

First Things

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

January 2010

WE @ FRC Resumes January 13

Newcomers and old timers are welcome to any part of any Wednesday Evenings at First Reformed; registration is never required. A delicious dinner at 6 p.m. starts us out right. Lively learning beginning at 7 p.m. this season; in honor of John Calvin's sesquicentennial, Daniel will be leading a DVD-based study of this reformer's significant legacy; Bill returns, beginning January 27, with his Preacher's Preview. Contemplative communion in our candlelit chancel begins at 8 p.m. for those who wish to conclude the evening with song, prayer, and the Lord's Supper.



Greening Team Reconvenes

Interested in joining with others to take better care for God's creation? Come to the next meeting of our congregation's Greening Team, Monday, January 18, 7 p.m. in the church offices. We'll be reviewing our work of last year and planning our greening work for 2010. For more information, check out Green Space in Assembly Hall, where you'll find current team members names noted.



New Communion Practice

In the Christian tradition, communion has been served many ways. For most of that time, communion was served to folks coming forward to receive it at the front of the sanctuary. Here at First Reformed, the worship committee and the consistory have discussed the pros and cons of this practice. It would save workers and energy cleaning up. It might move more quickly. It would allow us to have a different spiritual experience. While we will always be eager to meet the needs of those who, for whatever reason, would prefer to receive communion in their pews, we will be moving to the 'coming forward' style of taking communion in January. If you have questions about the change, please see one of the ministers or any consistory member.

Come Sing on "Easy Anthem Sunday"

The Chancel Choir wants you to help it grow for "Easy Anthem" Sunday on January 10. We'll be preparing a "hymn-anthem" based on the familiar tune, Kingsfold along with a unison song, "Carol of the Epiphany" from John Bell and the Iona Community. We'll meet at 9:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary. Call Julie Panke (370-5434) for more information or just come to the Sunday rehearsal.

Epiphany Party 6pm January 6

Christmas is the season of comfort and joy and what better way to celebrate than a gathering of church folks on grand finale of Christmas, Epiphany?! The Van Oort family will host this year's festive manifestation of Christ to the Magi. A signup sheet is posted in Assembly Hall, or the church office may be called, to indicate your intention to attend. Galette cake will be provided; please bring an appetizer and a beverage of choice to share and come to the feast! Eat galette cake; perhaps you will be a King... Gather around the warmth of the bonfire if you wish, but bring the whole family both young and old or come by yourself and be amidst your church family!

Bake an Epiphany Cake?



Contact Heather Chestnut (346-7887) to learn how - and help make - this traditional French

dessert at her home on Tuesday, January 5 at 7:30pm.

Wednesday Kerygma

We'll begin a new 7 week study at 9:30 a.m. January 6 in the Polling Conference room. Scripture in ethics in the Christian life is our subject; books available at the first meeting. All those who seek to grow in their knowledge and practice of the Christian faith in this Epiphany season are welcome to join us for biblical engagement and warm spirited fellowship that characterize this long-standing group. For further information contact Daniel Carlson.



There are no words to express the support I have received from so many of you. The cards, the hugs, the food, the words of understanding have been a great comfort to me. I am so fortunate to belong to such a caring church. I thank you from the deepest crevices of my soul. My daughter Melissa was born into this church. I know she loved it very much. You watched her grow and you heard of her struggles from the pulpit. She finally rests in God's Care. Thank you for being the hands of God and helping me with my grief.
- Maria Greskovich.



Reading on the Road

Are you too busy for an in-person small group but want opportunities to deepen your knowledge and faith? Want to discuss the Bible with others but find that your schedule is too erratic to allow for a traditional weekly or monthly study? On January 19, Stacey will begin an online Bible discussion group at 1stRoad.com

Every Tuesday, she will post a brief introduction to the passage for that week and some questions to begin the discussion. Join in the comments at your own convenience throughout the week.



Entered into Eternal Rest

Mary Frances Case
December 2, 2009

Elsie Emery
November 29, 2009



Stephen Ministry

How are you?

This is simple question, yet one that is also so much more profound than we usually allow it to be. When used in passing, with no expectation of a real response, it serves as a kind of informal greeting, a way of saying hello without getting down to the nitty-gritty of what's going on in someone else's life. But when asked with a greater degree of care and sensitivity, with a patience that waits to listen carefully to the response, it can be the key that opens the door to deeper understanding between two people and can, in some cases, even lead to a greater degree of hope and healing for one or both of them.

Stephen Ministers remember this and try, as much as possible, to ask it of those who receive their care with open ears and open hearts, with a readiness to listen intently to their responses and to compassionately attend to what they are telling us. Our Stephen Ministers are here to care! They're trained to walk with others who are facing a challenging time in their lives. If you or someone you know is hurting, please find out more about Stephen Ministry by talking with one of our Stephen Leaders, Rev. Daniel Carlson (377-2201) or Linnea D'Andrea (371-8313).

I never saw a moor,
I never saw the sea;
Yet know I how the heather looks,
And what a wave must be.

I never spoke with God,
Nor visited in heaven;
Yet certain am I of the spot
As if the chart were given.

- Emily Dickinson



January 3 - No Youth Group meetings

January 6- Encouraged to attend the Epiphany Party at the Van Oort home. This is an intergenerational event, and parents are also welcome.

January 17 - JHYG meets at 5pm, SHYG meets at 7pm

January 24 – Annual Chili Cook-Off and Auction. SHYG should be at the church by 4pm to help set up.



Chili Cook Off and Auction Sunday, January 24!

The annual chili and bidding extravaganza will be held on January 24 at 6pm. The proceeds will support the Senior High Youth Group's mission trip to New York City in February. In order to make this event a success, we need:

- Chili cooks. All cooks bring one pot of their chili to be judged by the diners.
- Auction donations. Past items include: personally catered dinners, time at summer homes and B&Bs, gift baskets, paintings and other art objects created by members, and a wide variety of smaller items from both members and area businesses.
- Participants! Taste and vote on the delicious chili, bid on the silent and regular auctions, and help our youth gain a valuable learning experience while serving those in need.



January 30 Adult Winterfest

Doug Todd has graciously offered his home in Galway as a location for an opportunity for adults in the church to gather for good food, drink, laughter and, for those who may be more adventurous, snowshoeing and cross country skiing. The outdoor activities will begin at 3:00. If you would like to skip the snowy stuff and the food, beverage and laughter is what you find most appealing then come at 5:30.

To offset the cost of this event, there will be a \$5 charge per person. Please bring a dish to share. People with last names A-E bring dessert, F-L bring an appetizer, and M-Z bring a side dish or salad. Space is limited to 55 so decide quickly. There will be a sign up sheet in assembly hall or call the church office. We would also encourage carpooling to ease parking. Directions will be provided to those who sign up. Hope to see you there!

Faith Bookshop

Wait! Wait! Before returning your Christmas ornaments to that box in the closet, please consider bringing one or more to the Bookshop. We'll store your donation until next December when The Shop plans to have an ornament benefit sale. It's all-round good: you can divest yourself of a nice but not-needed ornament, someone else will consider it a treasure, and others will benefit from the proceeds. Help us make it gigantic

Groups!

Tuesday Ladies

January 19th meeting at 7:30pm, with a salad dinner at Gay Doolittle's home.

Group VII

Will meet at 9:30am in the Dirck Romeyn Room on Friday, January 15 at First Reformed Church. Hostesses will be Linda Witkowski and Roberta Blackmer. A program will be presented by Lori Jo Marso on the lives and works of individual women.

Stitch Group

Resumes Thursday, January 7 at 10am. Find those unfinished pieces of stitch work and complete them. We meet in the Poling House Conference room and the coffee is always on. There is no need for reservations; just join us on any Thursday.

Third Way Report

Thank you FRC folks for being so supportive of our "Third Way" endeavors during 2009. You have made a big difference in the lives of so many people in our downtown community. For those who have been "Ambassadors," great job. During the year 27 FRC Ambassadors helped out. At the Bethesda House and City Mission 24 of our members cooked, served, and shared their love. Finally, in the Missioner Garden Project you planted, tilled, and harvested food that fed our community at The Salvation Army, The City Mission, and the Bethesda House. In addition you helped to serve 90 residents of the YMCA and The TenEyck Senior Housing 490 meals.

May we keep serving the poor, dreaming big, and giving from the heart in this New Year.

Bethesda House's New Building

The Mission & Benevolence committee has designated Bethesda House's move into their new building as the beneficiary of this year's Christmas Offering. A special reminder for those who are eligible for matching from GE: GE has agreed to match \$2 for each dollar donated for organizations which provide food and shelter to the poor (such as Bethesda House.) Be sure to report it that way.

In addition, Bethesda House has accepted our church's offer to serve as its interim site for a drop-in center as they transition to their new building during the early part of January. Volunteers are needed to help smooth their transition, so if you would like to help Schenectady's poor and homeless in this way please contact one of the ministers at the church office (377-2201) or Andy Chestnut (346 -7887).

Senior Moments

Abby and I want to **thank** folks for the cards and holiday joy so many people have brought us in this season.

The church calendar is certainly jumping in January! There is something exciting to do every week here. Jump in, the winter's fine.

We are serving the Lord's Supper in a new way in January, but we want to be sensitive to everyone's feelings about this. I think you will find the approach a new spiritual experience, and you won't have to worry about germs.

May your new year be blessed, may your resolutions be kept, and may God bring us peace.

- Bill Levering

First Reformed Church
 8 North Church Street
 Schenectady, NY 12305
 (518) 377-2201
 1strefomed@gmail.com
 www.1stReformed.com

Non-Profit Organization
 U.S. Postage Paid
 Permit No. 24
 Schenectady, NY

Sunday Schedule				
Jan	Preach	Read	Forum	Vespers at 5
3	Bill Levering	Chris Fernandes	Coffee & Conversation	Jazz: Nat Phipps, piano; Pete Toigo, bass; Tom D'Andrea, drums
10	Bill Levering	Bruno DePaoli	Ellis Medicine Merger Update	Chamber: Young Phenom Louis Lohraseb, piano
17	Daniel Carlson	Therese McCarty	Coffee & Conversation	Jazz: Peg Delaney, piano; Bill Delaney, bass; Tom D'Andrea, drums
24	Bill Levering	Anne Putnam	CPE & Spiritual Gifts-AMC	Organ
31	Bill Levering	Rob Dickson	Coffee & Conversation	Chamber: Guitar Quartet

Address Service Requested

January Birthdays

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Kayla Kerwin | 17 James Cesare, III |
| Carol Molino | Jennifer Evans |
| Heather Scribner | Jack Evans |
| 2 Bill Levering | John Norton |
| 3 Thea Brandenburg | 18 Elaine Thuener |
| Willaim Hubbard | John Zeltmann |
| Helen Phillips | 20 Mary Fisher |
| 4 Caroline Brooks | Alden Rivenburgh-Brown |
| Elena Grande | 21 Shaun Allen |
| Harvey Schadler | Katharine Lnenicka |
| 5 Inge-Lisa Pangburn | Brook Maliszewski |
| Helen Willis | 23 Marilyn Beadle |
| 10 Kyle Cox | 24 Charlotte Hubbard |
| 11 William McColl | 25 Barbara Landon |
| Randy Sparrow | 27 Diana Mitsche |
| 12 Anne Hewitt | 28 Julie Little |
| Sara Moore | 30 Abigail Bundy |
| 14 Hannah Bachorik | Gwen Mltsche |
| Gregory Matusic | Keith Muse |
| Douglas Todd | Terry Rickard |
| 15 Jeffrey Rickard | 31 Darryl Wisniewski |
| 16 Sara Erickson | |

January 2010

Every Sunday

HS/College Singers, 9:15 am
 Chancel Choir, 9 am
 Worship, 10 am
 Church School, 10:20 am
 Fellowship, 11 am
 Kirk Ringers & Singers, 11:30
 Youth Orchestra, 3:30 pm
 Vespers, 5 pm

Weekly

Monday:

Men's News Group, 9 am

Tuesday:

Women's Group, 9 am
 Morning Prayer, 10 am

Wednesday:

Keygma, 9 am
 WE @ FRC:
 Dinner, 6 pm
 Studies, 7:15 pm
 Worship, 8:30 pm

Thursday:

Stich in Time, 10 am
 Chancel Choir, 7:30 pm

Monthly Meetings

Concern for Hungry, 1st Mon.
 Group 5, 1st Mon.
 Committees, 2nd Tues., 7 pm
 Consistory, 2nd Tues., 8 pm
 Support & Care, 3rd Tues., 11
 Archiving, 2nd Wed., 1 pm
 Stephen Ministry, 3rd Wed.
 Wednesday Dialog, 3rd Wed.
 Frolics, Various Sundays

Upcoming Events

- 1 New Year – Office Closed
- 3 No Youth Group meetings
- 5 Baking- Epiphany Cake, 7:30pm
- 6 Wednesday Kerygma, 9:30am
- 6 Epiphany Party, 6pm
- 7 Chancel Choir, 7:30pm
- 13 WE @ FRC resumes, 6pm
- 15 Group VII, 9:30am
- 17 JHYG, 5pm
- SHYG, 7pm
- 18 M.L.King – Office Closed
- Greening Team, 7pm
- 19 Tuesday Ladies, 7:30
- On line Bible Study begins
- 24 Chili Cook-Off, 6pm
- 30 Adult Winterfest, 3pm