



The Visitor

Schoharie Reformed Church – March 2017

Pastor Mike & Pastor Sherri



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*Deadline for April Newsletter
Submissions: March 27*



Living Lent: God's Process for Transformation

*"If anyone would come after me, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me."
– Jesus. Luke 9:23*

It is hard to believe that it is already that time of year for us to once again enter into another season of Lent. Some of you may have already begun, or possibly even decided how you will "live into" this season of Lent. It is often a popular Lenten practice for many of us to "give something up" during the season of Lent; for some it is an item of food like chocolate, or caffeine, or anything deep fried. For others, it is to give up a part of ourselves we'd like to change, such as complaining too often, or working too hard, or watching too much television. Some of us also like to "take something on," like spending more time reading the Bible, or praying, or visiting others, or exercising, or doing random acts of kindness. All of these things are wonderful ways that we can use to help us connect more to God and to our own lives during this season of Lent.

For myself, I (Pastor Mike) have thought about taking on a new exercise routine that I would commit to for the next 40 days. My thinking was that it would be really great if I could commit to a certain exercise that would transform me in 40 days. Wouldn't that be great? I could work really hard all the way up to Easter and then be done! But the more I thought about it, the more I began to wonder...what happens on day 41? Or day 51? Or even day 101? Would my transformation remain if I then went back to life as normal? Would I have the courage, or the energy, or even the desire to start over again or to continue?

Lenten practices are a great way for us to get in touch with this special holy season and we certainly hope you will consider taking on a Lenten practice to deepen your own faith, and I am going to commit to exercising during these next 40 days of Lent. But within

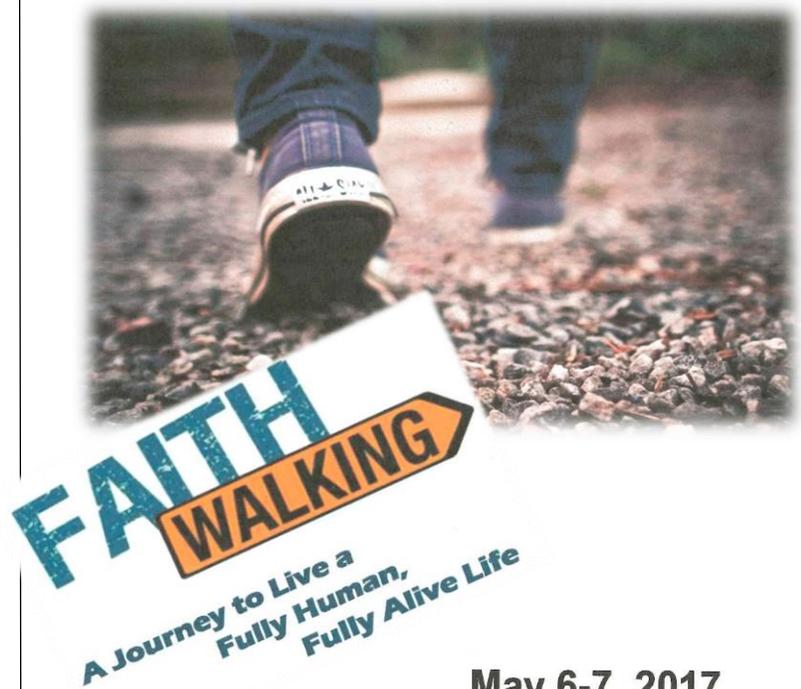
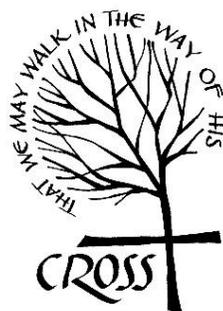
all of this, it is important for us to remember that our life as disciples of Jesus is never meant to be a seasonal activity. Did you catch a significant word in Jesus' words to his disciples from the verse above? We don't take up our cross during Lent, or when we are at church, or on a mission trip, or volunteering at the food pantry or homeless shelter. We are to take up our cross "daily." In other words, living as disciples of Jesus is not a religious practice, instead it is a way of life. It is not something we choose to do when we have a spare moment or a religious conviction. It is meant to be the reality that shapes the whole of our lives and is a part of everything we do. Take some time to consider, what does it mean for you to see your faith as more than a seasonal practice or a religious activity, or even a specific system of belief, but instead as a way of life? What in that excites you? What makes you anxious? What gets in the way of seeing that reality for your life?

During this season of Lent, we want to explore together during worship a way of being that Jesus lived out through his encounters with God and with others on his way to the cross. Together we want to explore the values of curiosity, authenticity, integrity, love, and courage as ways of being disciples of Jesus in the world. We also want to practice a way of being disciples that involves a new way of learning where we engage in a process of information, practice, and reflection to help deepen our life with Jesus. This is some of the key learning that our church Ridder Team has been part of and we are looking forward to sharing it with you during this season of Lent.

Our hope in all of this is that this Lent will become more than a "seasonal series," or a set of practices or beliefs, but will also challenge us and inspire us to try on new ways of being that will help our faith to become a new and whole way of life in this season and in every season!

Living Lent Together,

Pastor Mike and Pastor Sherri Meyer-Veen



May 6-7, 2017

9 am - 6 pm

**Quality Inn & Suites
160 Holiday Way (I-88 & Route 30A)
Schoharie, NY 12157**

Faithwalking is a spiritual formation journey that leads participants to take steps toward and 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 a missional life.

**Contact:
Pastor Sherri
(518) 231-2151
PastorSherriMV@gmail.com**

Upcoming Events

March 1- Ash Wednesday: 6pm - pot luck supper at the Schoharie United Presbyterian Church; **7pm** - ecumenical worship service at the SUPC.

Wednesdays March 8, 15, 22, 29 & April 5, 6pm: Lenten Soup & Bread Evenings in the Heritage House

Small groups focusing on "Present over Perfect" meet on Monday evenings at 7:00pm and on Wednesday mornings at 10:00am, both in the Heritage House, continuing through March 22. A sign-up sheet is in the Narthex. There is a suggested donation of \$10.00 if you would like to give towards the cost of the book. Please join us!

May 6-7, 9am-6pm: Faithwalking event at the Quality Inn in Schoharie. For more information, contact Pastor Sherri at (518)231-2151 or PastorSherriMV@gmail.com.



*Wednesday Evenings,
March 8 through April 5
6pm in the Heritage House*

Please join us for weekly soup and bread evening gatherings beginning on Wednesday,

March 8. Dinner will begin at 6:00pm in the Heritage House and the worship service will begin around 6:45pm. The evening will conclude by 8pm. All are invited to attend; a sign-up sheet for those who would like to offer bread and/or soup is available in church. We hope to see you there!

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## Food Pantry

**The Food Pantry is open Tuesdays & Thursdays, 12-2pm**, looking for a **driver** to pick up at Hannaford's every Tuesday AM, AND **volunteers** for the second Thursday of each month to serve our clients from 12 to 2 pm. We welcome 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. **If you'd like to help with the Food Pantry**, please call or e-mail Jean Sparks, 295-6032; [sparksviking@gmail.com](mailto:sparksviking@gmail.com).



## Announcements

**Easter memorial plants** will be available this year. An order form will be in your church bulletin. Please submit forms and payment by Sunday, April 2.

**Lost & Found:** There are several nice jackets and a child's shirt & pants on the rack in the Heritage House – any takers? Unclaimed lost & found items will be donated in April.

**Nursery volunteers needed:** This is a great chance 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!

**Irish Dance lessons** for beginners of all ages are held in the Heritage House on Tuesdays, 4:15-5:15pm. Contact Jennie at the church office or 295-8560.

**Thank you to our new "Kitchen Angels,"** who have already started to make the kitchen shine!

**Reminder: Recipes sought for Schoharie Reformed Church Cookbook by March 31!** The cookbook project is making progress, and we want your favorite "go to" recipes, holiday recipes, too! Please print or type your recipes as soon as possible, bring them to church on white paper or the form in the narthex, or mail/e-mail [Cindy Parks: cjparks7@midtel.net](mailto:cjparks7@midtel.net).

**Mike & Wanda Derry's new phone number** is 315-940-1924. Their cell number is still the same: 518-229-7656

**Christian After-School Program at the Schoharie United Presbyterian Church** seeks volunteers - forms are by the sign-up sheets.

**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!

**Fellowship:** Do you have ideas for special events? The Fellowship Committee wants to hear from you! Contact Cindy 295-7419 to discuss.

**Electronics recycling continues** – please bring toner cartridges, cell phones, digital cameras, GPS, laptops, etc. to the secretary's office in the Heritage House. Funding Factory **does not** accept large items, batteries, regular phones, routers, etc. If in doubt, please ask Jennie.

## *Building & Grounds*

### Renovations

Much is happening. In the Fellowship Hall, our contractor, Ken Bernhardt, started work the beginning of February.



*Jack hammering the uneven concrete floor. Broken concrete was carried out by hand.*



*Sanitary lines trenched and laid; steel supports being replaced and moved.*



*Ready for concrete.*



*February 21 - Pumping concrete is much better than using wheelbarrows.*



*Looks good.*

Final mold mitigation is next. Framing is expected to be finished by the end of March.

Meanwhile in the Sanctuary, the electrician finally wrapped up his work. Currently, the sound system is being installed.



*Connecting cables in the floor boxes.*

## Classis Meeting Summary

### Classis Sexuality Conversation

January 28th, 2017

The Schoharie Classis held a special meeting in January to provide an opportunity for open discussion of issues related to sexuality. This was in preparation for the classis meeting in March where our classis will vote on the amendments below. These amendments were developed by General Synod to address issues related to marriage and to limit marriages within the RCA to one man and one woman. These issues are controversial and potentially divisive to the Reformed Church in America.

The day opened with worship in the sanctuary of the Lawyersville Reformed Church. This was followed by time in solitude prior to meeting in small groups. In our small groups, we shared our individual stories related to sexuality and how our own understandings have been shaped by our faith and personal experiences. We were encouraged to listen deeply to each other and focus on the goal of building community together as we explored our current reality. After lunch, we had a presentation by Josh Bode on the amendments and their impact to our church government. Following is an extremely brief summary of the two amendments and a few of their ramifications. The bullet points below each amendment are items that Josh brought to our attention.

The primary focus of the day was on two amendments to the RCA constitution. The 2016 General Synod adopted these amendments and has recommended them to the classes for approval. At least 2/3 of the classes must approve the amendments in order for the General Synod to pass a final declarative resolution allowing these amendments to take effect.

#### **Amendment #1** – Adoption of “Order for Christian Marriage” as part of the Liturgy of the RCA

\*Currently only sacraments (baptism and communion), church membership, and ordination (deacons, elders, and Ministers of Word and Sacrament) are part of the Liturgy of the RCA. This amendment would elevate marriage to the same level.

\*Currently, the only mention of marriage in the Book of Church Order states “the president and clerk of the consistory shall keep a careful register of all baptisms and marriages...”

#### **Amendment #2** – Marriages Solemnized in a Church or Congregation

Section 11 – The consistory shall be guided by the following requirements in their provision of services of worship.

Subsection g – The consistory or governing body shall assure that marriages solemnized in a church or congregation are between a man and a woman.

\*Currently, consistories are not responsible for the governance of their pastors. That responsibility falls to the classis.

\*This would add a specific responsibility to the consistory. A consistory could be disciplined by classis for approving a same gender wedding.

***The consistory is hoping to have an open forum for discussion around this topic. If you would be interested in attending this event or if you have any questions concerning these amendments, please contact one of the pastors.***

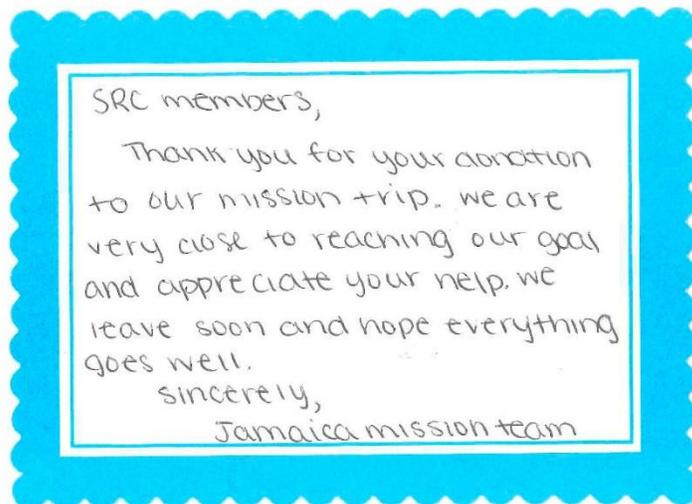
Respectfully Submitted –

Liza Toborg

## *Building the Kingdom Capital Campaign*

Thank you to the Fonda Reformed Church, who took up a collection during their Christmas Eve worship service for our Capital Campaign. They wrote, "We wish you many blessings as you continue your work and ministry in Schoharie."

### *Thank You*



Schoharie Reformed Church

*March 2017*

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