



The Visitor

Schoharie Reformed Church

January 2020

Pastor Mike & Pastor Sherri



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Seeing Salvation!

“When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying: ‘Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in the sight of all nations: a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel.’” – Luke 2:27-32

The reading below was shared with us from our brothers and sisters at the Fonda Reformed Church in their December Newsletter written by their Interim Minister, Rev. Rett Zabriskie. I don't know if he or someone else wrote it, but we share it with you because it is a great illustration about how the way we view ourselves, God, others, and the larger world around us makes all the difference. Take a moment to read this down to the bottom, and then read it again from the bottom up and see how it changes!



IT IS CHRISTMAS AGAIN
and I can't wait until
it is January
I hate when
Christmas trees are lit on all the cities balconies and terraces
the shopping streets are decorated and the Salvation Army sings carols
the best of Christmas is when
it is past and the Christmas trees lie in the rain and wait for the garbage men
I always fear the days when
we gather with family and friends to celebrate the holiday
I long for when
winter darkness settles over the city
that is what I survive on when
it is Christmas
I really mean it
and, yes
I wish you a Merry Christmas
but that does not come from the heart
Christmas is a superficial consumer party
yes, I also say that
Christmas is nothing but sentimental superstition and religious kitsch
it is patronizing to suggest that
Christmas is an expression of an inborn longing
that lies deep in us all, just as
the full churches are proof of a genuine faith
where do you get that?
Christmas is a Disney-ized relic from a dead religion
it leaves me cold when you say that
Christmas is a Feast of the Heart.

As you reflect on this and on the story of Simeon seeing the boy Jesus in the temple, we want to invite you to wonder how Simeon's experience of living his life in hopeful expectation that he would one day "see salvation" impacted the way he looked at the world, the way he lived out his life, and the way he understood God?

As we enter into a New Year, our eyes continue to look in hope that we might also "see the salvation of our God." How does the reality of God's in-breaking into our world impact the way you will live in this New Year? The arch of God's promises to their complete fulfillment is a big one that spans much of human history as we know it. Like, Simeon, we are still within that same arch. We still long for the day when the lion shall dwell with the lamb and spears will be turned into pruning hooks. And we, like Simeon, can chose to live our lives through the eyes of God's promises, even when the chaos of the world around us is increasing our anxiety. Choosing to change our perspective doesn't mean we ignore, or deny, or avoid the pains and the problems that are around us and within us. Rather it means we face them with even more compassion and courage because we recognize that God has
(continued on page 3)

come, and is among us now! We step more fully into our lives because of the hopeful expectancy that God is bringing all promises to fulfillment in us, through us, and beyond us!

Happy New Year!

Pastor Mike and Pastor Sherrí

*Thank You from
Pastors Mike and Sherrí*

Pastor Sherrí and Pastor Mike would like to sincerely thank the congregation for your generous Christmas gift and for all of the love and support we have received from you over the year. We are so blessed to be able to serve the Lord along side of you in this place and we look forward to all of the good things that God has in store for us in the coming year. Thank you and bless you!



Sunday School

Our Sunday school program takes place for different age groups at different times during our 10:00am morning worship service. All kids from Pre-Kindergarten through 8th grade are invited to attend.

January 5 – Regular Sunday School

January 12 –Regular Sunday School

January 19 –Regular Sunday School

January 26 - Regular Sunday School

February 2 – Regular Sunday School

No Sunday School for Grades 5-9

February 9 – Regular Sunday School

February 16 – No Sunday School

February 23 - Regular Sunday School

March 1 – Regular Sunday School

No Sunday School for Grades 5-9

March 8 – Regular Sunday School

March 15 – Regular Sunday School

March 22 – Regular Sunday School

March 29 – Regular Sunday School

April 5 – Palm Sunday Parade. –

No Sunday School

April 12 – No Sunday School - Easter

April 19 – Regular Sunday School

April 26 – Regular Sunday School

May 3 – Regular Sunday School –

No Sunday School for Grades 5-9

May 10 – Regular Sunday School

May 17 – Regular Sunday School

May 24 – No Sunday School

May 31 – Sunday School & Church Picnic



Christmas Program and Pot Luck

On Sunday, December 15th the Sunday School children presented their annual Advent Program, "A Mystery at The Manger." Thanks to some Detectives and a CSI team (Christmas Scene Investigators) along with a wonderful cast of nativity characters, the kids found the missing manger and the baby Jesus while helping us all learn about the real meaning of Christ's coming.



Thank you to all our Sunday School teachers and kids!



Automated External Defibrillator

Have you seen it? An AED machine has been placed in the fellowship room of church. Thank you to Georgia Van Dyke and the "Darrel Van Dyke Memorial Fund."

Where is it located? On the wall to the right of the kitchen door as you enter the kitchen. It is housed in an easy to open metal box.

What is the purpose of the AED machine? It is used to revive a person who has collapsed from an apparent heart attack. It is an immediate resource while waiting for first responders to arrive. They will take over the person's care when they arrive.

Remember, call 911 first before any other action is taken!

Who should use the AED? Anyone who has had basic training in the use of the machine. The machine is simple to use and includes specific directions in the box. The most important action is to *call 911 first!*

Can anyone be trained? Anyone who is 18 or older and who attends a short training session. A training will be held on Sunday, February 9th at 12 noon in the Community Room. Training will be given by a member of our County Emergency Preparedness Office. This training is open to any adult who would like to attend.

If you have any questions please speak with Sarah or Dave Goodrich.



Annual Congregational Meeting

Our annual Schoharie Reformed Church Congregational Meeting will be held after our 10:00am worship service on Sunday, January 26th in the Community Room. Please plan to stay after worship to celebrate God's faithfulness to us in this past year and to share together in the hopes and plans for the coming year!





Fund Raising Committee

Saturday, December 7th during the Village of Schoharie Holiday Parade on Main St. members of our church held a “chili & bread” fund raising event. A great time was had by all who attended along with much appreciation received from the community. We are looking forward to holding this event again next year. Our next event being planned is a fish fry that will be held sometime during the season of Lent.



A Mission Project



It takes a community to raise a child. Some families, for a variety of reasons, have a difficult time being able to provide for all the needs of their children. As a church family we have a wonderful opportunity to help meet one of those needs for kids in our local elementary school. We are going to be collecting snacks now through the end of January to help the elementary teachers be able to provide snacks for all the kids in their classrooms who would not otherwise have them. This is a great way to help us connect to our local school and to meet a real need in our community. Please join us in helping to provide for this special “Snack Program” We would love to have this become an on-going ministry of our church and this is the first step in moving this forward.

We have provided a list to help with ideas (some children are allergic to nuts, peanut butter, etc.) of the appropriate snacks, just to name a few. We do ask that the snacks are individually packaged. If you are able to help provide snack items please place them in the labeled box in the Narthex or if you would just like to make a monetary donation we will make the purchases on your behalf. You may make your donation by placing it in the offering plate or by sending it directly to the church: (PO Box 635, Schoharie, NY 12157).

Snack ideas:

Dried fruits/raisins/trail mix
Popcorn
Gold fish crackers
Cheese crackers
Ritz/Townhouse crackers

Granola bars
Pretzels
Corn chips
Vanilla wafers/cookies
Graham crackers

Rice Krispie treats
Fruit roll ups/gummy fruit snacks
Chex mix
Teddy grahams/animal crackers

If you have any questions you may contact Cindy Parks or the Church Office.

Thank you for your support and participation,
The Consistory



Thank You

Dear Sisters and Brothers, On behalf of the drop-off site volunteers and our entire area team, I thank you for your faithful support of Operation Christmas Child. Thanks to you and others 11,178 gift-filled shoeboxes have left our six-county area destined for children in need in other parts of the world. We are blessed to be able to share our blessings with others! I wish you a Merry Christmas and a New Year of good health to enjoy the Lord's blessings. I look forward to our continued partnership in service to Him! Love MaryLou, OCC Church Relations Coordinator.

MCS Backpack Program-would like to thank you for the generous donation to our weekend backpack program. We now service 21 families who would not have an easy time providing for their children. Your donation will defray the cost of 2 backpacks. Our families are very thankful for generous donors like you. Thank you again and have a Happy New Year. Shannon Hughes-Coordinator of Backpack Program.

Community Thanksgiving Day Dinner Committee-would like to thank you for your generous donation. For our 2019 dinner we served and delivered over 400 meals. Your donation helped us to do this. Happy Holidays, Donna Whalen.

Capital City Rescue Mission-would like to thank you for helping our struggling neighbors by supporting the Mission this year. Many more are coming to us during the holidays, and with your help, we'll serve them all. Your gift will not only help feed men, women and children at Capital City Rescue Mission, you will also provide them with shelter and other critical care that could transform their lives-care that includes comprehensive programs and services designed to help them find long-term solutions that lead to bright futures. Above all, they will hear the message of hope found in Christ. Thank you! Perry J. Jones, Executive Director.

The Berkshire Farm Team-would like to thank Dave and the Schoharie Reformed Church for hosting our Independent Living class for our volunteer activity. It was a great experience for our youth to be giving back to our community. The youth were able to learn a lot from their experience at the Church. Many of them discussed how they helped, then they went home and showed their caregivers how they picked up the leaves and picked up garbage surrounding the church. We appreciate you taking the time out of your day for our youth. Again thank you very much, Nicole Fiorini and the Fall 2019 Independent Living Class.

Christmas Plants-thank you for helping to beautify our Church during our Christmas service while remembering special loved ones.

Camp Fowler-I love this picture. I wonder what the girls are looking at; what are they thinking; what adventure lies just before them? That's what camp is about. Looking ahead and wondering what we are to do with our "one wild and precious life?" Camp Fowler is a small part of many children's lives that makes a big impact. The learning and lifestyle changes that can come from even one week out a summer are enormous. 65 years of letters, notes, and phone calls often starting with, "I remember when..." are proof of the effectiveness of this ministry. As we look forward to 2020 and beyond we hope to exceed the gaze of these campers to be ready for the challenges, hopes, expectations, and dreams that they will bring with them. Thank you for your gift, it will be turned into some of those hopes and dreams. Walk in balance, Kent Busman, Executive Director.



Church Greening

Thank you to everyone who was a part of our church greening on Sunday, December 1st to help beautify our sanctuary for the Advent and Christmas seasons. We will be de-greening the church for the New Year following worship on Sunday, January 12th.



Announcements



Consistory-will meet on Wednesday, January 15th at 6:30pm in Heritage House.

Clothing Drop-Off Shed-we are now hosting a St. Pauly Textile, Inc. clothing drop-off shed. Located behind the Heritage House, this used clothing company provides a convenient and clean donation program that serves the community while helping the SRC financially. Items that may be donated are useable clothing, shoes, belts, purses, blankets, sheets, curtains, pillowcases, and stuffed animals. Items need to be in tied plastic bags. Please do not put in unacceptable items—electronics, books, household items, toys, garbage, pillows, rags, or fabric scraps. Please tell family, friends and neighbors about the shed. See Dave Toborg or Jim Callahan if there are any questions.

Offering Envelopes-for 2020 are in the Narthex, please help yourself to your box. Thank you for your generosity.

Technical Support Volunteers-we are in need of volunteers to assist with the technical support of our church sound board and the church website. If you would like to volunteer for one or both of these task please talk with Vince Smith or Jim Callahan. This is a great way to learn and offer assistance to your church family.

Aluminum Tabs- Please continue to bring can tabs to the church and you may leave them in the Narthex. The tabs will then be processed, proceeds will be used to offset patient cost.

Cancer Services Program-the Mobile Coach is coming to Apple Barrel Country Store, 115 NY-30A, Schoharie on Tuesday, January 21st 9am-2pm. FREE Mammograms, Breast Exams, Pap Test & 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 and older. Call 1-888-345-0225 for your FREE appointment!

SCHOHARIE COMMUNITY FOOD PANTRY REPORT FOR 2019

Business is booming at the food pantry. In 2017 and 2018 the number of families served hovered around 150. For 2019 that number jumped to 212. Those 212 families consist of 579 individuals – 187 children, 309 adults and 83 seniors. In 2018 we served 500 individuals, which means that most of our new families are single individuals. Our food pantry families visited the pantry a total of 1299 times in 2019, for an average of 108 visits per month. In 2018, by comparison, the pantry was visited an average of 80 times per month. On many days the pantry runs at a brisk pace, as we try to accommodate 15 to 20 families in a two-hour period of time. When the number of persons in each family is multiplied by the number of times that particular family visited the pantry, the total number of persons served is arrived at – a number of 3,199 for 2019, as compared to 2,643 in 2018. With that said, it is clear that most families still utilize the pantry on an emergency basis. Fully 62 families visited the pantry only once during the year, and 142 families (67%) visited 6 or fewer times. At the other end of the spectrum, there were 40 families who visited 12 or more times per year, but most of those families were small in size, with 1 or 2 members. Families are allowed to visit 2 times per month, or 24 times per year, but only 2 families actually visited that full number of times.

Our pantry is affiliated with the Regional Food Bank. That means that the amount of food given out to each family is based upon the number of persons in that family and is calculated to feed that family for a three-day period of time. In all likelihood, the food lasts much longer than 3 days, as it is a quite generous calculation which is used. The food that we give out comes from a number of different sources. First, we receive an annual grant from the Food Bank which allows us to purchase food from them, at greatly discounted cost. In 2019 we purchased over 20,000 pounds of food from the Food Bank. Our most current grant with them is for \$3,100, for the period of November 1, 2019 thru June 30, 2020. When that grant runs out, and it will, we will purchase food from the Food Bank and elsewhere with our own funds, which stand at \$7,981.76 as of October 1, 2019.

We also receive food through the Food Bank's Retail Store Donation Program. Three times a week, volunteers go to the Hannaford Market in Esperance and pick up whatever they have to donate. It can be 2 boxes of food or 12 – we never know how much or what kinds of food will be sent. This partnership is a great source for much of the meat that we give out, as well as breads, baked goods and produce. In 2019 we received 41,849 pounds of food from Hannaford!

In addition to these two major sources, we are the beneficiaries of MANY food drives throughout the year, from kind and caring community organizations, which are too numerous to even list, for fear of leaving many out. They give faithfully and generously, and we are extremely grateful. While we don't keep exact records, it is my educated guess that we received over 10,000 pounds of food from these sources in 2019.

Serving some 70,000 pounds of food to 212 families is a feat that takes many people to accomplish. We have some 25 to 30 volunteers who faithfully give of their time to make this happen. They fill many different roles, many of which are behind the scenes and out of the public eye. They are dedicated beyond belief. We can't thank them enough for their dedication and time. This is truly a "community" effort.

Pastor Colleen Quirion



Food Pantry

Food Pantry-received a very large donation from the Schoharie Elementary school last week, currently, the food pantry is very well stocked with food at this time. Thou are all set for food, we do need paper products and cleaning supplies. In addition to our Food Pantry box in the Narthex items may be dropped off at SUPC on Tuesdays thru Fridays from 11:00am till 3:00pm. Monetary donations are appreciated as well, checks may be made out to Schoharie Valley Food Pantry. *Volunteers are needed to help with the Food Pantry, if able, please contact Diane Walion at 518-868-4629.* Thank you all for your continued support.

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



January 26-28
Camp Fowler
152 Pelcher Road,
Lake Pleasant, NY 12108

Register Online at:
www.nyfaithwalking.com



Questions? Visit www.nyfaithwalking.com

Contact Rev. Dr. Sherri Meyer-Veen

PastorSherriMV@gmail.com (518)-231-2151

Faithwalking 101 is the beginning of a spiritual formation journey that leads participants to take steps toward an integrated, missional life by developing awareness of the obstacles to such a life – personal and cultural – and overcoming them by practicing growing authenticity with God and in community. It is our deep conviction that the fully human, fully alive life to which Jesus calls us is missional. ***Please Register ASAP – Only a few spaces remain!***

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

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