

THE KERK

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

Phone: 845-758-1184; Fax: 845-758-3675; email: office@stjohnsreformed.org

March 2021

VOL. 55, NO. 3

The Pastor's Notebook

The Owl's Passionate Call

"I Heard The Owl Call My Name"...is a wonderful book and movie from the 1970's about a Canadian Anglican priest assigned to a Native Canadian village way up near the Alaskan coast. When the priest first walked into the small mission church, he looked upon a crucifix of Christ portrayed as a carved-wood Native American man hanging on the cross. The priest immediately felt a need to change that crucifix to a traditional European style presentation of Jesus on the cross, and that just started him on a quest to change the mission church from native faith traditions into traditional Anglican Church customs from Toronto. He thought it was his Christian duty as leader to "civilize" the people to the British-Anglican ways.



The movie portrays his many efforts to coerce these ancient people who had developed their own Native American customs for understanding the Christian faith into accepting the Anglo customs with which he was comfortable. But, one day, he "heard an owl call his name," a native tradition that an owl would seem to call specifically to a person when that person was nearing death. Sure enough, the priest was struck with a terminal cancer.

When the Native villagers in the small community learned about it, these people poured out tremendous love for him. And as he experienced the total depth of the native people's compassion, he finally recognized that their customs were helping them express a real, deep and emotionally intimate, loving response to him that was far more dramatically expressing God's love in his last days of life than he could ever find in the rational, orderly, Anglican-Canadian way he was trying to push. He died in loving arms and feeling the Divine love from these people on his way to glory.

Jesus calls upon all his people to serve God's primary goal of love – love for God and each other and love for ourselves – deeply, compassionately, nurturing from whatever customs have developed in our traditions. And it is what the Season of Lent is all about: following Jesus' own self-giving "Passion" on the cross for the salvation of God's children and world. May our celebrations of Lent and Easter, through choir, sermons, liturgy, and family, (even during COVID) empower us to our ultimate purpose: greater depths of love for God and all others – in the name of the "Passionate" Lord who went to the cross for you and me!

Shalom,
Pastor Don

Important Notices

“St. John’s in Red Hook” on YouTube

We are going back to in person services (limited seating, masks, social distancing and COVID protocols) on March 7. Services will continue on Zoom at 10 a.m also and be available later on YouTube.

FATIH AND EDUCATION

BIBLE STUDY & WINTER WEATHER

Tuesday morning Bible Study met a couple times in February via Zoom due to bad weather. It was nice to be able to include a couple people who haven't been able to participate in person. Unfortunately this excludes a couple people who faithfully attend when the group meets 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 is planning a couple evening Bible study sessions via Zoom after Bible study is able to meet again in person on Tuesday mornings.



Children's Ministries

A third mailing of Sunday School resources were mailed out for Lent to each child/family. Lessons for Easter will be in the next mailing.



Book Club

The Book Club will meet on Monday, March 15 at 10 a.m. in the fellowship hall. The March selection is Crow Lake by Mary Lawson. April's book will be The Chilbury Ladies' Choir: The Novel by Jennifer Ryan. The tentative date is April 12.

RE-OPENING COMMITTEE

The Re-Opening Committee has turned its attention towards Lent, Holy Week, and Easter services and what they may look like this spring. Some services may be hybrid - offering in-person services, via Zoom and on YouTube. Others will only be available on YouTube to view at your own convenience. Be watching for announcements in the bulletin and in the April KERK.

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

The newly formed Tech Team continues to work on improving the quality of worship audio and visuals. All on the Re-Opening Committee agree that the music has been outstanding this winter thanks to the efforts of our Director of Music, Edward Forstman, Matt Fenaroli, the choir, and numerous individuals who have been accompanying them with musical instruments.

At the last meeting, the committee members sent a resolution to the Consistory to re-open the church to in-person worship beginning in March. A second resolution concerned offering a hybrid experience for Easter.

SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Search Committee has put the final touches on the Church Profile which will now be distributed to ministerial candidates along with other materials about the Church and the community of Red Hook.

At the last meeting, we completed a job posting which will now be posted on the RCA website and on the websites of the New Brunswick Theological Seminary in NJ and Western Seminary in Michigan. It will also be shared with the Regional Synod of New York and various Classis clerks.

If a minister or seminary student is interested in candidating at our church, s/he will reach out and obtain the Church Profile and all the other resources we have gathered for her or him. Then we received his or her profile to review. If the Search Committee members think this candidate may be a good match for St. John's, the Search members will check out the candidate's references via phone calls. If all reports are good, the Search chair, Glen Countryman, will set up an interview. The initial interviews will be done via Zoom.

Thank you for your patience with this process. The committee members are trying to be thorough and faithful as they seek the candidate that God has planned for us.

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, Sunday 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 should also email the Church Office with such a request.**

We look forward to seeing all the beautiful plants in the sanctuary on Easter morning.

CONSISTORY NOTES February 18, 2021

Pastor Don opened the meeting in prayer.

Elders report: the membership rolls were reviewed and edited.

Pastor Don will be doing a 3 part Lenten seminar series entitled "The Art of Caring Visiting" which will start on YouTube February 24. He has set this up at the request of the Shepherds for training but is available for Consistory members also.

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

Committee reports were received.

Faith and Education. Finance committee: a question was asked about the second PPP loan. Finance would be reviewing at its next meeting. **Reopening committee.** **Search committee:** had its first hit on the job posting. **Technology committee:** wireless mic can't be fixed.

Answers to the Consistorial questions were approved.

Consistory approved moving to a hybrid worship service starting March 7, assuming the covid19 infection rate

numbers continue to be declining or static. This will include Easter, April 4, and reservations will be required for the in person Easter service.

Consistory approve funding for Phase 1 Audio of \$1,800 out of endowment fund distribution for seed money. (Finance is in Full Support of Tech) and moving forward with Phase 2, to be completed by Palm Sunday. The complete upgrade has been divided into 3 phases. An email/letter will be sent to the congregation asking for donations for a target total of \$3500. Any funds that we don't use to be put in an account for future upgrades, as needed.

A Zoom meeting farewell was discussed for Pastor Eric and Nancy. When it can be arranged and email invitation will be sent out to the congregation.

Respectfully submitted,
Shari Juranic, Clerk of Consistory

SCUDDER CIRCLE NEWS **Thursday, March 4 at 10 a.m. via Zoom.**

The Scudder Circle will meet Thursday, March 4 at 10 a.m. via Zoom. The officers are hoping that the group can meet in person in April. The meeting date for April will be determined at the meeting. The April meeting falls on Maundy Thursday.

Scudder Circle hopes to continue doing work for missions via members' dues and donations. The group plans to support each Mission of the Month and then our Church missionaries at Christmastime. Donations can be dropped off or mailed into the church office or made via Givelify online at any time. Don't forget to label them for Scudder Circle.

Scudder Circle is open to all the women associated with St. John's. Contact President Mary Bayer at [<meb1rh@citlink.net>](mailto:meb1rh@citlink.net) if you would like the Zoom link sent to you for the March meeting.

MISSION AND OUTREACH

Dear Friends in the Mid-Hudson Classis,

First of all, thank you for your ongoing support of the work in Oman. Your prayers and your financial partnership mean very much to me and Erica. The kids are back to school after Christmas break. They go in person half the week and attend via zoom half the week. It's about 70 degrees here, it being winter! I do not miss snow, I have to confess.

The Covid situation in Oman is pretty good at the moment, but they are watching closely the international situation and taking extra precautions. The work in the Christian community here has been frenetic and rich this month. We've been working hard in re-opening the church campuses for worship for the nearly 100 congregations under our supervision and care. All is going well. A slow start, which is just fine with me. The government provided us kindly with both permission to re-open and precaution guidelines for us to follow. They are rigorous, but not hard once you get the hang of it. It's basically the same as what they are doing in the mosques. Really similar to what you all have been doing. We have in-person and hybrid services as well as purely only services.

One year ago I started a process with the RCA Global Mission to have a 360 degree review of the overall mission with the Protestant Church in Oman. Times have changed a lot since the church was founded in its present form in 1970. Global Mission's principles now clearly state among other things that in RCA Global Mission "We believe in breaking the cycle of foreign dependency and paternalism by promoting interdependent, Christ-centered cooperatives that culminate in locally sufficient, locally supported, and locally

sustainable, faithful transformation." This month and these present weeks we are beginning to engage local leaders in the PCO about what that can look like for us all together in the 21st century. I am excited about this challenging work, and wonder what the results are going to be. Following down this road of exploration will be a primary goal for me for the next 5 months.

Please keep the leaders here in your prayers. Please keep the PCO in your prayers too. Re-gathering the community after 10 months of not being together is a big challenge. With the economic changes in Oman these days so many workers from other countries are leaving Oman. The Christian community is in the midst of some profound changes, which we do not yet fully grasp.

Josh

MISSION AND OUTREACH

Mission of Hope

This year's Lenten Season begins February 17, with Ash Wednesday, and continues for 40 days until April 3. Traditionally, many people think of Lent as the season of giving up or abstaining from something to put us in a self-reflecting state of mind and be closer to God. **In recent years, however, our church has decided instead of giving up something, to give to others, in the form of the RCA's Gifts of Hope Mission.**

This mission is a tangible way to provide basic human necessities like sustainable food, education, medicine, and job empowerment. **For the months of February and March, our mission of the month will be *Gifts of Hope*.**

You can donate directly on their website <https://giftofhope.rca.org/> or designate a donation as MOM on your mailed-in check or Givelify app.

There are many amazing choices in their catalog; from **giving chickens for \$25 to supporting a doctor in the Amazon for \$250.**

Involve your entire family by showing them the choices available in the catalog and work out a goal to reach it. Decorate an old mason jar or jug to be **the Hope Fund** to be counted at the end of the two months.

Hold a competition between family members to see who can raise the most.

It is an inside joke but I love every year raising enough money to give a cow ☺ (\$500 by the way).

May your season of Lent be the Season of Hope.



to the family and friends of **Jack Doyle** who died February 16.



Bob Haan for check to be sure the

defibrillator in the fellowship hall is in working order;

Glenn Countryman and Hop Michael for keeping up with the snow and ice;

Edward, Jane, the choir and the Handbell Choir for the music to keep us going during worship;

Edward for the lyrics so we can sing along at home;

The "tech team" for getting it better every week!

For those of you who check out the Food Pantry needs and continue to drop off food.

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.



Additional Thank You's To My Church Family

I would like to thank my dear friend Joann Fisher for helping me out with the Shepherds page for the past few months during all my tribulations. I really appreciate it.

I would like to thank all of you who prayed for my husband Ron to have his knee surgery and then for his surgery. Also for the cards that were sent.

I'm relieved to say it went well and he is getting back to normal after having therapy. Thanks for praying for me too.

I would like to thank Pastor Don for reaching out to me during this difficult time and all the prayers too.

I can't thank all of you enough for those who called, prayed, and sent cards to my sister while in the hospital.

I'm overwhelmed and blessed to have such a church family since her death.

The cards, calls, words, prayers, and those that attended her wake and funeral, have been tremendous. My sister loved serving her church by being a shepherd and by serving the coffee during fellowship hour. Please don't ever forget her smile.

Thank you all from the bottom of my heart and please stay safe and well.

Eileen Zeliph

We were all very touched by the prayers and cards from the congregation during mom's final weeks with us. One of her last public outings was to St. John's Church to hear a concert arrangement by Edward Forstman which she enjoyed immensely. She loved singing in the choir and missed seeing all her friends at church. We like to imagine her belting her heart out in the Heavenly Choir now!

Gratefully,
The Laibach Family



Deadline for the **April Kerk** is **March 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 SERIES

"WHO IS THIS JESUS?"

SUNDAY, MARCH 7

Text: Isa. 52:13-53:6; Mark 15:33-39

Sermon: "The Suffering Servant"

SUNDAY, MARCH 14

Text: John 17:1-5; Hebrews 1:1-12

Sermon: "The Very Stamp of God"

SUNDAY, MARCH 21

Text: Ephesians 3:14-21; Matthew 11:28-30

Sermon: "The One Facing the Abyss"

SUNDAY, MARCH 28 - PALM SUNDAY

Text: Matthew 21:1-11

Sermon: "The Big Parade"

A Lenten Virtual Study Series

3 Seminars About

"The Art of Caring Visiting"

Seminar One: Biblical Shepherding Care

Available on St. John's YouTube
Channel during the week of
February 22, 2021

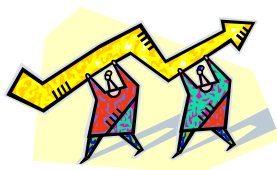
Seminar Two: Loving Techniques of Listening

Available on St. John's YouTube
Channel during the week of
March 8, 2021

Seminar Three: The Ambience of Acceptance

Available on St. John's YouTube
Channel during the week of
March 22, 2021

St. John's Reformed Church



Financial Report

January 2021

Income	\$ 16,022.72
Expenses	<u>\$ 14,506.08</u>
	+ \$ 1,516.64

Year To Date

January 2021

Income	\$ 16,022.72
Expenses	<u>\$ 14,506.08</u>
	\$ 1516.64

Did you know..

The Denominational Assessment is an amount of money paid to The Reformed Church of America each year. This amount varies every year, and is based on the number of confessing members in the congregation, as well as the anticipated expenses of the denomination. The total annual assessment is made up of three amounts: a Classis assessment, a Regional Synod assessment, and a General Synod assessment. The money collected is used to support the ministries and the operating expenses on each level.

For 2021, St. John's share is \$8,302.01 - a big item in our budget. We pay this in four quarterly payments of about \$2,075.00. As you saw in the January Kerk, St. John's share amounts to \$108 per active member this year. We are very grateful to all of you who have already contributed toward this expense. As of January 31, you had donated \$989.00 to help pay our commitment. If you have not yet given toward this, please know that any amount will help. You can use the green envelope in your giving envelope box, or just indicate it is for your Denominational Assessment, whatever way you choose to send it to the church.

We should also note that the \$989 given for Denominational Assessment is reported as income on this page. That money and more will be an expense later this quarter. If we deduct that amount from the income, the difference between our income and expenses is a mere \$527.64. Please give whatever you can to help meet our operating expenses and continue our ministries this year.

Thank you to everyone who donated to the January Mission of the Month. \$90 was donated the Food Pantry.

You don't have to use a special Mission of the Month envelope to donate. Use your regular envelope and just put the amount you wish to donate on the Missions line.

A Call to the Congregation:

We will be reopening services at St. John's in March with a limited number in attendance with adherence to COVID-19 restrictions. Consistory realizes that Zoom and YouTube will be an important part of the future of any successful Church. Zoom and YouTube are very attractive to people who are homebound, in nursing homes, or away from home. They are just a mouse click away from being able to attend a service.

Our current Zoom services are produced using Church and borrowed equipment. The quality of the audio and video is limited by the equipment we have. Acts Audio Visual has given us a proposal to upgrade our current equipment to make it more capable of streaming live performances whether they are Church services or one of our wonderful concerts that Edward provides. Our intention is to offer Zoom and YouTube streaming for all services and events in the Sanctuary. We have identified 3 stages of upgrades with an approximate cost of \$5500.

The Finance Committee has proposed, and Consistory has approved the use of \$1800 from the Endowment Fund Distribution for 2021 to get started on Phase 1. Phase 1 primary addresses improving the sound captured from the organ and some equipment to help Jane and Edward. Phase 2 addresses equipment required for Zoom such as a camcorder, tripod, PC, and related connectors. Additionally, Tom and Carol will provide training. Phase 3 addresses a 2nd PC that is required and headphones. The Technology Committee is asking the congregation to help fund the remaining Phases. If you feel that this ministry is of value and you have the means, we are asking for a donation targeted for Audio/Video upgrades. Any donation of any amount is appreciated. With your support we can continue to provide high quality services and concerts both live and via streaming services such as Zoom and YouTube now and for many years.

Thank you in advance for your support.

Pete Fenaroli

Church Calendar

Worship Service

Sundays **10 a.m. in person starting on March 7** and you can also join live on Zoom.

<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

You can continue to visit “**St. John's in Red Hook**” on **YouTube** for the Sunday service also!

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. March. 4, 10 a.m. on Zoom

Finance Committee meeting
Mon. March. 8, 7 p.m. on Zoom

Book Lover’s Club
Mon. March. 15, 10 a.m. fellowship hall
Crow Lake by Mary Lawson

Elders meeting
Thurs. March 18, 7 p.m. on Zoom

Consistory meeting
Thurs. March 18, 7:30 p.m. on Zoom

Search Committee meeting
Wed. March 24, 7 p.m. on Zoom



Shepherds Page

March 2021

MY DEAR SISTER NANCY

As many of you know I lost my dear sister Nancy on January 21, 2021. She had been in the hospital since November 27, 2020. She was admitted to Northern Dutchess with a mild heart attack and after a few days taken to Vassar for further testing. After further tests were done and they found how sick she was they decided to send her to Columbia Presbyterian in New York City which is rated high in the nation for heart conditions. My sister was a very sick lady with both heart and kidney disease. She never complained about not feeling good to her family. She ended up having the heart surgery or she probably wouldn't have lasted as long as she did. She had two valves and three bypasses and was in ICU for at least a month or more. After the surgery, she had several complications such as pneumonia, blood infections, and ended up having a trach put in so she was unable to talk.

I never got to say good by to her. The hospital was allowing visitors with limited hours. My nephew and his girlfriend were visiting her since they were living close enough to do so. I was so afraid of getting the covid that I hesitated to go to see her. I finally decided to go and I was supposed to see her that weekend. The last week the doctors mentioned that in another week they were planning to send my sister to a rehab facility but she needed to go to a place that was equipped to handle trachs, food tubes, and kidney dialysis. I even called places to try to get her closer to home. This was on Tuesday and I did tell my sister at that time how much that I loved her and how much I missed her. On Thursday night I received a phone call that she had passed and I couldn't believe it.

I feel lost without her as you all know she never learned to drive so since my parents have been passed for over twenty five years I have been taking her places so we were always together. I considered her my side kick and I have always been there for her but had no idea she was so sick. She fought a tough fight to the end as she never wanted to die but I tried to convince her it was all a part of life and God was the only one that could choose when it was our time to be called home. God has a plan for her so she is at peace and no longer suffering. All of those that have gone before us is being reunited and someday I will be reunited with all of them too. I will never forget her or stop loving her. A grieving heart is a loving heart.

Thank you for listening to my story.
God Bless All of You

Eileen Zeliph- Shepherd Coordinator

Shepherds Ministry serving St. Johns Reformed Church

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