



The Visitor

Schoharie Reformed Church – November 2017

Pastor Mike & Pastor Sherri



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Sunday School: 9:15am

Worship Time 10:30 am

*December Newsletter Deadline:
November 20*



10,000 Reasons



“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

-Thessalonians 5:16-18

*The sun comes up
It's a new day dawning
It's time to sing Your song again
Whatever may pass
And whatever lies before me
Let me be singing
When the evening comes*

-10,000 Reasons, by Matt Redman

I wonder if you've ever had a morning where you woke up just before the alarm went off, you felt well-rested, and re-freshed. The kids were up and getting themselves ready, in a pleasant mood, and eager to start the day. The coffee was already made when you came downstairs, the house was clean, the sun was shining, the birds were singing, and the text message you just received said your morning meeting was canceled!

Or

I wonder if you've ever had a morning where you woke up in a panic because you missed your alarm and overslept by twenty minutes. You fumbled out of bed certain you just got into it five minutes ago. The kids are grumbling as you pull them out of bed declaring this as some sort of abuse. You race downstairs to find it's cold and raining outside, and there is nothing in the house for breakfast but the bottom crumbs of the cereal box, and out-of-date milk because you were too tired to stop at the store last night, and the text message you just received reminds you of something that was due today and you totally forgot about it!

We can probably all relate to this on some level, and the majority of us probably find ourselves somewhere in between these two scenarios on most days. We have all experienced the feelings of joy, struggle, peace, frustration, excitement, and fatigue that comes with each day. But what about gratitude? Where does being thankful fit into our days? What if I told you that both of these scenarios offer the same number of reasons to give thanks, even if some of them are a lot harder to see than others?

Yet all too often, if we're not careful, our gratitude can become something that happens only when we feel like it, or when our circumstances are so good that we cannot help it, or else during that once-a-year tradition that takes place around the Thanksgiving table. So how do we keep an "attitude of gratitude," especially when the storm hits, or on the dark days, or in the hard times? How do we keep "singing when the evening comes" as the song above reminds us, with whatever has passed and whatever lies before us? Or how do we truly "give thanks in all circumstances" as the Apostle Paul encourages us?

What this does NOT mean is that we see our troubles, or the troubles of others as "less than" they are, or "not as bad" as they seem. Rather, it is not about the troubles at all. Instead, it is about what lies beyond them. It is a testimony to our hope in the larger reality of the Gospel. The "Good News" of God's love and promises that we claim for ourselves and for one another. We truly believe that one of the most powerful testimonies we can live out in the world is to live lives of gratitude!

At the heart of giving thanks in difficult times are three important things we need to remember and to work to put into practice. The first is, that **God is in control**. Even when we feel alone, God is with us, and God is bringing us through. We can trust in God's faithfulness, and redeeming power, even when we cannot see it. The second is, to **offer forgiveness**. Holding onto a grudge means that we cannot grasp onto gratitude. Yet

when we work towards forgiveness, as difficult as it can be, we are reminded of the grace God has given us, and in that grace, we can find gratitude. The last thing is, to **keep our joy**. There are many things in the world today that threaten to steal our joy, and amidst all of the demands of each day we can often find ourselves giving our joy away, or setting it aside. Yet joy is God's gift to us and we are invited to claim it for ourselves each and every day.

During November as we turn our hearts towards Stewardship once again, we want to celebrate the reality that our God has given us not just 10,000 reasons, but a whole lot more, to give thanks each and every day of our lives. We want this to be our testimony not just on the good days, but on the hard days as well. That is why we will look together at recognizing God is in control, at offering forgiveness, and at keeping our joy, so that this may be the hope and strength of our lives, as well as our testimony to the world.

In November we will have testimonies of God at work in the lives of our congregation, special music, an activity, and our annual consecration Sunday on November 19th, during our morning worship service. We hope you will join us for this special season because YOU are one of our 10,000 reasons at the Schoharie Reformed Church!

Bless the Lord, O My Soul,
Pastor Mike & Pastor Sherrí



Upcoming Events

Saturday, November 4, 9:00 AM: Fall Clean-up. Raking leaves, cleaning flower bed, trimming shrubs, etc. Please let Dave Toborg or John Nixon know if you can help. Rain date is Saturday, November 11.

Sunday, November 12 is the last day Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes will be accepted. OCC shoeboxes are available in the narthex. A list of suggested donation items is included. We'll be filling shoeboxes in November, and dedicating them during the worship service on November 12.

Sunday, November 19 is Consecration Sunday.

Sunday, November 19, 4-7pm: Please join us for dinner and an evening of reconnecting and sabbatical sharing as a church family! Stay tuned for more information.

Announcements

The Food Pantry urgently needs volunteers to receive the food delivery on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:30-10:00am, and to help distribute the food Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12 noon-2pm. If you would like to help, please contact Diane Walion at 868-4629. **Also needed are 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. Monetary donations are also appreciated. As the weather turns colder, hearty soups, stews and entrees are especially welcome, as well as breakfast & lunch foods. **The Food Pantry is open Tuesdays & Thursdays, 12-2pm.**

The Schoharie Christian After School Program seeks volunteers to assist with snacks, Bible lessons, homework, recreation, crafts, mentoring, etc. This is a joint project of the churches in Schoharie, and is located at the Schoharie United Presbyterian Church. Application forms are in church & the newsletter.

Faithwalking Hurricane Harvey relief project: purchase monetary gift card, send to Faithwalking, P.O. Box 131074, Houston 77219. These will be distributed to those most in need.

Or donate to **World Renew Disaster Response Services:** 1700 28th Street SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49508-1407 phone:1-800-552-7972 website: worldrenew.net/drs

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!

Shared with us:

A church goer wrote a letter to the editor of a newspaper and complained that it made 'no sense' to go to church every Sunday.

He wrote: "I've gone for 30 years now, and in that time I have heard something like 3,000 sermons, but for the life of me, I can't remember a single one of them. So, I think I'm wasting my time, the preachers and priests are wasting theirs by giving sermons at all."

This started a real controversy in the "Letters to the Editor" column.

Much to the 'delight' of the editor, it went on for weeks until someone wrote this clincher:

"I've been married for 30 years now.

In that time my wife has cooked some 32,000 meals. But, for the life of me, I cannot recall the entire menu for a single one of those meals.

"But I do know this: They all nourished me and gave me the strength I needed to do my work.

If my wife had not given me these meals, I would be physically dead today.

"Likewise, if I had not gone to church for nourishment, I would be spiritually dead today!"

When you are DOWN to nothing, God is UP to something!

Faith sees the invisible, believes the incredible and receives the impossible!

Thank God for our physical and our spiritual nourishment!

IF YOU CANNOT SEE GOD IN 'ALL,'
YOU CANNOT SEE GOD AT ALL !



Building & Grounds

Fall Clean-Up

Saturday, November 4, 9:00 AM. The focus will be on raking leaves, cleaning out the flower bed, trimming shrubs, and general outside clean-up in preparation for winter. Bring rakes, gloves, pruners, loppers, etc. Could also use a couple pick-up trucks. Please let Dave Toborg or John Nixon know if you intend to be there. Rain date is the following Saturday, November 11.



Miscellaneous Stuff

There are numerous “little” jobs (install door sweeps, weather stripping, vacuum, painting, building shelves, etc.) that you can do yourself at your convenience. Contact Dave Toborg if (295-8554, dtoborg@midtel.net) if you can help out.

Donations Being a church facility, from time to time there is a need for a second fridge and a large upright freezer; keep the Fellowship Hall in mind if you learn of a good clean unit for donation. Also looking for a large flat screen TV (55”+) to hang on the wall.

Anyone need a pew? As reported previously, some of the pews will not be used and are being replaced by loose “worship seats”. We’ve been keeping those pews for parts and “just in case”. As a couple of folks recently have inquired about acquiring a pew for their home, we are letting everyone know that those pews are available to Congregation members. First come, first served. Sizes range from 6’ to 16’ long. Contact Dave Toborg if interested.

Winter is coming

Snow After a 1” snowfall, our snow plow contractor plows the parking lot and shovels the steps, ramp, and the street sidewalk. Lesser amounts, however, are our responsibility - so please be encouraged to grab a broom and/or shovel for the nuisance snows that pop up all winter long. Don’t wait for someone else to do it. Especially keep the steps and ramp clear so the sun can do its thing thereby reducing usage of ice melting agents.

Note that we use plastic shovels (without steel edges) to minimize damage to the wooden steps and ramp. When necessary, there is a beige plastic tote full of magnesium chloride on the Heritage House porch. Compared to rock salt, magnesium chloride is less corrosive to the steel fasteners holding together the wooden steps and ramps.

Heat Both buildings have programmable thermostats. If you need to raise the temperature for an event, simply press the up arrow until the desired temperature shows (typically 68°). And remember to turn it down when you leave. If the schedule needs permanent adjustment AND you are comfortable doing so, then go ahead and change the program. If not, contact Dave Toborg.



Church Building Rededication

There is going to be Rededication event February 24 & 25 to celebrate our building and our lives. Here are a few of the ideas the committee is working on:

- A postcard is being created that will be sent out to all volunteers & donors who supported us during our rebuilding process
- Rebuilding slide show
- Short and sweet tour 2 or 3 times a day
- Long and more involved tour with details of rebuilding and history
- Catered dinner Sunday the 25th
 - Worship service
 - Rededication liturgy
 - Choir/praise singers
 - Organ rededication

We are open to any ideas and anyone who would like to help us with this event.



School After School Program Update

The school year is off to a wonderful start. Many thanks to Lacey Eddy for filling in as our director after the gentleman that we hired suddenly resigned. We have been blessed to hire JoAnne Mayne (wife of Pastor Burt Mayne) as our new director. JoAnne began on October 16th. Unfortunately, we then lost our snack & activity coordinator, Lisa Jones. Due to other obligations, she felt that she needed to resign. Deza-rae Kennedy, who previously was just helping out with homework, has stepped up and increased her hours in order to cover snack & activity responsibilities.

The children are learning the Lord's Prayer currently. They will also be involved in several service projects throughout the upcoming months including Thanksgiving cards to members of local churches.



Sunday School Update

The Sunday School students may be small in number, but they have been incredibly busy this fall. Each week they are given a new scripture verse to memorize and earn a treat. The first Sunday in October, the children sang during church; and they plan to sing "Ten Thousand Reasons" on November 5th.

The children are challenging the congregation to fill more shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child than they do. They have been collecting items over the past several weeks and will have a packing party on November 12th. During the worship service that week, the shoeboxes will be dedicated. The children are also making Thankfulness Chains. Please notice the paper chains hanging in the Sanctuary. They each have loops sharing things the children are thankful for.

We are so excited that Cindy Parks has begun a new class for young people in 7th through 12th grade!

This year's Reformation Day, October 31, 2017, marks the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. Here is a poem written by Pastor Mike to help commemorate this special anniversary, as well as our need to always be open to the working of God in our hearts and in the world.

In Need of New Reformations

O Lord,
we are a people
in need
of new reformations.

For we are in danger,
of no longer being
reformed but de-formed,
idle in our ideology,
punitive in our purity,
conditional in our compassion.

Re-form us Lord,
and pierce the door
of our wooden hearts
with your 96th thesis,
moving us out
once again
to the margins.

To dare our depravity,
sharing the blessings of our brokenness.

To minister in mercy,
sharing a love without limits.

To grow in gratitude,
sharing the peace that protects
all of creation.

We are a people
in need
of new reformations,

We are a people
in need
of the God
who is
always reforming.



Thank You Notes

From the Reformed Church in America:

Friends at Schoharie,

Thank you for this additional gift to help those affected by the hurricanes. There is much work to be done. Your gift brings hope to those who need it most. Thank you for being the hands and feet of God.

Blessings,

Amanda Bruehl

From Things of My Very Own:

Thank you for your donation to Things of My Very Own, Inc. It is only through the support of our community that we are able to provide services to approximately 7,000 children annually. Thank to your generosity and support, Things of My Very Own, Inc. will be able to provide emergency service to children like Ella.

Ella is a six year old little girl who was victimized by her mother's boyfriend. Recently, this incredibly brave child came forward to report the abuse that she endured. Child Protective Services immediately referred Ella's mother to Things of My Very Own, Inc. [who] provided Ella with a brand new mattress, bedding, ample clothing, school supplies, and toiletries. Most important, Ella was able to avoid being separated from her non-abusive mother because of the aid we provided. Ella and her mother have since started over and both have hope for a safe and bright future.

Ella is just one of the thousands of children who Things of My Very Own, Inc. has supported in the past year. Many of these children have been forced to completely uproot and leave their homes with nothing. Your donation will help ensure that children are able to stay with their non-abusive family members and out of the foster care system whenever possible. On behalf of Things of My very Own, Inc., we cannot thank you enough for your generosity and support.

Sincerely,

Rayn Boncie

CEO/Founder, Things of My Very Own, Inc.



Stewardship

November is Stewardship Month. The articles in this newsletter show how the gifts of this congregation are serving the community, through repairing and sharing our space, donating to charitable organizations, contributing time, talent, and love to the After School Program, Day Camp, and other programs, and taking time for Christian Education and self-development, enriching our relationship with God.

Your generosity makes it possible to continue to be God's hands on earth. You are making a difference every day.

Thank you!



Schoharie Community Christian After-School Camp



Volunteer Sign-Up

The goal of the Schoharie Community Christian After-School Camp is to be a cost effective, Christian based resource for students and parents of the Schoharie area, providing a fun, safe, and nurturing environment for children in the after school hours. The program will meet Monday – Friday, from 2:30 to 5:30 pm during the school year, and will not meet on day's school is closed or lets out early. The program begins September 7th, 2017.

In order to meet this growing need, this ministry will need the support of our congregations! Please let us know how you can help:

Name _____

Phone Number _____

Email Address _____

Mailing Address _____

Best Way to Reach You _____

Home Church (*If applicable*) _____

How would you like to help? Prayer Donation Be a Volunteer

If you would like to be a volunteer, on what days and how often are you available?

What areas of the program are you interested in participating with?

Snacks Mentoring Bible Lessons Crafts Homework Recreation



Other

If "Other", please describe _____

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