the worship services and is always looking for poetry readers.

Address Service Requested

**November Birthdays**

- |                       |                          |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 – Darwin Brudos     | 12 – Evelyn Johnson      |
| 1 – Lucy Cesare       | 13 – Jean Brown          |
| 2 – Donald Middleton  | 13 – Millicent Casey     |
| 2 – Kemp Bundy        | 13 – Danielle Valachovic |
| 3 – Ann Gotwals       | 14 – Ava Muse            |
| 4 – Margaret Reed     | 15 – Earl Bucci          |
| 4 – Jane Falconer     | 17 – Richard Davis       |
| 5 – Virginia Forster  | 18 – Kaye Vosburgh       |
| 6 – Diane Ontkush     | 19 – Max Mossey          |
| 6 – Kevin Adams       | 20 – Timothy Molino      |
| 6 – Alexandra Baackes | 20 – Jim Ramsey          |
| 6 – Diane Ontkush     | 22 – Chuck Pangburn      |
| 7 – Hazel Feiker      | 23 – Emily Nagamatsu     |
| 7 – Julia Phillips    | 24 – Sarah Kowaleski     |
| 8 – Russell Burgoyne  | 25 – Bob Beadle          |
| 8 – Heather Ipsen     | 28 – Katharine Kowaleski |
| 8 – Martha Winchester | 30 – Maria Greskovich    |
| 10 – Maude Dunlap     | 30 – Ethan Maliszewski   |
| 10 – Jeanne Shoulder  |                          |
| 12 – Gayle Caufield   |                          |



**November 2009**

**Every Sunday**

- Youth Orchestra, 9 am
- Chancel Choir, 9:15 am
- Worship, 10 am
- Church School, 10:20 am
- Fellowship, 11 am
- Vespers, 5 pm

**Weekly**

- Monday:**  
 Men's News Group, 9 am  
 Klokken Ringers, 7 pm
- Tuesday:**  
 Women's Group, 9 am  
 Morning Prayer, 10 am
- Wednesday:**  
 Kerygma, 9 am  
 WE @ FRC:  
 Dinner, 6 p.m.  
 Studies, 7:15 p.m.  
 Worship, 8:30 p.m.

- Thursday:**  
 Stitch in Time, 10 am  
 Chancel Choir, 7:30 pm

- Sunday:**  
 Musical Rehearsal, 11:30

**Monthly Meetings**

- Concern for Hungry, 1<sup>st</sup> Mon.
- Group 5, 1<sup>st</sup> Mon.
- Committees, 2<sup>nd</sup> Tues., 7 pm
- Consistory, 2<sup>nd</sup> Tues., 8 pm
- Support & Care, 3<sup>rd</sup> Tues., 11
- Archiving, 2<sup>nd</sup> Wed., 1 pm
- Stephen Ministry, 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed.
- Wednesday Dialog, 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed.

**Upcoming Events**

- 1 – Stewardship Brunch, 12 pm at Glen Sanders
- 1 – JHYG, 5 pm SHYG, 7 pm
- 2 – Group V, 1 pm
- 2 – Concern for Hungry, 5:30
- 6 – Midnight Run
- 8 – Chancel Guild, 11:00 am
- 8 – Pie Sale Begins
- 10 – Standing Committees, 7 pm
- 10 – Consistory, 8 pm
- 12 – Sch'dy Art Society, 6:30
- 15 – JHYG, 5 pm
- 17 – Care & Support, 11 am
- 18 – Wednesday Dialog, 12 pm
- 19 – Staff Meeting, 12 pm
- 20 – Group VII, 9 am
- 21 – Pie Baking
- 22 – Pie Pick Up
- 26 – Thanksgiving Day – Closed
- 27 – Office Closed