



The Visitor

Schoharie Reformed Church – October 2016

Pastor Mike & Pastor Sherri



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*Sunday School is at 9:15am
Worship Service is at 10:30am*

November Deadline -October 24



Seeking Shalom in Busy Town

“Many nations will come and say, ‘Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths.’”

-Micah 4:2

One of our favorite family games to play when our kids were younger was a board game called “Busy Town,” based on the wonderful books by Richard Scarry. Busy Town is a fun spin-and- move/look-and-find game where you have to help the Pig Family, along with Sally Cat, Lowly Worm, Hilda Hippo and the others all make it to Picnic Island without losing all the food. I love this game because it includes two of my favorite activities, look-and-find puzzles and picnics! In the game each player spins and moves the number of spaces indicated by the spinner. If you land on “Pigs Eat” then you lose a piece of your food. If you land on “Goldbug” then you draw a card, flip a timer, and as quickly as you can, find all of the objects on your card hidden throughout the board. The greatest reason that I enjoy playing Busy Town is because it is not your usual board game where the first one done is the winner. It takes everybody working together to win. In fact, before you can cross over on the ferry to Picnic Island to finish the game, all of the players must be on the ferry.

I wonder if we all don't live in our own type of “Busy Town,” with all of the people with whom we live, and work, and play. I wonder if life doesn't seem to us at times to feel like there is just too much going on, with lots of people doing lots of things, and lots of feelings of chaos to go along with it all. I also wonder if the people playing the game, journeying together, and working together

towards a common purpose and goal could be a wonderful illustration of what the church can be! The church as a group of people who are committed to living out relationships of love, grace, truth, and authenticity as they work and journey together toward a common purpose. Another “churchier” word for this is what is known as a “Missional Community.” A Missional Community can be described as, “A group of people who are journeying together in authentic community and working to see the Kingdom of God (the way things are supposed to be – i.e. Shalom) expressed in a specific place and/or among a specific people. It reminds me of the words to one of my favorite Lenten hymns, “We Are People on a Journey.”

*We are people on a journey,
Rising up in life reborn.
We are people on a journey,
Seeking peace, accepting scorn.
We are walking toward a homeland,
To a mystery yet unknown;
To a kingdom coming quickly,
To the light of God’s own throne.*

The “Busy Town” illustration does have its limits, of course. Being a Missional Community doesn’t merely observe the world, or use the world around us to “preserve” ourselves on our journey. Rather we seek to partner with what God is doing in the world, we work to serve and to bless one another as a part of our work with God in the world. Sometimes this means that we are led in some unexpected directions! Yet as we continue to live life in our “Busy Town,” may we also seek to experience more fully all of the blessings, joys, learnings, and love, of being a community of believers journeying together towards God’s vision of shalom for the world!

Seeking Shalom Together,

Pastors Mike & Sherri



Working together to build the playground

Upcoming Events and Announcements



Nursery volunteers still needed: 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!

Bible Study Mondays at 7pm. We will continue to meet every Monday at 7pm until Advent, continuing our study through the book of Genesis. All are welcome to attend. We hope to see you there!

Alzheimer's Support: Interested in volunteering to help families of Alzheimer's patients? Renee Mandarano from the Eddy would like to start an Alzheimer's care team within our church. This team would provide support for families caregiving at home for loved ones with dementia. The only requirement is 2 to 3 hours per month, non-medical support along with friendship. The team is offered continued training and support from the staff at Eddy. Please contact Cindy Parks if you're interested. 295-7419 or cjparks7@midtel.net.

Schoharie Reformed Church Cookbook seeks contributions: The Capital Campaign is creating a cookbook to raise money for Building the Kingdom, and we need your help! Please print or type your favorite recipes as soon as possible, bring them to church on white paper or e-mail to Sue Smith: vinsue@midtel.net or Cindy Parks: cjparks7@midtel.net.

Toasty Toes Pajama Project: We're collecting PJ's and warm socks (any size) thru October, Head Start will distribute for Christmas. The box is in the Narthex.

Do you like putting puzzles together? Barb Miers is giving away puzzles; please see her if interested.

Christian After-School Program at the Schoharie United Presbyterian Church is up and running. See SUPC website for details. Volunteers are appreciated - forms are by the sign-up sheets.

Fall Clean-up Nov. 5, 9am: please contact Dave Toborg or John Nixon (details in Building & Grounds article).

Conflict Happens...So Make It Useful! Healthy Communication Workshop Nov. 12, 9-4 at Niskayuna Reformed Church, through the Regional Synod of Albany Mediation Team. Registration deadline Oct. 15. Scholarships available. To register, contact Ali Stone at the Synod Office: 374-4573 or synodalbany@gmail.com. Register online: tinyurl.com/ConflictHappens

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 at 295-7419 to discuss. God Bless!

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!

Food Pantry Report - August 2016

Greetings from the Food Pantry!!

The summer has been busy in the pantry. Last month we fed 280 people. Regarding numbers, they are staying about the same. Some of our clients have died and we have gained some new clients.

Needs of the Pantry are: Drivers for every Tuesday AM pickup at Hannaford's. We also need a volunteer for the second Thursday of each month to serve our clients from 12 to 2 pm.

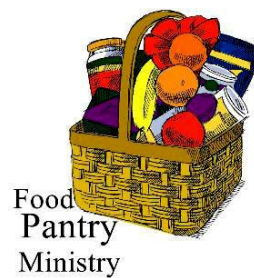
I believe what is happening is we are five years post flood, and folks are settling in, and they are not so quick to volunteer. I have also heard a person say that they don't believe in the Food Pantry as there is no incentive for folks to get independent of all the government handouts. We know that the economy has made it more difficult for the working poor to keep things going. He did not change my mind and I did not change his. If anyone can help in either of these areas it would really be appreciated.

Enjoy the fall and all the colors that will be coming to the trees.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jean Sparks

The Food Pantry is open Tuesdays & Thursdays, 12-2pm, welcoming donations of food (especially fresh garden 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.



Food
Pantry
Ministry

Building & Grounds

Progress

Much happened in September:

- The detail on the cut-off balcony ends came out great. Now waiting for the painter to prep and paint. Assembly of the new balcony rail began.
- Many thanks to our friends from the Faith Lutheran Church of Rochester. Their mission group modified the balcony pews to fit the shortened balcony; reset loose balcony floorboards; lengthened the rear door to compensate for the new floor level; installed the recessed electric/microphone boxes in the new pulpit floor; fabricated cloth covers for the speakers recessed in the front wall; and prepped and painted the old circular stairs.



- With completion of the above work, we then disposed of various old wood trim and structural pieces that were being held in case we needed it. There was also a big “clean out” and vacuuming of the entire building.
- The vertical platform lift (ADA access) is operational.

- Asphalt pavement repairs and patching were complete.
- Architectural drawings for the Fellowship Hall were completed and submitted to a contractor to develop a cost estimate for the portions of the work requiring professional skills (concrete, substantive framing, plumbing, electrical).
- The Congregation was called the past two Sundays by enthusiastic bell tolling by two young ringers. Worshippers enjoyed music from the 1894 organ as well as the Sanctuary’s improved lighting.



As of this writing, the painter returns the first week of October. The balcony rail should also be finished around that time. Final electrical work and trim installation around the platform lift is being scheduled.

There are numerous “little” jobs (install door sweeps, weather stripping, pull nails, vacuum, etc.) either needing to be done or popping up all the time that you can do yourself at your convenience. Contact Dave Toborg if (295-8554, dtoborg@midtel.net) if you can help out.

Fall Clean-Up

Saturday, November 5, 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 12.



Operation Christmas Child

What do fun toys, school supplies, hygiene items, and prayer all have in common? They all go into packing a shoe box for a child through Operation Christmas Child.

Since 1993 shoe boxes have been lovingly packed with items and prayers and delivered to boys and girls in more than one hundred fifty countries and territories. It has been a long standing tradition for Schoharie Reformed Church to participate in this worthwhile project. Later this month I will have shoe boxes and more information about Operation Christmas Child or you can go to samaritanspurse.org to learn more.

We will be dedicating our boxes Sunday, November 13th. Let us show some children of the world how much God loves them through the goodness and love of others by packing a box or boxes full of "goodies" and prayer.

Jody Meinsma

Gift Suggestions

- **Toys:** Include items that children will immediately embrace such as dolls, toy cars, stuffed animals, kazoos, harmonicas, yo-yos, jump ropes, balls, toys that light up and make noise (with extra batteries), etc.
- **School Supplies:** pens, pencils and sharpeners, crayons, markers, notebooks, paper, solar calculators, coloring and picture books, etc.
- **Non-Liquid Hygiene Items:** toothbrushes, bar soap, combs, washcloths, etc.
- **Accessories:** t-shirts, socks, hats, sunglasses, hair clips, jewelry, watches, flashlights (with extra batteries), etc.
- **A Personal Note:** You may enclose a note to the child and a photo of yourself or your family. If you include your name and address, the child may be able to write back.

Do Not Include: Used or damaged items; war-related items such as toy guns, knives or military figures; chocolate or food; out-of-date candy; liquids or lotions; medications or vitamins; breakable items such as snow globes or glass containers; aerosol cans.

Thank You

From Michaela Johnson, SRC Summer Intern:

Dear Friends at the Schoharie Reformed Church, From the bottom of my heart, I thank you for the kindness you showed me during my time with you this summer. I am so grateful for the opportunities I had throughout the whole experience. I enjoyed getting to know some of you better and I appreciate the time each of you took to talk with me. I will miss you all and look forward to coming back when I'm home from college!



From the Gallupville United Methodist Church Young Families Group:

Thank you so much for the donation. We plan to do the same tournament next year. We hope you can get a team together! With your help, we raised almost \$200 to send a kid to camp in the summer of 2017!

From the Schoharie County Community Action

Program: Thank you for the generous donation of school supplies. The back to school drive is truly a team effort and would not be a success without your time, donation and labors. As of today, 205 backpacks filled with school supplies have been distributed. The children and their parents are genuinely moved by the generosity of so many. Your donations support the educational success of children.

From the Schoharie Reformed Church: Thank you to all the many, many dedicated volunteers who participated in the Sanctuary Clean-up and Playground Build Days! Your work and support are making dreams come true! You are helping to build a loving and caring community as well as a place to worship and a place to play.

Let's Build a Playground Together!

"This is a dream come true" were the words used at the Ribbon Cutting ceremony held as a part of the build day event on Saturday, September 17. I went on to say that this playground has been a dream of the church in conversation with the community for the past seven years. The church had a committee working on it as a part of our "Church on the Grow," led by John Wilkinson, which had actually received two proposed plans in August of 2011.

In the aftermath of flooding as the church became the volunteer hub for the area, many volunteer groups inquired about the playground, a couple even offering to assist in rebuilding it. However, over time, none of the groups were able to follow through with their desires, and we continued to wait for the right time. In the meantime, the Village of Schoharie continued work on their revitalization plan, pointing to creating more play spaces in the village as a high priority. When a new church committee formed to try to rebuild the momentum and apply for some grants, over 100 families responded to our survey, resounding that the dream was not just a dream of the church, but of the entire community. Mayor John Borst concurred, following my comments with his own at the ribbon cutting, adding, "Spectacular!" And going on to say, "This is exactly what we needed as we continue to rebuild and revitalize this community!"

Schoharie Central Schools, Schoharie County Chamber of Commerce, the Village of Schoharie, Schoharie County Department of Social Services, Schoharie Area Long Term, and the Schoharie Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution all gave official support to our grant proposal, which received partial funding as you know. The Schoharie Valley Lions Club, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Elmira College, Schoharie Central School, and multiple sister churches all sent volunteers and tools (especially Prattsville and Middleburgh Reformed Churches, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Our Lady of the Valley, Christ the Shepherd Lutheran and Schoharie United Presbyterian), working side by side with Schoharie Reformed Church and community members.

Another church that deserves special attention is Faith Lutheran of Rochester, whose eighth volunteer mission trip to spend the week with us was a part of helping this project move forward this fall. We are so grateful for their continued support and commitment to us throughout our long and difficult rebuilding process. The group undertook a number of projects in the

sanctuary, as well as setting the posts for the entire playground fence and then putting up half of it.

We are especially thankful to Guernsey's Schoharie Nursery and Floyd Guernsey who spent many hours excavating, grading, leveling, hauling dirt, unloading equipment, and auguring the site for both the new fence and the play equipment. Floyd and his team's dedication to the project went above and beyond expectations, making the project even better. Floyd also lent his skid steer, which was exceptionally helpful even when he was not present himself. Floyd saved us thousands of dollars, but also put his heart into this project. Please be sure to thank him!

We are also thankful to: Carver Stone who gave a discount on the drain stone; Lowe's of Amsterdam who deeply discounted the new fence, concrete, and some of the supplies; Hannaford & Stewart's who both donated hotdogs for the build day event; and all of the members of the Schoharie Reformed Church who rallied to provide an abundance of food, snacks, tools, and supplies for volunteers, as well as volunteer in a wide variety of capacities. Special thanks to Thomas and Mike Jaqueway and Matt Fagnani for bringing down their bucket loaders to help spread stone and wood carpet. Their help on both Saturday and Wednesday saved us hours and hours, and all of our backs!! About 15 people were involved in pre-build day activities, which included sorting equipment, auguring and leveling holes for the equipment, and putting up the main posts for the swing structures.



Over 75 people were involved in the build day event itself. Kids' activities were held on the DAR lawn and included an assortment of games, face painting, building benches, and crafts led by Elmira college students. A pair of new kittens was an unexpected highlight for the kids. The volunteers were a great cross section of the community! Many told stories of either

playing on the former playground as kids themselves, or of their children using the former space. Many anticipate utilizing both the adult fitness equipment and the kids' play equipment. All expressed their enthusiasm and appreciation for the project, how greatly it was needed, and how glad they were to be a part of it.

With the help of many hands, all of the equipment was concreted into place by 6 p.m. Around 7 p.m., Mike Griffin, Pastor Mike and Dan Stevens decided they had enough energy to stay for a few more hours, and worked diligently to get all of the stone spread under and on the entire play space.

Noting the anxious children ready to play on the equipment after three days of curing the concrete, a group of 10 people with two bucket loaders finished off the wood chip and hung the swings, officially opening the playground on the advertised day.

Each day more and more people are beginning to utilize the new playground! "Thank you"s and "This is SO WONDERFUL"s are continuing to be heard from community members. One such comment came from Emily Davis, who proclaimed, "The Reformed Church is at the heart of this community!" While she and Mike were not able to be present for the Saturday build day, they were able to come assist on Wednesday evening, donating a special "woodchip" rake for our ongoing maintenance. While we may not see them in church, Mike and Emily would like us to know how much they appreciate all that the church does.

The equipment is all ready to be utilized, even though there are still a few additional projects. Half of the panels of the new fence have yet to be hung, some additional painting on the asphalt also needs to be completed, and additional clean up and sweeping of the parking lot is needed. Please let Pastor Sherri know if you can assist in finishing this grand project. In the meantime, let's celebrate this "dream come true!"

Pastor Sherri



More helpers arrive!



Rolling out the landscape fabric and putting down the gravel



Bring on the concrete!



Assembling the play equipment



Letters of Support

From the First Reformed Church of Berne:

On behalf of the consistory and congregation of the First Reformed Church of Berne we would like to support you in your Capital Campaign with our prayers, ongoing encouragement, and the enclosed contribution. We know that the task before you is great and this donation is small, but we trust it will be a blessing to work already completed and an encouragement for work yet to be done.

We have long cherished our relationship with you in sharing pastors as supervisors during vacancies, participating in the Day Camp ministry, and even participating in a few membership exchanges over the years. We will continue to pray and support and seek ways to bless your ministry and particularly this Capital Campaign and know that God will as well.

We pray you will continue this journey in faith, hope and love as you follow God's call in this endeavor.

From the Town of Wright/Schoharie Valley Lions Club:

Lion Georgia VanDyke called our attention to the new playground being built behind your church...We think the children of Schoharie will be very happy to have such a good place to play.

We would like to help with this project and are enclosing our check... toward this ongoing work.

From the Lincoln Avenue Church/Iglesia Lincoln Avenue, Pomona, CA:

In our August mission of the month offerings we collected \$395 for urban church starts. Although Schoharie is neither urban nor a church start, our hearts go out to you as you are still trying to rebuild and we want your church to have this gift. Although it's not a lot of money, we hope it encourages you and your people. We'd like to go towards your new playground.



From the Reformed Church of Prattsville:

Sorry this is a little late for the big rebuild days, but we know it will be used for the good of the playground. Blessings to you all and continued prayers from all of us at the Prattsville Reformed Church!



From Lori Potter:

Thank you, Schoharie Reformed Church family, and our community for all of the meaningful, wonderful and endless work so many of you all do.

Enclosed is a donation toward the Community Playground I make in memory of my granddaughter, Sophia Rose McCluskey.

Thank you, and may our Lord continue to be with you and bless you in all that you do.

From St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Middleburgh:

Our church has decided to return your generous although unnecessary gift for hosting the youth that came to assist at your summer camp in July. We felt this was our way to support your mission. We look forward to being able to host them again next year.



Capital Campaign Update

September has been an eventful month! Worship services have finally moved back into the Sanctuary; work continues, but so much progress has been made. We now have a beautiful playground, and the children of the community are making good use of it! In addition to many hours of help from volunteers, we received over \$4,000 in donations this month toward both the rebuilding and the playground.

Donations were received from Lori Potter in memory of her granddaughter, Sophia Rose McClusky (playground); from the Montione family in memory of Jean Forti and Carol Hendrix; from the First Reformed Church of Berne, the Prattsville Reformed Church, the Lincoln Avenue Church in Pomona, CA, the New Hope Reformed Church, and the Town of Wright/Schoharie Valley Lions Club. A very special donation was made by Osniel, the driver of the truck which delivered the playground components - he was so moved by our efforts to fund and build this playground for the community.

Sam and Sophia Meyer-Veen had a lemonade stand and dedicated the profits to the playground fund! People gave to the playground in honor of Pastor Sherri's birthday, as well. Many others also donated time and money to prepare the sanctuary and build the playground.

And here's another way you can help: the Capital Campaign is creating a cookbook to raise money for Building the Kingdom, and we're looking for more recipes! Please print or type your favorite recipes as soon as possible, bring them to church on white paper or e-mail to Sue Smith: vinsue@midtel.net or Cindy Parks: cjparks7@midtel.net.

Heartfelt thanks to all!

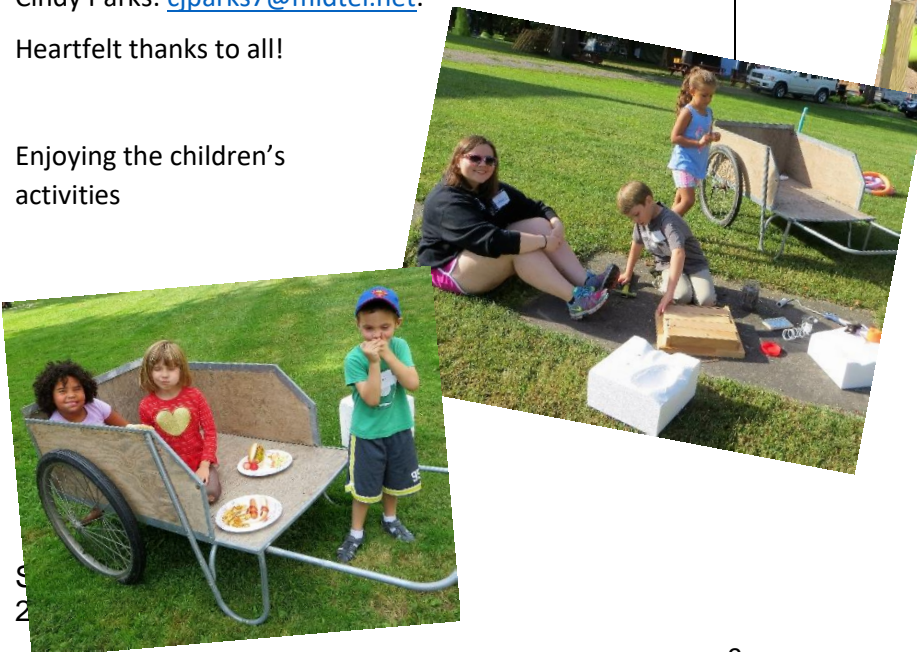
Enjoying the children's activities



Decorating the benches



Faith Lutheran Church volunteers installing the fence



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October 2016

