



The Visitor

Schoharie Reformed Church – January 2017

Pastor Mike & Pastor Sherri



JANUARY

What's Inside

<i>Pastors' Message</i>	1-2
<i>Prayers and Praises</i>	2
<i>Announcements</i>	3
<i>Food Pantry</i>	3
<i>Building & Grounds</i>	4
<i>Capital Campaign</i>	4
<i>Birthdays & Anniversaries</i>	5
<i>Ushers & Greeters</i>	5

*Deadline for February Newsletter
submissions: January 25*



You're Invited!

“When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, “What are you looking for?” They said to him, “Rabbi” (which translated means Teacher), “where are you staying?” He said to them, “Come and see.” They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day.” – John 1:38-38

Our children are at the age where it is exciting to get an invitation. Whether it is to a birthday party, a special celebration, or event, their first question is always, “Can we go?” But truth be told, no matter what our age is, I think we all like to be invited. It gives us a sense of feeling valued, included, even worthy.

I imagine that is also how those two disciples felt as they followed Jesus that day wondering if he would be their Rabbi and teach them the truths of God. Little did they know just how good of a teacher they were getting, and how much he would change their lives, and the world! But none of it would have happened for them without Jesus' invitation to, “Come and see.” And they did, and everything else is a history still unfolding.

Throughout the Gospel story we find numerous examples of Jesus inviting the people he encountered throughout his life. From the disciples invited to, “Follow me;” to the crippled man invited to, “Take up your mat and walk;” to the rich young ruler invited to, “Sell all your possessions and give your money to the poor;” to the women invited to go and tell that “Jesus is risen;” to Thomas invited to, “Stop doubting and

believe;" Jesus extended many, many invitations that changed the lives of the people, including the invitations given to you and me.

As we continue this journey from Christmas through the season of Epiphany and on into Lent, we watch, listen, and follow as Jesus interacts with people. In each and every conversation he gives an invitation to follow, to believe, to change, to remain silent, to speak, and almost always to receive a new life and reality found in him.

In the beginning of this New Year we want to "invite" you to wonder. How might Jesus be inviting me? And then the obvious follow-up question, how will I respond? It may not always be clear to us what Jesus is calling us to do in our lives. But one thing is clear – Jesus doesn't live and move among us so that we can remain where we are, viewing from the sidelines as "arm-chair messiahs" where we think or act like we know better than God. Nor "arm-chair believers" who remain on the sidelines. Rather, every invitation Jesus gives is meant to elicit a response, that as the saying goes, "We might become the change we want to see in the world."

The good news in all of this is that Jesus doesn't send us anywhere God is not already at work. Jesus is heaven-bent on us coming to a deeper understanding of our own belovedness, as well as the belovedness of others. So God doesn't "set us up" to fail, or test us in the sense of waiting objectively to see what we do so that God can render us a pass/fail grade. No – Jesus invites us in the world as a friend, as a fellow traveler, and even as "co-laborers" in the redeeming work of the world.

In this winter season, may we hear Jesus saying to us, "Come and see!" May we also seek to keep our hearts and lives open to responding to the invitation Jesus brings into our lives. It may come in the form of a stranger asking for help, or a sick relative we can care for. It may be nurturing a child, or volunteering for a service, or maybe even simply lifting others up in prayer. Whatever it might be, let us remember that Jesus does not want a stagnant faith, but rather a seeking faith that dares to try on, to live out, and to share with others, the good things God has in store for us in the New Year!

The invitation has been given, let us respond with hearts and hands and voices!

Happy New Year!

Pastors Mike and Sherri

A Few Highlights from 2016



Announcements

Nursery volunteers needed in January: This is a great opportunity to enjoy spending time with little ones, while providing a service to your church family. The sign-up sheet is next to the flower sign-up sheet. Thank you!

Irish Dance lessons for beginners will be held in the Heritage House on Tuesdays from 4:15-5:15pm, beginning January 24. Contact Jennie at the church office to sign up.



Reminder: Recipes sought for Schoharie Reformed Church Cookbook! It's time to share your favorite "go to" recipes, holiday recipes, too! Please print or type your recipes as soon as possible, bring them to church on white paper or the form in the narthex, or e-mail them to:
Sue Smith: vinsue@midtel.net or Cindy Parks: cjparks7@midtel.net.



The Food Pantry is open Tuesdays & Thursdays, 12-2pm, looking for a **driver** to pick up at Hannaford's every Tuesday AM, **AND volunteers** for the second Thursday of each month to serve our clients from 12 to 2 pm. We welcome donations of food (including fresh produce), paper products, personal care & cleaning products, empty egg cartons, to drop off here or in the SUPC Christian Ed building. **If you'd like to help with the Food Pantry,** please call or e-mail Jean Sparks, 295-6032; sparksviking@gmail.com.

Christian After-School Program at the Schoharie United Presbyterian Church seeks volunteers - forms are by the sign-up sheets.

Aluminum Tabs for the Shriners - Please continue to bring can tabs to the church; John Nixon and Ron Filmer will deliver them to help Shriners' Hospital. Thank you!

Fellowship: The Fellowship Committee wants to hear from you! Do you have any special events you would like to see happen in our church? Contact Cindy 295-7419 to discuss. God Bless!

Electronics recycling continues – please bring toner cartridges, cell phones, digital cameras, GPS, laptops, etc. to the secretary's office in the Heritage House. Funding Factory **does not** accept large items, batteries, regular phones, routers, etc. If in doubt, please ask Jennie.



Food Pantry

November 30, 2016: November in the Pantry was busy getting ready for Thanksgiving. We were able to give a turkey to everyone that needed one. A total of 289 people were served this month.

We are now planning for Christmas and the Food Pantry Committee is planning a luncheon for all the volunteers who have given of themselves to make serving our clients possible. This will be held on December 14, 2016.

On December 15th the North East Food Bank will be doing their annual survey of the Pantry.

The Pantry wishes all of you a very Blessed Christmas and a safe and warm New Year.

December 31, 2016: December in the Pantry was busy and getting ready for the Holidays was a little stressful. We were able to give a turkey to everyone that needed one. A total of 308 people were served this month and this made for a great feeling of accomplishment for everyone involved.

The Food Pantry Committee gave a luncheon for all the volunteers who had given of themselves to make serving our clients possible. This was held on December 14, 2016 and it was enjoyed by all.

On December 15th the North East Food Bank completed their annual survey of the Pantry and we again passed.

We are in partnership with the Hannaford Store in Esperance. This is a program sponsored by the North East Regional Food Bank. Volunteers pick up there on three days a week. In 2016, Hannaford donated to our pantry 30,843 pounds of food for our clients. We are very grateful to the Hannaford Food Store for this and to the North East Regional Food Bank for choosing our pantry as one to be a partner.

Just For Your Information: A check of the Year-End totals shows a major change in the number of clients coming to the Pantry. Between the beginnings of 2012 to the end of 2016, we have gone from 1,477 total people covered to now 3,889 total at the end of this year. A need is definitely being met at our facility.

The Pantry at the start of this New Year, again wishes all of you a great and special 2017.



Food
Pantry
Ministry

Respectfully Submitted,
Jean Sparks

Building & Grounds

Little Jobs

Below is the list of “little jobs” that people can volunteer for. The tasks can be done at your convenience weekdays, evenings, or weekends. By yourself or with a friend. Each job done is one less item on the “things-to-do” list and/or we have to pay to have done. Contact Dave Toborg (295-8554, dtoborg@midtel.net) for details if you can make one of them happen.

	<u>Skill Level</u>
a. Balcony – Pull up the remaining old blue carpet. Pull those carpet tacks and nails.	Low
b. Balcony Pews – Shim and tighten certain units.	Moderate
c. Balcony Pews – Fill nail holes and prep for paint. Paint.	Low
d. Organ – Finish vacuuming floor and furniture alongside the organ.	Low
e. Rear Doors (upper & lower) – Install door levers. Clean paint off interior brass door lever.	Low
f. Rear Door (upper) - Wash spill stain off aluminum threshold and concrete floor.	Low
g. Rear Doors (upper & lower) – Install door stops. <i>Requires research.</i>	Moderate
h. Lift Door (exterior) – weather strip door perimeter. <i>Requires research.</i>	Moderate
i. Basement – Disassemble homemade work platforms (no longer needed).	Low
j. New Balcony Rail – Clean mill scale and trim any sharp welds. Remove any surface rust. Fill holes. Mask, prime and paint. <i>Long, tedious, but rewarding.</i>	Moderate

Building the Kingdom Capital Campaign

We have huge news!! December was a fabulous month for the Capital Campaign. We received generous donations totaling \$161,550, bringing the total received to \$682,018, with an additional \$69,433 in remaining pledges.

WE DID IT! WE REACHED OUR \$750,000 Goal!!

Thank you to all who have done so much to help make this happen! Let’s PRAISE GOD and CELEBRATE!!

We thank the following churches which have shared their offerings and encouragement with us this month: Woodhaven Reformed Church, Standale Reformed Church, Calvary Reformed Church of Hagaman, and New Hope Reformed Church, as well as the Schoharie Classis of the Reformed Church in America. Donations were also made by Donna Morey in memory of Robert J. Morey, and by Carol “Kitt” Jackson in memory of Larry.

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