

THE KERK

St. John's Reformed Church, 126 Old Post Road North, Upper Red Hook, New York 12571

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April 2021

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The Pastor's Notebook

HUMUSY BREEZES

“The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning – Great is your faithfulness.”

Lam. 3:22-23

During the mornings of early Spring, I enjoy tremendously when I am awakened to the wonderful humus smell of southerly, warm breezes through our bedroom window, wafted to my waking nostrils. Those breezes from the Gulf of Mexico instantly fill my mind with images of flowers and sunshine and breakfasts on our deck. Just a few molecules of that humusy aroma can so affect my outlook for the day that it initiates in me an automatic positive start. I wish I could bottle that smell to use at will!

The words from the above Lamentations passage are, for me, a kind of spiritual counterpart to the wonderful Spring odor of humusy breezes. Whenever I read or hear them, they evoke a strong feeling within me of “Spring Hope.” Images of God’s wonderful faithfulness, both past and present, are triggered by the words. Whenever we have times when we feel more bogged down with struggles, tasks or worries, it is helpful to remember again the writer of Lamentations brilliant statement: **“God’s mercies are NEW every morning – Great is they faithfulness, O Lord.”** Each day is a new possibility when we trust in God’s care. These words are like a bottled elixir of God’s mercy which can encourage us on to new hopes and new dreams.



And we can all appreciate them particularly this Spring, as the vaccines are being taken and the possibilities of some return to a more normal life are lying not too far away – when we can share dinners with friends again, see our grandchildren again, do some travel anew and plan for summer excitement. And hopefully, we can watch the slowing of the flow of illness and death which has been the pall under which we have lived for a year. So as April comes upon us, let us take an elixir of Humusy breezes of Spring and remember: **The Steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end: they are new every morning; GREAT IS YOUR FAITHFULNESS O LORD!**

Shalom,

Pastor Don

FATIH AND EDUCATION

Tuesday morning Bible Study is back to meeting in person. Copies of Year D are available in Desiree Albizu's mailbox, or she can mail them out to anyone who needs one. John Roberts hopes to get a couple evening dates on the calendar for Bible study sessions via Zoom in the month to come.



Children's Ministries

Easter resources will be mailed out to each child/family. A spring unit will be the next mailing. Perhaps we will be able to have a summer program outside under the tent. If you would like to help with this, please let Desiree Albizu know, albizu@gtel.net or text (518) 965-7538.



Book Club

The Book Club will meet on Monday, April 19 at 10 a.m. in the fellowship hall. April's book will be The Chilbury Ladies' Choir: The Novel by Jennifer Ryan. May's selection is The Gown: A Novel of the Royal Wedding. Jennifer Robson is the author. The tentative meeting date is May 10.

RE-OPENING COMMITTEE

The Re-Opening Committee is working with the Tech Team to prepare for a hybrid Easter worship - in person as well as offering worship via Zoom and then YouTube afterwards.

Sunday worship bulletins and new lists of items needed for the food pantry are available on the church website.

Palms will be left outside the education wing on Saturday, March 27 if you would like to swing by and pick up some for you and/or your family. The rest of the palms will be available the next day on Palm Sunday.

There will be a registration form for those who plan to attend Easter Sunday service on the Church website. You may also call the Church office after March 21.

The Tech Team continues to work on improving the quality of worship audio and visuals. A new laptop is needed to replace a personal one. They would like to train a few volunteers to help with worship so that the burden doesn't fall on the same people week after week.

The Committee members pondered how vaccinations will affect our future with hopes that by fall we may return to some sort of normalcy.

EASTER FLOWERS

As we did for Christmas, the Worship Committee is asking that interested people provide their own flowers for the front of the sanctuary for the Easter Sunday worship service, April 4.

Please mark your name on the flowers if you plan to pick them up after the service or in the days following Easter.

Plants may be dropped off during Holy Week, but please do not place them in the sanctuary in advance of Easter morning. A table will be set up in the fellowship hall for the flowers.

There will also be a sheet on the table where you can include a dedication in honor of or memory of loved ones in the Easter bulletin. You could also email the Church Office with such a request. We look forward to seeing all the beautiful plants in the sanctuary on Easter morning.

SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE

The last update from your Search Committee stated that we had completed the CHURCH PROFILE to be distributed to those ministerial candidates requesting one. We also have asked that the St. John's job posting be added to the websites of the RCA, the Theological Seminaries, the Regional Synod of NY, and the Classis clerks.

The next step for a prospective candidate is to complete a MINISTER'S PROFILE FORM. This form, like a resume, gives him/her the opportunity to tell us all about themselves; who they are, where they come from, where they went to college/seminary, and what previous experience they have.

The second half of the MINISTER'S PROFILE, called Reflection, digs deeper into the beliefs and core values of the applicant. Why did you enter into the ministry? What are your strengths? What are your weaknesses? Who are your mentors? What are your hopes for the Church at large? How would you theologically address the issues facing our contemporary world? Describe your vision and hopes for the Church over the next 5-10 years. Provide us church related/professional references.

Following the MINISTER'S PROFILE, the Search Committee carefully chooses FIRST INTERVIEW questions that get very specific to St. John's. We will use many of the suggested questions from the Search Committee Handbook but, most importantly, we will ask the candidate questions based upon the input you, the St. John's congregation, provided in the ST. JOHN'S REFORMED CHURCH SELF STUDY 2020. Candidates that we consider to be finalists will be further interviewed using SECOND INTERVIEW questions.

Stay tuned for further information on Search Committee progress in subsequent issues of the KERK.
Search Chair,

Glenn Countryman

CONSISTORY NOTES

March 18, 2021

Pastor Don opened the meeting with prayer.

The agenda and the minutes from the February meeting were approved.

Pastoral report: James gave a written report to the Elders prior to tonight as the Elders did not meet. Pastor Don reported it was nice to have people back in the sanctuary for service last week. The mid week meditations will continue on YouTube probably until the summer. The last segment in the "Art of Caring Visits" series will go on YouTube this week. There maybe more if he can't fit everything he wants to say in this last segment.

A summer seminar is possible on the parables.

Susan Vitolo reported on responses to her congregational calls. In her calls, she told everyone about the services being on Zoom and YouTube.

Financial review: the monthly review, balance sheet and profit and loss were all received.

Committee reports were presented:

Faith and Education

Finance

Reopening: The question was asked if we would be opening to more people. Linda reported there have been no new capacity guidelines from the CDC.

Technology: Serena was thanked for updating the website. This is especially good from Search's perspective with possible candidates checking it out.

Serena said she can add pages for each group if they would want as there is only a list of groups now. A motion was approved to accept all reports.

Linda volunteered to do the closing prayer for the next meeting in April.

The meeting was closed in prayer by Susan Vitolo.

Respectfully submitted,
Shari Juranic, Clerk of Consistory

SCUDDER CIRCLE NEWS

The Scudder Circle will meet Thursday, April 1 at 10 a.m. in the fellowship hall. As the meeting falls on Maundy Thursday, the program will be a contemplative one with scripture and prayer. There will be a short business meeting at the start.

Scudder Circle continues doing work for missions via members' dues and donations. The group supports each Mission of the Month and our Church missionaries at Christmastime. Donations can be dropped off or mailed into the Church Office or made via Givelify online at any time. Please label them for Scudder Circle.

Scudder Circle is open to all the women associated with St. John's.

Technology Update

Due to the generous donations from the congregation, **we have raised \$3575** as of 3/22/2021. This is outstanding and the Technology team is truly grateful.

With that money, we have purchased a laptop to capture the video and audio for zoom. This PC has to be somewhat high end.

We purchased a very nice Video camera with 20X zoom lens, remote control, and a video capture card. Once this is setup, the picture, zooming and panning will improve dramatically.

We also purchased a pair of noise cancelling headphones so that the host can listen to the zoom service without noise interference.

Once we install all these upgrades, we should have a very professional setup for zoom services.

Pete Fenaroli,
Technology Team



to the gentlemen who have been doing cleanup in the cemetery;
to everyone who helped Pastor Eric and Nancy pack up;
to Pete, Eileen and Marion who faithfully show up to man the Food Pantry and cover for each other when they can't;
to all those who donate items or money to keep the Food Pantry stocked and running.



The sacrament of baptism was administered to **Ulrich Scott Buring**, son of Annamarie Woelm and Jeffrey Buring, at the worship service on March 7. Pastor Eric was able to baptize Ulrich just as he did Ulrich's three older sisters!



Serena Winchell and Michael Fleming
who got engaged March 12th.

CONCERT

An Easter Celebration

April 4

The St. John's Choir, Handbell Choir, and more. Program to include music by Benjamin Britten and Everett Titcomb.



Deadline for the **May Kerk** is **April 10**.

Personal ads of no more than 3 lines will be accepted for \$1 per issue. Business ads in the form of a business card to be photocopied will cost \$5 per issue.

If you would like to receive the Kerk by e-mail (a little more reliably on time than the paper version being mailed to your home) e-mail the church and let us know;

office@stjohnsreformed.org.

SERMON TEXTS AND TITLES FOR APRIL

MAUNDY THURSDAY- TENNEBRAE SERVICE : APRIL 1

Lessons: Jonah 2, Matt. 12:38-42
Sermon "Sign of Solidarity"

EASTER SUNDAY: APRIL 4

Lessons: Luke 8:49-56 ; 24:1-11
Sermon "The Joke Is on Us"

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTERTIDE: APRIL 11

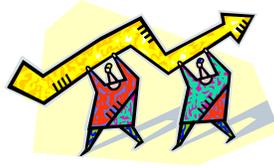
Lessons: Heb. 12:1,2; Matt 28:1-12
Sermon "GO ON AHEAD!"

THIRD SUNDAY

OF EASTERTIDE: APRIL 18

Lessons: Ps.131,Philippians 2:1-12
Sermon "Easter Put into Practice"

St. John's Reformed Church



Financial Report
February 2021

Income	\$ 17,165.46
Expenses	<u>\$ 13,663.54</u>
	+ \$ 3,501.92

Year To Date
January - February 2021

Income	\$ 33,188.18
Expenses	<u>\$ 28,169.62</u>
	+ \$ 5,018.56

Did you know?

\$3,575 has already been received since the request went out for donations to help upgrade our Audio/Visual equipment for better Zoom and YouTube broadcasts. The Finance Committee appreciates the funds given, which gives us a good start on what is needed for Phase II. (Money from the Endowment Fund has been used to cover Phase 1.) The donations also show us that many people see the value of the project, as we do. We feel that the recording of worship and concerts is important now, and into the future. One member commented that we have been talking for years about handicap access, and this is a solution. Our church has not been able to find a feasible physical solution, but now we have a technical one! While not everyone has access to this kind of programming yet, many really appreciate it. It is good to be able to worship this way if we cannot attend on a particular Sunday, or to view a service or event that we could not attend.

You might also like to know we have been receiving contributions in those extra envelopes, besides the Regular Offering (white envelopes.)

Denominational Assessment: as explained in last month's Kerk, St. John's has an obligation to the denomination of \$8,202, or \$108 per active member. During January and February, members contributed \$1,637 to help pay this big bill.

Mission of the Month.. \$315 has been received. This will all go out to the missions designated by the Mission and Outreach Committee.

Benevolence: Members have given \$255 to help support the missionaries that St. John's has designated in the budget.

Initial Offering: \$140 has been contributed toward the cost of our Envelope System.

Thank you to everyone who donated to the February Mission of the Month. \$175 will go toward Gifts of Hope. An additional \$50 was collected for January's M-O-M, The Food Pantry.



Shepherds Page

April 2021

FEED MY SHEEP

A dear friend of mine was always telling stories and jokes. I was always amazed at his ability to remember them all and always wondered where and how he got most of them! I know I have a short memory span but this one story I remember so I am hoping I get it right. A lot of his stories were funny, some inspirational. So here goes.

One day when St. Peter was bringing a few new spirits thru the Pearly Gates, he advised them up here we eat only with these spoons. He gave each of them a spoon that was almost a yard long. They each looked at their spoons and shook their heads in disbelief and wandered off looking bewildered. Awhile later St. Peter went to check on them and each of them criticized St. Peter “how do you think we can feed ourselves when we cannot reach our mouths, these spoons are too long!” St. Peter just said to them “when you are hungry enough, you’ll figure it out.” Well a little more time passed and again St. Peter went to check on his new flock and when he saw them he told them “I see you found the answer.” For they realized if they were to be fed with these long spoons, that they feed each other and in turn they will be fed.

The other day I was thinking about a verse in the Bible that states “Feed My Sheep” and right away I thought of Jim’s story of feeding each other to be fed. I guess in more ways than one, we can be fed in so many ways; not only the idea of food and drink, but also the idea of feeding our minds, hearts, and souls. So when you feel down or in despair, perhaps try to feed others with your words, acts of comfort, kindness, support, and prayers. This will help you to be fed with love and friendship.

At least I’d like to think when it was said to “feed my sheep” it was more of a spiritual feeding. Remember we are all shepherds and looking out for our sheep in so many ways.

May we all be fed with God’s love. God Bless.
Respectfully Joann Fisher

Shepherds serving St. Johns Reformed Church

Desiree Albizu	Stan Tremper	
Kayla Bell	Nancy Finkle	Linda Neilson
Joann Fisher	Denise Gilhooly	Marie Votava
Terry Laibach	Judy Rockefeller	Eileen Zeliph

Church Calendar

Worship Service

Sundays **10 a.m. in person** and you can also join live on Zoom.

You can continue to visit “**St. John’s in Red Hook**” on YouTube for the Sunday service also!
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88588306134?pwd=eW92WFgzUXdjSElwOG5KcFVBZGV6dz09>

Meeting ID: 885 8830 6134

Passcode: 126126

To phone in: Dial by your location

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

If you need help on a Sunday morning you can call 845-758-1184 from 9:45-9:55 a.m.

The bulletin for each service can be found on the website: www.stjohnsreformed.org

Shari Juranic, Administrator

Mon, Wed, Fri. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Thurs. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Michele Zagorski, Financial Consultant

Thurs. 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Every other Thursday

Food Pantry Distribution

remains outside only, distribution from kitchen

Mon. 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Wed. 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Handbell rehearsal

Mondays, 7:30 p.m. in the fellowship hall

Bible Study

Tues. 10:15 a.m. in the fellowship hall

Choir Rehearsal

Tues. on Zoom, 7:30 to 8:15 p.m.

Mid Week Meditations from Rev. Dr. Donald J. Heringa on YouTube, Wednesdays .

You can go to “St. John’s in Red Hook” on YouTube,

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=st+john%27s+in+red+hook or you can go to the website, www.stjohnsreformed.org, and click on the link to YouTube.

Scudder Circle meeting

Thurs. April 1, 10 a.m. in the fellowship hall

Tenebrae Service

Thurs. April 1, 7:30 p.m. in person and on Zoom

Good Friday mediations

Fri. April 2, available on *St. John’s in Red Hook* YouTube Channel

Easter Sunrise Service

Sun. April 4, 6:45 a.m.

Concert Series; Easter Celebration

Sun. April 4, 4 p.m. available on *St. John's in Red Hook* YouTube Channel

Finance Committee meeting

Mon. April 12, 7 p.m. on Zoom

Property Committee meeting

Tues. April 13, 7 p.m.

Elders meeting

Thurs. April 15, 7 p.m. on Zoom

Consistory meeting

Thurs. April 15, 7:30 p.m. on Zoom

Book Lover's Club

Mon. April 19, 10 a.m. fellowship hall

The Chilburg Ladies Choir by Jennifer Ryan