

The Visitor

Schoharie Reformed Church

July 2020

Pastor Mike & Pastor Sherri



What's Inside

<i>Pastors Message</i>	1 -2
<i>In-Person Worship</i>	3 -4
<i>July Worship</i>	4
<i>Schoharie Valley Community Camp</i>	5
<i>Announcements</i>	6
<i>Church History</i>	6
<i>Food Pantry</i>	7
<i>Imagine Their Homes</i>	7



Finding Our Way In



"Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

-Psalm 139:23-24

"The key to moving forward is what we do with our discomfort.

We can use it as a door out—blame the messenger and disregard the message.

*Or we can use it as a door in by asking,
Why does this unsettle me?*

What would it mean for me if this were true?"

- Robin DiAngelo, [White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism](#)

For myself (Pastor Mike), I am continually in need of facing the power and presence of my own defensiveness in my life. As a person who has had a life-long struggle with shame, and my own sense of worthiness; I continually find myself being defensive as a way of protecting myself and proving my own worth and value to others, especially when I am confronted with places where I am in need of change and/or growth.

When my faults, or failings are pointed out, my walls go up, and my best arguments, excuses, and blames are put out in an effort to keep me feeling safe, secure, and valued. It is really hard for me to offer an open heart like David does in the Psalms when I am confronted with some way that I have been wrong or am unaware. While I have made some progress in recent years, I hope more and more to grow into being a person who asks God and actively engages with God in the work of “searching and knowing my heart and my anxious thoughts, seeing any offensive way in me, and moving towards the way everlasting.”

In recent conversations about race and racism I have become more and more aware of the ways that we (who are white) are tempted to quickly move towards defensiveness as a way of avoiding our own pain and potential shame around this reality that is continually being brought to light in our world. It can be tempting to want to say, “All Lives Matter,” in response to the chants of “Black Lives Matter,” as a way of lessening our discomfort about the violence and injustice that has gone on against African Americans for centuries. Of course, it is true that all lives matter. The point is that black lives continue to face violence and threats that whites do not. It can also be tempting to put the focus on the rioters and looters as the “problem” in order to avoid the hard conversations about the realities that have stirred their anger. While the violence is not to be encouraged, it needs to be understood. It can also be tempting to quickly point out all of the books we have read, the people of color we know, and all of the ways we are “not racist,” as way of distancing ourselves from the reality and its impacts that are being felt by people in our own county and communities, as well as the way we may be unknowingly contributing to it through racism’s systemic roots.

I have come to believe that one of the most important things we can do, for those of us who are white, is to engage with courage, curiosity, and compassion in the work of getting past our own defensiveness and denial. This engagement, managing our defensiveness as best we can, is crucial in order to grow our awareness. We need to increase our capacity to engage in learning and conversation free from blame, and to be able to explore our own histories, our biased behaviors, and our systems to help bring about change and transformation in ways that help create racial equality for all.

The truth for me is that I have a lot of privilege. As Reggie Harris shared with us in our conversation on Wednesday night, as white person I don’t have to worry about jogging at night and being stopped by the police. I also had access to quality education all of my life, that many people of color did not. I did not have to wonder how my neighbors would accept me when we bought our home in the same way people of color do. I also believe that I probably accept and even support things that happen in our society that I am not even aware are racially biased. One recent story for me is that I became aware of how people of color were being portrayed as the villains, while people who were white were being cast as Jesus, and the heroes in some Bible story videos. I probably would not even have noticed this had it not been pointed out to me. I am also aware that I use language that is probably not appropriate when talking about race. These are just some of the things I hope to learn more about and to find the courage, curiosity, and compassion to address in my own life, as well as in the relationships and systems I a part of in my life.

In all of this it may also be tempting to say, “people shouldn’t be so sensitive.” But I believe this is also a statement of defensiveness because we who are white get to define the boundaries of sensitivity for our society. Rather instead, I hope to put myself more on the side of sensitivity to help raise my awareness for myself and for others. I am sure I will find times where I get defensive about race, or about other realities in my life, *but I also want to continue to commit to finding a way in and not taking the less painful way out in order to transform my life.* I invite you to explore with courage, curiosity, and compassion the way in for your life in whatever way that looks.

Growing in God, Living in Love,

Pastor Mike and Pastor Sherri



In-Person Worship beginning this Sunday, July 5th, 9:30am!!!

We are excited to announce that we are planning to hold both Zoom and in-person, outdoor worship for the month of July beginning this Sunday, July 5th at 9:30am – weather permitting! ***(Please Note the Time Change)*** for those who are comfortable with attending! ***If you are uncomfortable or you are not feeling well, we encourage you not to attend but to join us live through Zoom at 9:30am!*** Below are the gathering guidelines that have been put together through the generous and hard work of Dave Toborg and our church consistory in conjunction with Health Department, State, and CDC Guidelines. We look forward to worshipping together in-person, or on Zoom beginning this Sunday at 9:30am!

Outside Worship Guidelines

Beginning July 5, 9:30 a.m.

We will be following all normal recommended hygiene, physical distancing, and PPE (mask) rules for all ages - including kids; as well as cleaning and disinfecting protocols for our worship spaces during this time.

Seating and Space for The Service:

Please BYOC - *Bring Your Own Chairs*. Lawn & north side of lot (downtown) is shaded; south side (Middleburgh) is sunny.

Use the circles chalked on the parking lot OR the orange flags in the lawn & playground area for seating with one family unit per circle.

We will be maintaining 12' between families so that we can sing during the service.

Personal Practices:

Please refrain from hugging, holding or shaking hands.

Please maintain physical distancing for all ages (including kids)

Face masks are required when within 6' of another person, outside your family unit.

We will need people to sign-in by Health Department Guidelines for possible tracing purposes should it be needed.

Important Service Information:

Bulletins, including music will be pre-printed and available on a table for you to pick-up your own.

Pre-printed children's activity pages will also be available for the kids during the service.

Please bring your own Bible

continued on page 4

An offering plate will be on the table for you to place your offering but no offering will be collected during the service to maintain physical distancing.

There will be no communion during the month of July.

The worship Service will also be available live on-line through Zoom for those who are more comfortable joining us that way. The video link with the bulletin will continue to come through the church email as usual.

The bathrooms in the Heritage House & Church will be open for use.

There will be no coffee hour or fellowship time at this point, so please bring your own coffee if that is something you desire.

Rain – If rain is forecast, we will gather for worship through Zoom. An announcement will be included in Saturday's Zoom invitation email if possible, otherwise a decision will be made and sent out through email by 8:30am on Sunday morning.



July Worship

July Worship will be held at 9:30am in-person
and
outdoors with masks and physical distancing,
as well as online through "Zoom"



Schoharie Valley Community Camp

July 20–24, 2020



Online Day Camp space still available for complete information and to register visit:

www.schohariereformedchurch.org/camp or

e-mail: schoharievalleycommunitycamp@gmail.com or call 518-295-8177.

Day Camp is in need of any extra boxes, we'd love to receive our clean medium size (bigger than a shoe box) boxes to pack up camper t-shirts, bibles, craft supplies and other fun "camp in a box" stuff. Boxes may be dropped off at Schoharie Reformed Church (Heritage House) by 7/9/20. Thank you

Thank you to all volunteers who make our Community Day Camp possible.

July 2020 Prayer Calendar for Schoharie Valley Community Camp – Virtual Style

Please pray for...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1...families whose children will be participating in camp	2 ...donations of materials & food and for those who will prepare materials, videos and live chat experiences	3 ...worship leaders and directors	4 ...recreation & nature leaders
5...arts and crafts leaders	6 ...Remember the camp nurses and EMTs whose services are not on call for camp this year	7 ... first-time counselors and volunteers	8 ... returning camp leaders and staff	9 ...children who will be experiencing camp for the first time	10... those who will plan and prepare snacks	11... that the camp boxes for home camp be packed & distributed and campers have the supplies they need
12 ... hearts to be open to the Good News about Jesus	13 ... that technology will help facilitate a feeling of community and sacred space	14 ... inspiration from the Scriptures	15... that homes may be safe spaces	16 ...God's love to be shown among staff and campers	17... safety and good health for everyone	18 ... effective training in Zoom and Google Classroom
19... strength and inspiration for staff and volunteers	20 Virtual Camp Day 1 ... reliable technology and a smooth first day of camp	21 Virtual Camp Day 2 ... energy and enthusiasm for leaders, staff, and volunteers	22 Virtual Camp Day 3 ... campers' families to find God's path for their lives	23 Virtual Camp Day 4 ... campers to seek ways to continue to grow in faith	24 Virtual Camp Day 5 ... all participants to see God at work in their lives	25...campers to reflect on what they learned
26 ... A Sabbath filled with worship and rest	27... campers to live what they learned	28... our communities to be blessed by our camp experience	29... campers to continue to grow in awareness of how God moves in the world	30... continued inspiration from the Bibles campers received	31...hearts to be open to the Good News about Jesus	



Announcements

Consistory-will meet Thursday, July 2nd at 6:30pm. Consistory has been meeting every two weeks to be sure all the needs of the congregation are able to be meet resulting from Covid 19.

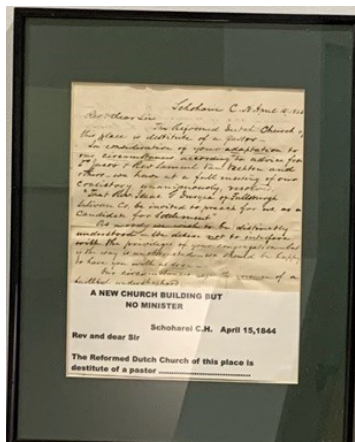
Schoharie United Presbyterian Church-has a new email address: office@schohariepresbyterian.org

Day Camp-is in need of any extra boxes, we'd love to receive our clean medium size (bigger than a shoe box) boxes to pack up camper t-shirts, bibles, craft supplies and other fun "camp in a box" stuff. Boxes may be dropped off at Schoharie Reformed Church (Heritage House) by July 10th. Thank you

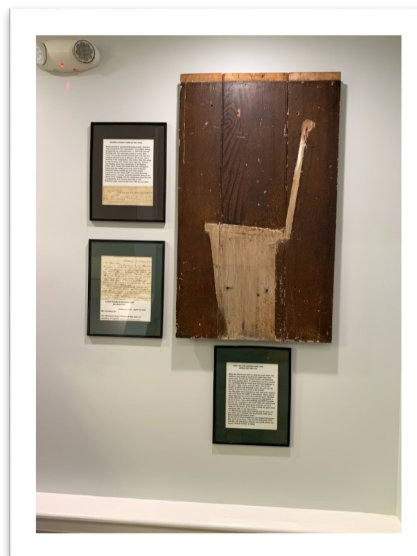
Church History

Dave Goodrich and Dave Toborg put up several pictures in the stairwell and depict the old pews that we found during the repairs after Irene.

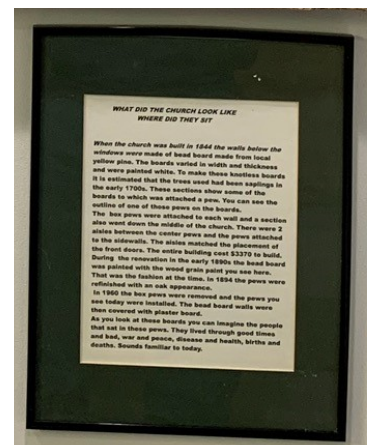
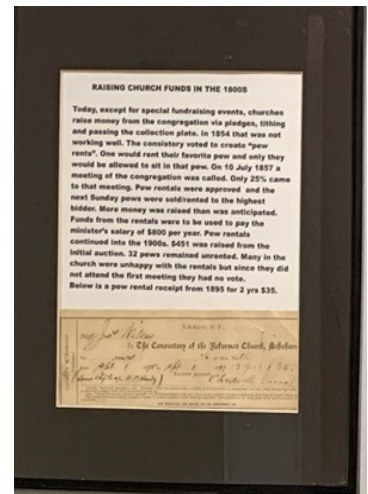
Raising Church Funds
in the 1800's



A New Church Building
But No Minister



What Did The Church Look Like
Where Did They Sit





Food Pantry



The Food Pantry is providing for many families in the area during the summer months when children are not in school. The Food Pantry is currently very low on canned fruits like fruit cocktail, peaches, pineapple, pears, and oranges; and pasta. Other items of need are, canned vegetables such as corn, carrots, peas, green beans, yellow beans; canned ravioli/beef stew/soup/spaghetti o's/chili with beans; boxed macaroni & cheese, tuna fish, peanut butter, jelly, granola bars, cereal, pasta sauce, jello packs, pudding packs, snack crackers. During this time there is a special need for cleaning supplies in addition to food items. Cleaning items such as: paper towels, toilet paper, laundry and dish soap, toothpaste, shampoo and shower soaps are 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.* Thank you all for your continued support.

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

Welcome to Fairies & Gnomes: Imagine Their Homes!

This is a summer learning project of the Mohawk Valley Library System, whose mission is to provide a summer of magical opportunities for families working together — using social-distancing guidelines and natural "found" materials — to build fairy and gnome homes at their own residences, on library lawns, in community parks and other local sites — wherever the shy and mystical "wood folk" might be found!

Where might one create or stumble upon a fairy or gnome home? Under bushes, near trees, at the base of walls, in crevices — places where the miniature, whimsical structures are unlikely to be disturbed or to cause a disturbance. Creators and seekers of the fairy folk and their abodes are asked to **respect public flower displays and gardens and to use natural, non-living materials** unless building in their own yards or homes.

When finished, families can post photos of their creations to #518Fairyhomes on Instagram or Facebook so the fun of finding other people's fanciful dwellings — or signs of the elusive wee folk — can begin!

This is a way for families to celebrate the library summer reading program safely outdoors, build "STEM," and practice good stewardship of land and resources throughout their local communities.

Check out more about this fun project (including other Fairy House Locations in the Mohawk Valley) at <https://www.518fairyhomes.com/>



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