



The Visitor

Schoharie Reformed Church

February 2021

Pastor Mike & Pastor Sherri



What's Inside

Pastor's Message	1 -2
Highlights of our Annual Congregational Meeting	3
Ash Wednesday	3
Schoharie Valley Community Day Camp	4
After School Program	4
Food Pantry	5
Clothing Drop-Off Shed	5
Sunday School	6-7
Thank Yous	7
Devotional Books/ Collection Envelopes	8
Cancer Services Program	8

Caught in Lent



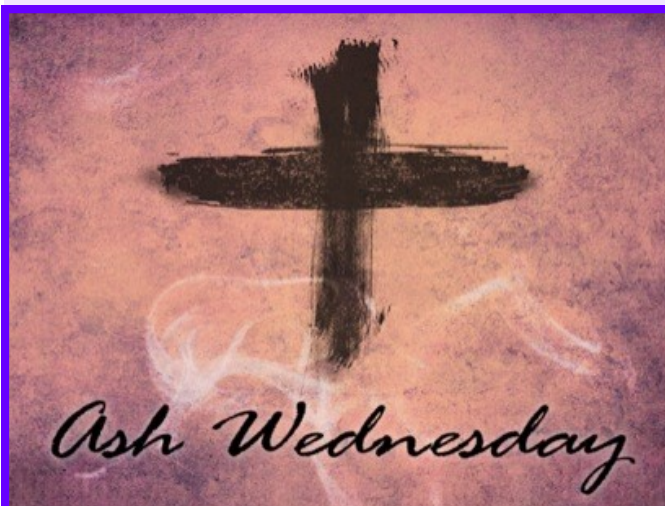
*"Then he said to them all:
'Whoever wants to be my disciple
must deny themselves and take up
their cross daily and follow me. For whoever
wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever
loses their life for me will save it.'"*

-Luke 9:23-24NIV

From: "Catch Me In My Scurrying"
by Ted Loder, "Guerillas of Grace"

Catch me in my mindless scurrying, Lord
and hold me in this Lenten season:
hold my spirit to the beacon of your grace
and grant me light enough to walk boldly,
to feel passionately,
to love aggressively;
grant me peace enough to want more,
to work for more
and to submit to nothing less,
and to fear only you...
only you!

I don't know how it is for your life, but it has been somewhat surprising to me to see just how much I (Pastor Mike) have found myself "scurrying" at times during this pandemic. Even when I can't really "go" anywhere I have done a lot of scurrying. I found myself scurrying at times because I was distracted by all the things going on around me and within me and it was really difficult to concentrate or focus as I wanted. Other times I was scurrying because I wanted to be distracted to avoid the pain of my grief, or my frustrations, or my anxiety, and even at times shame about all that I "should" be doing or feeling during this pandemic. I also found myself scurrying because



of messes I had made with things I was responsible for because I acted careless or lazy. Then there were times of scurrying that came as a very real part of living everyday life with kids, pets, meetings, tasks, and managing the house, that are all a part of the regular rhythms of life. When I am scurrying, I often find myself tired, frazzled, and often anxious. As I reflect on this it is becoming clear to me that while it feels like I am really busy and always “on the go” I am actually accomplishing very little. What is better during these times is not to push harder, or shame myself, but rather allow myself to be “caught,” and to come back to the center of my being with God that I might better and more wholly reengage the world.

As you look at your own life, I wonder what “scurrying” you can observe in yourself? One of the ways my scurrying has impacted my life is that I often don’t take the time I need to be with God to nurture my own faith and my own soul. I know that I regularly need to hear the voice of God in my life to remind me of my Belovedness, to hear the mercy and faithfulness of God (especially at times when it feels like I can’t find any evidence of it in the world). I also need to be reminded of how I am called to live my life as a disciple of Jesus in the world instead of just getting caught up in reactivity about what is going on around me and/or within me (as I too often find myself). I need this in order to truly live my best life. AND I also know that it won’t just happen on its own. This is the hard work of self-care and tending to our own souls.

Self-care is different than what we sometimes think of as self-soothing. Self-soothing is often more about our own relief than our growth. We self-soothe to help alleviate and avoid stress, anxiety, grief, pain, and shame. We might do this by eating, or shopping, gambling, time on the internet, drinking, or other things. Not all of this is bad, but too much of it can lead to habits of escapism, and patterns of addiction that can make our sense of scurrying even worse. The work of self-care helps bring us back to the center of our life with God. It reminds us what a life of “Shalom” or wholeness looks like for us, and it renews our sense of purpose and mission in the world with God.

With all of my “scurrying” I am coming into this season of Lent with a lot of hopeful expectation. The word Lent refers to “spring.” Now it maybe hard to contemplate spring with all of the snow we have right now. But I am reminded of the all the bulbs buried in the ground unseen, living into the promised hope of spring. I think about what it means for me to live fully and faithfully in this winter season with that same expectation and anticipation of the promise of spring! This year for Lent I hope to be caught in my scurrying. To be unsettled enough to create new habits and rhythms to help more deeply connect me to God during this time. Now I realize Lent is not “magical” simply because it is a religious season. But it does give us a unique opportunity to take time to reflect, pray, and do some good work of tending to our own souls to help us more deeply and intentionally engage the world around us as God created us!

What could it look like for you to connect with God more deeply and fully during this Lenten Season? For me (Pastor Mike) I am planning to take time to read again the wonderful book, *“The Jesus I never knew”* by Philip Yancey. There is also a wonderful Faithwalking independent study course I might engage in entitled, “Creating Space for God.” Here is the website if you are interested: <https://www.faithwalking.us/creating-space-with-god-independent-study/>. You can also reach out to a friend or a neighbor who might be lonely or struggling during this pandemic. You can pray for different groups of people or different places in the world each day. You can also join with your church family on Wednesday evenings and Sunday mornings through Zoom. Now it is important not to let even good “spiritual things” become their own type of “scurrying” but we look forward to hearing from you about how you will be “Caught” in Lent and drawn more deeply into the love God and engage the world more fully as you tend to your own soul during this special season!

Getting Caught in Lent,

Pastors Mike & Sherri





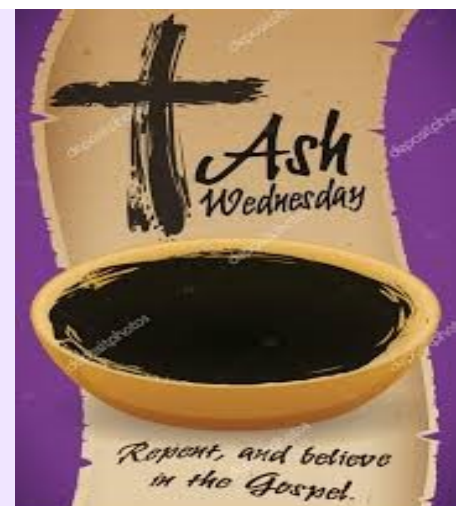
Highlights from Our Annual Congregational Meeting



- We celebrated all of God's faithfulness to us during this past year. We celebrated God's faithfulness through the gifts of technology to continue worship and meeting together during the pandemic. We celebrated the gifts of Vince Smith as our minister of music. We also celebrated the ministries of the After School Program, the Food Pantry, and Day Camp. We celebrated the gifts and talents of our church family who have greatly blessed our ministry during the past year!
- Building and Grounds - Dave Toborg discussed the need for a new roof on the Heritage House and is currently seeking bids. We are continuing to work to raise funds for the necessary repairs of our stained-glass windows. There are also some smaller repairs still needed to be done around the church. You are invited to contact Dave Toborg if you have any questions or would like to do some volunteer work.
- The clothing box in the parking lot is back open and is once again accepting donations.
- Cindy Parks shared the report of our Benevolences and we celebrated the generosity given through our church family to be able to bless many families in need as well as local and regional organizations during this past year!
- MaryAnn Foland presented our budget for the coming year and reviewed our overall financial picture. We are experiencing a decrease in funds and are in need of finding some creative solutions to help bridge the gap between our giving and our expenditures. We are beginning to make smaller cuts in our church budget but may have to make more if the trend continues. The congregation approved the budget for 2021.
- The Schoharie Reformed Church will be celebrating its 300th anniversary this year and we are hoping to celebrate in some creative and fun ways. Please let a member of consistory know if you have any ideas or would like to be part of planning this year of celebration!
- The congregation voted to approve the nominations to consistory for Mike Jaqueway to serve a term as Deacon and Sarah Goodrich to serve a term as Elder. They join our current consistory members Liza Toborg, Cindy Parks, Larry Poulin, MaryAnn Foland, Laura Stevens, and Emily Fagnani.

Ash Wednesday Service

On Ash Wednesday, February 17, you will be able to receive a drive-thru sign of the ashes from your car in our church parking lot along with a prayer from 12:00 to 1:00pm and from 5:00 to 6:00pm. There will also be an Ash Wednesday video service that you will be able to watch on Ash Wednesday. Then we will have a Zoom gathering to fellowship together, talk about the service, and the upcoming season of Lent. The link and the worship video will be sent through the church email.





Schoharie Valley Community Day Camp 2021

The Day Camp team met on Jan. 20th to continue preparing for summer 2021. We received the Adventure Island “The Quest for God’s Great Light” curriculum to be used this year. Throughout camp week, we will explore several Bible stories including Creation, Moses, and Mary at the Tomb.



We are always looking for people to step into leadership roles! There are openings for leaders in Arts & Crafts, Recreations, and Nature, as well as Assistant Directors. Please check us out on Facebook under Schoharie Valley Community Camp. If you know of anyone in 10th grade or up that might be interested in a paid position, have them check out the Day Camp section of the Schoharie Reformed Church website for job descriptions. Volunteers will also be needed to help with everything from snacks to preparing materials to working with campers. There is also the potential for a group of volunteers to come from Michigan this summer.

The question on everyone’s mind is whether we will be able to hold camp in person this year or whether we will be virtual again. That decision will be made by March 31st. In April, online registration will open for campers. Day Camp will run from July 19 – 23, 2021. Please pray that God will provide us with all the necessary resources to make Day Camp a wonderful time for children of all ages to learn just how much God loves them!

We would love to have more people working with us to make Day Camp a wonderful experience for all the children in our community. Please contact Liza Toborg at ltoborg@midtel.net for the Zoom link to our next meeting on **February 15th at 7 PM.**



Schoharie Christian After School Program



The After School Program Advisory Board met on Jan. 25th. Due to a smaller number of children in the program this year, our income has been significantly reduced. Current projections indicate that we will be about \$6,000 short. Because of this, the decision was made to apply for a second round of PPP.

We have also applied for a grant from Stewarts. We are hoping to be able to purchase rubber mats for underneath all of the swings as well as more Legos.

The children are having a wonderful time learning about Jesus, playing in the snow, and doing a variety of arts and crafts this winter. In the upcoming months, they will be creating Valentines for Vets and Easter cards to be sent to shut ins.

If you would like to donate to the ASP, we are always in need of paper towels, pretzels, crackers, and 100% juice. If you happen to have Legos that you are looking to get rid of, the ASP would be delighted to take them off your hands! You can drop off items for the ASP at the Heritage House-Tues/Wed/Thurs 9am-1pm or call the church office at 518-295-8177 for arrangements. Please place items in the large box labeled ASP donations on the table just inside the parking lot door (if icy, please go around to the far side of the front porch to enter).

Please continue to pray for this program and for the health of our children, staff, and volunteers.
Blessings,
Liza Toborg, Advisory Committee Member



Food Pantry



The Food Pantry continues to serve many families in our community as many continue to struggle with job loss and heating expenses due to the winter weather. Special items of need are cleaning supplies, paper products-paper towels/toilet paper. Hand soap, toothpaste, shampoo and shower soaps are also needed. Non-perishable items such as canned fruit, tuna fish, pasta, pasta sauce, canned ravioli/beef stew/soup/spaghetti o's/chili with beans, vegetables, applesauce, instant potatoes, boxed macaroni & cheese, peanut butter, jelly, granola bars, cereal, jello packs, pudding packs, snack crackers are item always needed. Items may be dropped off at SUPC on Tuesdays or Thursday from 12noon till 2:00pm or they may be left between the doors of the SUPC educational building. Monetary donations are appreciated as well, checks may be written to "Schoharie Valley Food Pantry". Volunteers are needed to help with the Food Pantry, if able, please contact Diane Walion at 518-868-4629.



The Food Pantry is open Tuesday & Thursdays, 12-2pm

Thank you for your donations!



Clothing Drop-Off Shed

Good news! The clothing drop-off shed reopened early January. After closing its sheds last year due to Covid pandemic, the operator (St. Pauly Textile, Inc.) is restarting operations.

Located behind the Heritage House, the shed provides a convenient and clean donation program that serves the community while helping the SRC financially.

So start cleaning out your basement and closets. As of two weeks ago, we already had a good load inside the shed.

What kind of items can be donated? *Useable* clothing, shoes, belts, purses, blankets, sheets, curtains, pillowcases, and stuffed animals. Items need to be in tied plastic bags.

Unacceptable items are electronics, books, household items, toys, garbage, pillows, rags, or fabric scraps.

What does the company do? St. Pauly empties the shed weekly/biweekly depending on volume and pays us 4 cents per pound of clothing.

St. Pauly sells the clothing in bulk to other companies that, in turn, contract with government agencies, relief organizations, and private companies that redistribute the clothing around the world. The geographic destinations depends on what is happening in the world at any given time.

Can the SRC use the clothing? If there is ever a need, the SRC can sort through donations to pick out items for a specific need or event (i.e. family in need, rummage sale).



Sunday School



Hi Sunday School Kids,


I saw this story on the Lenten Pretzel and wanted to share it with you. Hope you enjoy reading it. I know every time I see a pretzel I'll remember prayer and what Jesus gave up for us!

Miss Cindy

The Legend of the Lenten Pretzel

- A very long time ago, (in the early 600's) there was a man who worked for God.
- His job was being a MONK.
- A MONK does everything in his life for God. He lives in a special place with other MONKS, who pray and read the Bible many times during the day. They usually live in a building or group of buildings for this purpose. It is called a monastery.
- MONKS usually make and/or grow their own food.
- This MONK had been in the kitchen where other monks were baking a special bread for LENT, and he saw some leftover pieces of dough.
- This monk decided to use the leftover pieces of dough for something special.
- The Monk formed the dough into thin strips crossed into a looped twist to be **like the folded arms of children in prayer.**
- Look at the picture.
 You will be one of the few people who know which way is really UP!
- **That was how children held their hands to pray in those days.**

- Let's all try crossing our arms like the children in the early church. (Like a pretzel for prayer.) This treat was given to the children as they learned their prayers.
- They began calling the treat "Pretiola", which means "little reward" in Latin. (a common language of the monks)
- *(a different version of the story calls thembracellae, a German word that eventually became pretzel.)*
- Soon it was known the world over as a pretzel.
- The simple shape of the pretzel, arms folded in prayer, reminds us to pray every day.
- **Every time you see a pretzel, remember prayer!**
- What do we do with our hands and arms when we pray? We should fold our hands and bow our heads!
- Would it be ok to pray with our arms folded?
Yes it would, but some people who do not know what you know might think it was strange!
- The pretzel really has its origins as an official food of Lent.

- Lent is known as the 40 days* before Easter. (Actually 46. Read our 40+ story)
- Lent is a time when we should be thinking of **what Jesus gave up** for us – his body and blood – his life – so we could go to heaven.
- Lent is a time when we could think of **what we could give up** in honor of God or Jesus.
- Long ago, in some churches, you had to decide on something to give up for the 40 days of Lent. (A personal sacrifice)
- Some ideas would have been chocolate, or candy or cookies or pizza!

- The monk in our story lived in a time when you could not eat meat or milk or eggs during Lent! So he and his brother monks had to figure out a special bread that did not use eggs or milk.
- The monks were preparing a special Lenten bread of water, flour and salt – which is what pretzels are still made out of today.
(continued on next page)

The Legend of the Lenten Pretzel (continued)

- Pretzels then began to be enjoyed by all people. They became a symbol of good luck and long life. They were also a common food given to the poor and hungry. They were cheap and easy to make and satisfied hunger.
- **Questions:**
 - Have you ever had a pretzel like this?
 - Who can tell what it tastes like?
 - If you were asked to give up a favorite food from now until Easter, what would it be? (Please ask and discuss with each of your children)
 - Would it be easy or hard not to have that food until Easter?
- **Pass out pretzels to your children if you have them.**
- ASK: What are pretzels supposed to remind us of? (see previous page for the answer)
- **Let's pray with our arms folded like the pretzel:**
 - Dear God,
 - We thank you for your son Jesus. We thank you for caring about us and loving us. Amen.
- **The ancient way to pray is mimicked in the pretzel**
- **Please review these pictures with your children.**



Thank You

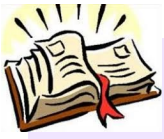
Jail Ministry of Otsego County: Dear Schoharie Reformed Church, On behalf of the Board of Directors of Jail Ministry of Otsego County, thank you for your donation and continued, generous support of this organization.
Sincerely, David Allan Rutenber, JMOC Treasurer

Capital City Rescue Mission: Dear Schoharie Reformed Church, Thank you for helping our struggling neighbors through your support of the Capital City Rescue Mission this year. Because of you, everyone that came to us over the holidays got the real help they needed.
Thank you, Perry Jones, Executive Director

The Joshua Project: Dear Schoharie Reformed Church, On behalf of the 2020 Schoharie County Christmas for Kids Program, The Joshua Project would like to thank you for your generous donation. Your thoughtfulness has contributed to brightening the holidays for children and families throughout Schoharie County. Entirely through your donations and those of other caring citizens and businesses throughout the area, we assisted 628 children.
Sincerely, Jane Munger, 2020 SCC for Kids Administrator

Ronald McDonald House Charities: Dear Friends, Thank you for your generous gift received on 2/1/21. Your gift to RMHC of the Capital Region will allow us to continue our mission of delivering and supporting programs that directly improve the health and well-being of children and families. Because of you, more than 17,000 families have experienced a haven of comfort, hope, love and support-free of charge-when they needed it most.
Gratefully, David E. Jacobsen, Psy.D., Chief Executive Officer





Devotional Books and Collections Envelopes

Since we are not currently holding in-person worship at this time we would like to offer you if the opportunity to pick-up any monthly reading materials as well as your offering envelopes. You can do this by visiting the Heritage House; Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday anytime between 9am – 1pm. Materials can be picked up on the downstairs table and you may use the side entrance of the Heritage House (unless it is icy, then please go around to the far side of the front porch). If you have any questions or would like to make other arrangements please contact the church office at 518-295-8177. You are also welcome during these times to come with a mask and utilize our church library, located upstairs in the Heritage House.



Cancer Services Program

Delaware, Otsego, Schoharie, Oneida, Herkimer and Madison Counties are offering FREE Mammograms, Breast Exams, Pap Tests & Pelvic Exams to uninsured & underinsured women 40 or older, insurance billed for those with insurance. Colorectal Cancer Screening Take-Home kits to uninsured & underinsured men and women 50 or older.

Free cancer screening events near you: Oneonta Southside Mall, Tues. 2/16/2021;
Dolgeville Bassett Clinic, Thurs. 2/25/2021; Delhi Price Chopper Parking Lot, Thurs. 3/11/2021.

Call [1-888-345-0225](tel:1-888-345-0225) for your FREE appointment!

Also call to learn more about our program, enroll for free cancer screening or find a participating provider in your area.



Schoharie Reformed Church
258 Main Street
Schoharie, NY 12157

Rev. Mike & Rev. Dr. Sherri Meyer-Veen

Phone: (518) 295-8177

Fax: (518) 295-8105

email: schohariereformedchurch@yahoo.com

Website: www.schohariereformedchurch.org/

February 2021



**Sunday
Worship Service
Zoom and Pre-Recorded**