

SPECIAL EDITION

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# The Carillon

Schoharie Christian After-School Program



The new Schoharie Christian After-School Program launched with the start of school on September 7, 2016. As most of you know, from design to launch, the conception of this program happened in a very short span of time, and it would make sense there would be a lot of questions floating around. To fill you in on a bit of the history, the idea for a Christian After-School program has been an evolving conversation for several years between SUPC and Schoharie Reformed. With the continued growth and success of the Summer Christian Camp, mostly recently serving close to 150 kids this past summer, yet steady decline in youth attendance in our Sunday Schools, the question “*Where are all the kids the rest of the year?*” was worth asking. From continued conversations with parents around the village, a Christian After-School Program presented itself as a great outreach opportunity, extending the Summer Camp experience year-round while also meeting a growing need among parents. This past May, a small group of dreamers were gathered to ask two very simple questions: “*Is an After-School Program possible, and if so, what would it look like?*” Knowing the clock was against us for a September deadline, we felt affirmed in our hearts this was an opportunity God was leading us to in the here and now, and resolved to do all we could to see a program come together in this short window; (Cont. on Page 2)

## Meet the Staff

### **Darlene VanDeusen** Program Director

*Originally from Detroit, Michigan, Darlene was in the U.S. Air Force for 9+ years, where she met her husband.*

*Moving to Cobleskill in 1988 with her husband and daughter, Darlene worked in many roles, including Computer Programming and Management. In 2015, Darlene started working with schools as a substitute teacher for children with special needs.*



### **Margaret Hesdorfer** Assistant Director



*Originally from Long Island, NY, is now a resident of Esperance along with her husband, Rick. Margaret is a mother of two*

*grown children. In addition to her work with the After-School Program, Margaret works as a substitute teacher in Middleburgh, Schoharie, and Duaneburg. She also has a Masters degree in Elementary Education. Margaret is enjoying her time working with the After-School Program, and feels it's a great opportunity to get to know and work with the students and share with them about God.*

if it was not to be this September, we would have at least built the foundation for the following year. The planning group, consisting of members from both SUPC and Schoharie Reformed, with coordination from Session, got to work meeting regularly over the next several months until a program began to take shape. By July, enough work had been done, and we felt it was time to survey the parents during the week of Summer Camp and seek permission for “Green Light” from Session and Schoharie Reformed Consistory, respectively. The survey from Summer Camp confirmed enough interest from parents to warrant moving forward, and with permission from both church councils, based on reviews of a preliminary program budget and the official creation of an Advisory Committee to oversee the program, (*consisting of 2 council appointed representatives from each church, and Clergy serving in advisory roles*) and a Session appointed Designated Treasurer to monitor the program budget, a search for staff began. By end of August, God had led us to a great staff, each with their own set of unique gifts and experiences, and student registration was underway. Now, as of the first month, the program is currently serving 28 kids ranging from Pre-K to 6<sup>th</sup>, all students from Schoharie Elementary School. The program meets Monday – Friday, 3:00 to 5:30 PM, in the SUPC Christian Education Building in sync with the School’s calendar, and does not meet on days school dismisses early or is closed. The program focuses on youth enrichment with daily schedules of snacks, fellowship, Christian devotionals and education, homework tutoring, and recreational and craft times. Schoharie Elementary School has been very supportive of this new ministry, providing school bus transportation from the school to the church each day. In addition to the Program Staff, volunteer support from church members has been a welcomed blessing. Similar to the Community Food Pantry, the program was designed with a budget independent from the participating churches, and is supported solely from Parent Program Fees and In-Kind Donations. As an ecumenical mission of both SUPC and Schoharie Reformed, both churches have awarded \$1500 each to the After-School Program Budget from their respective Mission Funds. In the past few weeks, the program has taken on a life of its own, and we now look to God’s blessing on what this new ministry will mean to our churches and this community in the coming years. Thank you all for your support and continued prayers for this new ministry!

In Christ’s Service,

-Rev. B Eddy

### **Billy Lee Program Aide**

*Billy is a 24-year-old resident of Gallupville, NY. Prior to his time with the After-School Program,*



*Billy served in the U.S. Air Force with the unit at Stratton Air National Guard Base in Scotia, NY, working on airplanes. In 2015, he began working at the Schoharie Elementary School in a special education classroom as an aide, and now works at the Whispering Pines Pre-School located inside of the Schoharie School. Billy is currently pursuing a degree at SUNY Cobleskill in Early Childhood Education with the desire to one day teach at the School. Billy is a talented musician, and enjoys singing and playing songs with the kids. Faith is also very important in his life and being able to share the love of Jesus with the students at the After-School program is the best part of his day!*

### **Advisory Committee**

#### **SUPC**

Arlene Price  
Linda Mencucci  
Jean Sparks (Alt)

#### **SRC**

Liza Toberg  
Jodi DeJong  
Jessie Griffen (Alt)

### **Designated Treasurer**

Bernice Barton

