



## Thank You for Four Great Years

By now you have either received a letter from me or heard that I have been extended and accepted a call to be the minister of The Church on the Hill in Flushing, Queens, NY. The church was founded in 1927 and I will be the fifth minister to serve the congregation. Stephanie and I are excited about the new possibilities and challenges that await us in Queens, but are also saddened because this means that we will have to leave Schenectady and the life that we have built here among you.

Stephanie, Gavin, and I thank everyone who has supported us, in one way or another, throughout our four years here as I served as Minister for Youth and Families. I especially thank you for welcoming Gavin so warmly into the Family of God.

I have learned a great deal from the people I have had the privilege to serve with, both the clergy and lay leaders of this great congregation. The many transitions of the past years have provided me with invaluable lessons about how churches work, and opportunities to grow as a minister. Thank you for the chance to preach and find my voice in the pulpit. I don't know if I'll ever find one so tall or as initially intimidating. I thank also all the people who have invested time and energy into the youth of this church whether it was in meetings, fundraisers, mission trips,

Sunday activities - in so many ways, your ministry with me has been a great blessing.

Most importantly I thank the youth and children of this congregation for allowing me to be your minister. I will treasure the mission trips, where our adventures took us to places, strange, foreign, near home, and even down a river in Kentucky. The children's messages, Advent festivals, and yes, even Living Nativities, will fill the spaces of my mind where I will remember you fondly.

Over the next couple of months I will treasure our time together as we say goodbye and reflect on the last four years. I welcome chances to talk with anyone who would like to talk to me as I end my ministry here among you.

Know that you all will be special to me as the first church that I served as an ordained minister. I am deeply appreciative that you called me here. While I have been with you I have grown in ways I never could have imagined. I hope that you have grown as well. May God bless you all.

Grace and Peace,

Justin

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## Youth Groups in May

### SHYG

**May 4** 11:00 p.m. - May 5 9:00 a.m. Lock in at church. We will make tie-died clothing, watch movies, and hang out all night followed by breakfast at the Scotia Diner. Please RSVP with Justin at [jmeyers@frcschdy.org](mailto:jmeyers@frcschdy.org).

**May 20** SHYG at church from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. We will have a year-end cook out and party at church.

### JHYG

**May 20** JHYG Cook out at church from 5-6:30 p.m. We invite all current 5<sup>th</sup> graders and parents of all 5<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> graders to join us as we wrap up this year and look toward the summer and next year.

**June 9** JHYG tentatively plans to take a trip to Boston to go to the Aquarium. Look for more details later.

## Attention College Students

Applications are now being accepted for Rev. Albert A Smith Education Scholarship. Any church member attending a four-year academic college, a two-year vocational college or enrolled in courses, which help the individual progress toward his or her educational goals, is welcome to apply. Applications are available at the church office and are due May 30, 2007. Any questions, please contact Sara Erickson.

## You Can Avoid A Stroke!

Most people can't identify a single risk factor or a warning sign of stroke, yet over 750,000 Americans will be affected by a stroke this year alone!

Life Line Screening Radiology will be at First Reformed Church of Schenectady performing a day of preventive health screenings on **Tuesday, June 26, 2007**.

Screenings are fast, painless and offered at low cost. They involve the use of ultrasound technology, and scan for potential health problems related to: blocked arteries which can lead to a stroke, aortic aneurysms which can lead to a rupture, and plaque buildup in the arteries in the legs, a strong predictor of heart disease. Also offered for men and women is a bone density screening to assess their risk for osteoporosis.

These non-invasive, inexpensive and painless, ultrasound tests help people identify their risk for stroke, vascular diseases or osteoporosis early enough for their physician to begin preventive procedures.

Each screen takes about 10 minutes or less to complete. Our vascular screening package, which includes the stroke/Carotid Artery, Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm and Ankle Brachial Index (hardening of the arteries) screenings, is \$109. Sign up for the complete wellness package (which includes the osteoporosis screening) and pay only \$129.

Appointment spaces are limited and pre-registration is required. Sign up now by calling toll free to 1-800-636-0418.

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### Dessert and Conversation on the Belhar Confession May 6, 2007 7:00 p.m. Poling Conference Room

The Belhar Confession was born out of the struggle against apartheid in South Africa. Since being adopted as one of three standards of unity by the Uniting Reformed Church in South Africa (URCSA) in 1986, it has served as a reference for unity and reconciliation for understanding what God desires of social justice in the world. URCSA has invited other reformed denominations throughout the world to recognize the

Belhar. Review and study are underway by General Synod of the RCA. As part of this process, a Coffee and Conversation will be held (as noted above) to explore the confession. Led by Brad Lewis and Joe Doolittle the evening will provide an overview and reference, and help determine interest in a longer study-group in the fall. For more information, please contact Brad Lewis or Joe Doolittle ([aldenjoie@att.net](mailto:aldenjoie@att.net); 588-2801).

#### Audio Recordings of sanctuary Services Available

Audiotape cassettes and audio files of sanctuary services are now available at no cost. Simply place your order, using a pew order form or by contacting the church office. You can have your order held for pickup or mailed to a specified address.

Alternatively, the 10:00am Sunday services can now be downloaded as MP3 audio files from our website, <http://www.1streformed.com> > Sermons.

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#### Labor Day Weekend at Fowler

Reservations are already coming in for our congregation's annual outing to Fowler Camp and Retreat Center--and the registration forms haven't even been published! From Saturday, September 1 through Monday, September 3 all those who attend will be making new friendships and deepening existing ones with members of our church and those of Delmar Reformed Church. Shared and separate meals, hikes, games, activities, worship, etc. are being planned. Do plan on coming and look for the registration forms in Sunday's bulletin during May noting accommodations, cost, etc!

## Why They Pray

by Andrew Carroll

From the March 9, 2007 Wall Street Journal

“How can there be fairness in one man being maimed for life, suffering agonies, another killed instantaneously, while I get out of it safe?” Pvt. Walter Bromwich wrote to his pastor back in Pennsylvania during World War I. “Does God really love us individually or does He love his purpose more?” he continued. “Sounds rather calculating, doesn’t it, and not a bit like the love of a Father.”

Bromwich’s sentiments are hardly unique. “If God’s chief work has been the creation of this earth and man on it, to date He and His work have been a glorious failure,” Lt. Russ Merrell concluded in a July 1944 letter to his wife after seeing the aftermath of the horrific Normandy invasion.

Whoever coined the now well-worn phrase that there are no atheists in foxholes – was demonstrably wrong. They exist (there is even a statue, albeit small, erected in their honor in Alabama), and they have long argued that wartime faith cannot possibly be sincere or authentic but is merely a grasping and short-term reliance on divine intervention that desperate troops cling to in the maelstrom of battle.

Faith undoubtedly offers comfort and strength to those in need, especially troops confronting their own mortality. But this does not explain why so many soldiers go to extraordinary and potentially fatal lengths to worship a higher power. On May 25, 1952, Capt. Molt Shuler described to his wife, Helen, a church service he attended in the mountains of Korea. Despite the fact that gathering together made them vulnerable to mortar attacks, the soldiers were determined to have the ceremony and give thanks to God. With loaded rifles by their sides, they created an altar with ammo boxes and lined up their helmets on the ground as pews. (Makeshift services like these are common on the front lines of every conflict.) “Only a couple times in my life before this evening,” Shuler wrote, “have I felt God’s presence in such a way.”

This presence becomes even more visible in the life-and-death context of war, where all that is frivolous and superficial is shorn away to reveal what is truly meaningful and lasting. Lt. Ray Stubbe, a young Navy chaplain serving in Vietnam in 1967-68, often reflected on this theme in his correspondence with friends in Wisconsin. “People benefit spiritually,” he wrote in one letter, when they “face the loss of all the trivia of modern day society.” After describing a litany of nightmarish hardships that his Marines had to endure, he noted: “You would be amazed at the faith expressed here. There are evidences of genuine and deep prayer life, of reading and knowing the Bible backwards and forwards, of sacrificial concern for others.”

These two words, “sacrificial concern,” represent the heart of the matter. Countless soldiers have demonstrated

their faith by risking their lives for their comrades in arms. (Ray Stubbe himself often came close to dying when he flew by helicopter through hostile territory to minister at Marine bases in the remote mountains of Khe Sanh.) One of the most famous stories concerns the sinking of the USAT *Dorchester*, which was torpedoed on February 3, 1943, by a German sub. The chaplains on board – Rabbi Alex Goode, Rev. George Fox, Rev. Clark Poling and Father John Washington – refused to get onto the lifeboats so that there would be more room for others. The last anyone saw of the chaplains was the four men, locked arm in arm, praying together as the ship went down.

This sacrificial concern, although it receives scant media attention, is evident in Afghanistan and Iraq as well. Staff Sgt. Brian Craig, who had lost and then regained his faith, handwrote a message to his father back in Texas, articulating how his newfound beliefs compelled him to act selflessly. “I think that they guys I work with know that I am different,” he wrote on April 8, 2002. “I just pray that I make a difference in their lives. I pray that I am a good example of a man of Christ.” It was his last letter home. Sgt. Craig, who had volunteered to seek out and destroy hidden ordnance that threatened both U.S. troops and innocent Afghans, was killed one week later when a bomb exploded in front of him.

“Some of my colleagues have wondered out loud how there can be a God with all of this suffering,” Lt. Col. Scott Barnes wrote in an October 2005 email home from Iraq. It is a question that transcends war and relates to any catastrophe involving loss of life, and theologians and philosophers could not have provided a more impassioned answer: “Where is God?” Col. Barnes went on to write. “He is in the will of the sergeants helping organize a blood drive as only they can, He is in the hearts of the soldiers who immediately rolled up their sleeves to give what they had to save a dying brother whom they don’t even know.” Like those who came before and after him, Col. Barnes saw the worst of human nature in a war zone. But in the selflessness of his brothers and sisters in arms, he also witnessed the best.

Walter Bromwich would almost certainly agree. At the end of his letter to his pastor, the young World War I private finally decided: “God is in this war, not as a spectator, but backing up everything that is good in us. He won’t work any miracles because that would be helping us do the work He’s given us to do on our own. I don’t know whether God goes forth with armies but I do know that He is in lots of our men or they would not do what they do.” And what such troops do, and the enormous sacrifices they make, are more than intimations of deep and abiding faith. They are proof of it.

**Fresh Faith Worship**

Sundays at 8 a.m. in the  
Poling Chapel

**May Preaching Schedule**

May 6	Rev. Bill Levering
May 13	Rev. Bill Levering
May 20	Rev. Daniel Carlson
May 27	Rev. Bill Levering

## From the Senior Pastor

This is a dangerous time for me. After three or four months, I may come to the conclusion that I know what's going on around here. I understand that there are more complicated or sensitive issues to be explored, but I am ready for those as well. One of the things we fear about judgment as individuals is that people will see the actions of our lives out of the context that makes them reasonable. The same is true for institutions. There are many things about the history and heritage of First that I may not discover for years. Nevertheless, the future calls us:

- ✓ Justin's leaving will create a big hole in our hearts and our program. We will need to make tough decisions about what First needs and wants.
- ✓ The demographics of the town are changing. How shall we address the greater diversity of our area? What parts of our particular cultural heritage will we emphasize, and which will we need to let go?
- ✓ The cultural focus of our part of town is changing. How will the renaissance of the arts downtown affect us and how can we capitalize on it?
- ✓ The words and expectations of new generations are changing the way institutions of all types need to talk and listen. What worship opportunities and styles will best convey the gospel?
- ✓ Our denomination and our seminaries are increasingly unwilling to take prophetic positions in church and society. This former role may now be falling to individual congregations like ours.
- ✓ We face a media-oriented culture in which word of mouth about a church is no longer good enough. For a church of our size, we get few visitors and need to figure out how to have a bigger presence in the consciousness of the average person.
- ✓ What particular spiritual healing does our congregation need?
- ✓ The organization of the church is vestigial from its days as a larger congregation. Should it be reshaped?
- ✓ Union College is starting a new department of Religious Studies. This seems like a unique opportunity.

- ✓ We don't draw a big percentage of Stockade residents. How can we be more neighborly? How can we be better at what people drive here for?
- ✓ In the face of large designated special funds, our regular budget faces regular red ink. Should we cut back or step up?
- ✓ How can we coordinate or focus our mission efforts for better interpretation and more effective action as Christ's agents?

As you can see, this particular time finds me with only enough information to formulate interesting questions. Perhaps just that can be helpful to all of us.

### Planning Festival May 12

Former and future leaders of all types are invited to the planning festival to be held May 12 at the church. We will meet from 9 – 1:30 p.m. and will consider program initiatives, mission directions, scheduling realities and staff transitions.

RESERVATIONS are necessary since lunch will be served. Call the church office or send back a white card in worship.

### Wireless at Church

The church meeting complex now has high-speed wireless access. Members are welcome to use this resource any time the building is open.

### New Website

You don't have to be a geek to visit the new church website. You can find sermons, calendars, forums, pictures, and even church sweatshirts and coffee mugs. It's [1streformed.com](http://1streformed.com).

### Use the Church!

Having a birthday or anniversary party? Use the church facilities! It's crazy cheap.

Sincerely,

Bill

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### Happy Birthday!

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

If your birthday is in May and we did not list your name, please call the office to let us know your date of birth.

## Mothers and Motherhood.....

My Grandma Stange was a very special person in my life. She met me with an umbrella at the bus stop on rainy days, sewed ripped clothes before my Mom found out and always had fresh baked cookies in the kitchen. Grandma lived with my family and played a daily role in our lives. To this day I miss her dearly.

My mom, another important person in my life, taught me well...to be kind, caring, respectful, philanthropic and much more. She showed me how to be strong and get through tough times. Her actions spoke greater than words...like how to give back to your community, especially your church.

### Poetry Corner

On Furlough

He's spending his furlough in heaven,  
That young soldier brother of mine.  
He's on leave, all his duties forgotten  
Earthly hell he has left far behind.  
He's away from the whine of the bullets,  
He's free from the filth and mud.  
No more will he quiver with terror.  
Operations are peaceful above.  
My brother's young life now is ended,  
Sad truth. It had scarcely begun.  
He's spending his furlough in heaven.  
God grant him a wonderful one.

Written by Marion Sim Wilson after the death of her brother Private Colin Cran Sim (1917-1944) who is buried in Ortona, Italy.

My Aunt Marion died at the age of 93 last spring and this poem was part of her memorial service.

I remember my grandmother receiving letters written in Italian from a lady that used to visit my Uncle Colin's grave. It seems that local families adopted the grave of a soldier and took responsibility for taking flowers to the gravesite and keeping in touch with the parents of the soldier.

~Joan Lindsay

Now my Mom is a Grandma and I am a Mother. Motherhood is one of God's gracious gifts. I am very fortunate to have been blessed by having my Grandma Stange & Mom in my life. All the little lessons they taught prepared me for being a mom. Samantha & Christopher have made me a mother and graced my life even more than I could imagine.

I wish a Happy and Blessed Mother's Day to all mothers.

~Sara Erickson

### Anniversary Celebration

Please join us for a post service reception on Sunday, May 22 to celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Charlie Moose's musical contributions to our congregation.

### Capital Community Voices to Present "Melodies in Bloom"

Capital Community Voices, directed by Julie Panke and accompanied by John Norton, will present "Melodies in Bloom" on Saturday, May 5 at 7:30 pm at Columbia High School, Luther Road, East Greenbush. The program will feature classical, folk and popular songs inspired by flowers and the art of gardening. The Hendrick Hudson Male Chorus will be guest artists. Selections by Capital Community Voices will include "Down By the Sally Gardens," a jazz arrangement of "Tiptoe Through the Tulips," "Honeysuckle Rose," and "In Flanders Fields."

### Book Group Forming

A new book group is forming at First Reformed. We are planning to have meetings in the evenings so that working folks will have the option of attending. Our first meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 30th, at 7 p.m., at Abby Norton-Levering's home, 923 Northumberland Dr, Niskayuna. Snacks, tea and coffee will be served.

We will be discussing Gilead, a Pulitzer prize-winning novel by Marilynne Robinson. [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)'s editorial board summarizes the book this way:

"The narrator, John Ames, is 76, a preacher who has lived almost all of his life in Gilead, Iowa. He is writing a letter to his almost seven-year-old son, the blessing of his second marriage. It is a summing-up, an apologia, a consideration of his life. Robinson takes the story away from being simply the reminiscences of one man and moves it into the realm of a meditation on fathers and children, particularly sons, on faith, and on the imperfectability of man."

Copies of Gilead will be available at the church bookstore for purchase. Please consider joining us for this informal, interesting discussion. For more information contact Jeanne Shoulder at [jmshoulder@hotmail.com](mailto:jmshoulder@hotmail.com) or 372-8647. Abby can be reached at [applekale@yahoo.com](mailto:applekale@yahoo.com) or 630-6151.

**Adult Forum Schedule**

- May 6      *327<sup>th</sup> Annual Congregational Meeting*
- May 13     *Camp Fowler, Fred Daniels and Joe Gallagher*
- May 20     *Reception for Charlie Moose*
- May 27     *Coffee and Connections*

## April Consistory Notes

### Ministers' Reports:

#### Justin Meyers:

- Voiced concerns about the struggle Bethesda House is having getting approval for their new building across the street from their current facility. Resolved: "We urge the Planning Commission of the City of Schenectady to judge the Bethesda House site plan on its obvious merits; to reject biased, discriminatory and irrelevant opposition; and to grant site approval for the new Bethesda House facility as soon as possible." M/S/P
- The Youth Group served Good Friday lunch at Bethesda House.

#### Bill Levering:

- Has met with several Schenectady Associations and church activities.

#### Treasurer's Report: (Fred Daniels)

- Financial information will begin appearing in the *Tower Crier*.

### Committee Reports:

#### Adult Education and Nurture (Carol DeLaMarter)

- The five week Lenten dinners and classes were a success with many more participants than last year.
- They will meet at the end of April to plan the May 12 dialogue meeting.
- Adult Forum will end the second Sunday in June.

#### Congregational Care (Carol Welch)

- The Narthex windows will have artifacts from the archives to enhance the talk by Dr. Carl George about the church on April 22.
- The hospitality coordinators have been busy. Thanks to Gay and Jennifer for organizing the Lenten dinners. Upcoming will be receptions during Post Service for new members on April 15 and for Interfaith Sunday on April 29.
- Five new members were received on Easter. Two more will be received soon. Thanks to Del Pierce and Rob Dickson of the membership committee.
- Pastoral Care Committee organized the delivery of Easter flowers to shut-ins and those who have had a death in the family in the past year.
- Greg Matusic and Dick Blackmer have been receiving compliments on the new look and ease to hear the sermons over the internet through the website **1streformed.com**. People with computers are now able to hear the sermons over the internet through the website.
- Dick and Greg are willing to help congregants who need help getting their computers to cooperate.

- We have a new provider and the building is now wireless.

#### Finance (Fred Daniels)

- We have received a \$100,000 bequest.
- The committee wrestled with how to track and monitor changes in the US Trust now that it has been sold to Bank of America.

#### Mission and Benevolence (Carol Troost)

- Total income for Easter to date for SICM and Roots and Wisdom was just over \$5,300, including matching.
- We are about to advertise for internships for this summer. Applications are available from Carol or will be in the office.
- We will be having a planning meeting in September to discuss all of the benevolence funds, including the restricted funds.

#### Property (Bill Rochelle)

- We are on track with the sale of the parsonage with an intended closing on May 25. The Whites have found a new home and will be moving before that date.
- There will be a complete study of the insurance packages for the church.

#### Strategic Planning (Tom Lindsay/Bill Levering)

Bill circulated a paper about the Planning Focus Group report (see page 9). Six people met on March 20th to discuss the parameters of planning in the short and long term and focused on the basic questions of planning. It included brainstorming lists: Why Plan? What needs to be planned? Who should plan? These will be incorporated into the May 12 meeting to decide together who we are what our priorities are. We will discuss committee structure. The previous goals will be held before us. Anyone who is interested is invited to attend, especially anyone who has led a group before. There will be someone from the community present as well as staff members. Suggestions and recommendations will be sent to the consistory.

#### Other Business

The slate for the new elders and deacons was presented.

For Elders: Christine Daniels and Andrew Chestnut

For Deacons: Catherine Lewis, Elsa Hjelm, Chris Van Ort, Gregory Matusic, and David Schweizer.

Nominating Committee: Heather Chestnut, Rebecca Draffen-Grande, Carol Troost, and Daniel Ipsen.

~Carol Troost, Clerk

**MONEY MATTERS**  
**Summary of Income and Expenses As of March 31, 2007**

Rev. Levering, your Finance Committee, and I believe that the congregation should know more about our financial health than has been routinely revealed in the past. Therefore, we are beginning with this issue of the Tower Crier to publish on a quarterly basis our cumulative Income and Expenses for the fiscal year. I will be available during second hour on the first Sunday following the in-home receipt of the Tower Crier to answer any question you may have. I will also indicate by notation any significant observations that I can make about our operating results.

~Fred Daniels, Treasurer

<b>Account</b>	<b>March 2007</b>	<b>2007 YTD</b>	<b>2006 YTD</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>INCOME</b>				
Contributions	\$38,121	\$122,135	\$127,074	
Investment Income	\$19,892	\$51,972	\$133,302	Schermerhorn grant (\$72,000 not yet received this year)
Other Income	\$1,530	\$6,495	\$4,382	
Classis Assessment	\$10,467	\$10,534	\$11,703	
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$70,010</b>	<b>\$191,135</b>	<b>\$276,461</b>	
<b>EXPENSE</b>				
Music & Worship	\$17,380	\$34,984	\$41,049	Staff vacancy early Jan.
Pastoral	\$7,344	\$23,393	\$21,156	
Congregational Care	\$1,608	\$4,438	\$4,711	
Adult Education	(\$230)	(\$23)	\$587	
Youth Education	\$6,229	\$20,233	\$19,589	
Mission & Benev.	\$0.00	\$4,340	\$24,739	Started gifting earlier last year
Property	\$22,955	\$57,480	\$58,833	
Administration	\$11,609	\$29,130	\$19,665	Relocation expenses, Levering
Finance	\$8,265	\$19,350	\$27,396	Classis assessments paid out last year
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$75,159</b>	<b>\$193,325</b>	<b>\$217,726</b>	
<b>Net Operating</b>	<b>(\$5,150)</b>	<b>(\$2,190)</b>	<b>\$58,736</b>	<b>Schermerhorn grant would make '07 to '06 comparison comparable</b>

**Planning Report**

Six people gathered on March 20th to discuss the parameters of planning in the short and long term and focused on the basic questions of planning.

They came up with reasons for why planning is necessary and beneficial:

- It helps us prepare for future needs.
- It prevents unpleasant surprises.
- It helps us allocate resources.
- It helps us accomplish agreed goals.
- It helps us prepare our organization.
- It helps us focus our goals.
- It enables us to have a spiritual continuity with our rich heritage.

They then turned to specific things that needed to be planned:

- ✓ The church calendar.
- ✓ A new big initiative with national impact, but local connection.
- ✓ General priorities.

- ✓ Budgeting and stewardship campaigns.
- ✓ The building: its maintenance, its ecological responsibility, and its relevance.
- ✓ Broadening our outreach for growth and discipleship.
- ✓ Parking issues.
- ✓ Interaction with the city.
- ✓ Inclusivity – how can we be more open to people who are different than our current constituency?
- ✓ Spiritual transitions: confronting gossip and negativism and encouraging the gifts of the Spirit.
- ✓ Ecumenism – especially in working together on common goals.
- ✓ Social justice and basic helping.
- ✓ Communication, including advertising and media impact.
- ✓ Organization in general, including the committee structure.

~Bill Levering

The *Tower Crier* is published monthly (except July and August) by the First Reformed Church, 8 N. Church St., Schenectady, NY 12305. Contributions should be submitted to the church office by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. The church is grateful to its editor Linda Witkowski, and its editorial staff: Ronnie Bartholic, Richard Blackmer, Daniel Carlson, Dee Gravink, and Kate Ryan for all their work and to Jean Brown and Lauralee Moore for their work in mailing the newsletter to members' homes each month. Comments, as well as letters to the editor, may be directed to the church office.

**THE CHURCH OFFICE MAY BE CONTACTED BY:**

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### Crop Walk

If I asked you how far away you live from the nearest supermarket, you would probably answer with a period of time, such as, "about ten minutes," or "a half an hour's drive." I'll bet that most of you don't know exactly how many miles it is from your home to the store, probably because you've never walked the distance. If you had to *walk* to the store, you would probably know how many miles it is, or you would at least know how many hours, instead of minutes, it would take to get there.

Now just imagine with me for a moment that you do not own a car, nor do you own a refrigerator. Someone in your household would have to walk to the supermarket almost every day to get the things that you need for your family, like milk and food. Could you walk that far? How long would that take? How much of your day would be consumed with the simple task of providing food for your family? Then you'd still have to work a full day to earn your wages, and take care of your kids (or your parents), and do all the little things that need to be done each day. Do you think that we would still spend so much time worrying about internet

download speeds or whether or not the game is being broadcast in HD?

We as a nation and society are blessed with cars, computers and stores full to the brim with any kind of food we want. And we can have it all in a matter of minutes. Take just a *second* to think of those who barely have enough food to survive. Think of those who *do not* have enough food to survive. Think about how, for one month, your internet connection, or cable hookup, or even one trip to the grocery store could feed a family for an entire year. A family for whom getting food is a daily challenge, not just a matter of adding it to the list on the refrigerator door.

The Crop Walk will be held on May 6, at 1:00 p.m. on upper Union Street in Schenectady. Please stop by the table outside the sanctuary to learn how you can help, either financially or by walking with us on the 6<sup>th</sup>. I am personally curious to see if my two-year-old can walk a mile on her own, so my family and I will be walking the "Golden Mile" this year. For the sake of the world's hungry people, I hope you will join us.

~Adam Kerwin