

THE KERK

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

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May 2021

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The Pastor's Notebook

THE SERVING MAPLE

"I have come that they may have life, and have it abundantly" John 10:10

Just before my teen years, my family moved from a Chicago apartment to a house in the suburbs. The house was situated on a typical, cleared lot and the first order of business was to plant a nice maple tree for shade. That maple served us wonderfully by providing a roost for birds, a centerpiece for our yard landscaping and, of course, shade in the hot summer.

One day, however, something happened to that "serving maple" which drastically changed its life. It was struck by lightning and lost half of its bushy crown. Half of its shade gone, half its perches gone, half its service to us and the birds was gone. Yet it continued with its diminished capacity to serve – though it always seemed somehow sad that it had lost its ability to serve fully.

As we see the way of our Lord Jesus Christ, we see the absolute example of "diminished service to the death" of which my serving maple was but a pale symbol. Our Lord was struck by bolts of lightning throughout his ministry through attacks, accusations, denials and betrayals. Furthermore, they intensified up to the ultimate betrayal of death, even death on the cross. Yet our Lord continued to serve with amazing stamina and resolution throughout. He was the ultimate "Suffering Serving maple" and brought to the whole world the wonderful shade of the Father's grace and forgiveness to give abundant life, full and free, to all who seek him, .



In this continuing Eastertide season, let us respond again to that offer of abundant life by the serving Lord Jesus. As we move toward the summer, let us continue to worship and serve our Lord, as He has always served us. Join us in church or zoom in our worship, continue giving for the needs of the church ministry and participate in "being Jesus presence" in the world through deeds of love and mercy, by which the heavenly kingdom comes!"

God bless all of you this May! Shalom!

Pastor Don Heringa

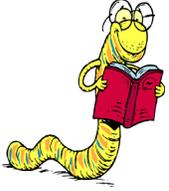
FATIH AND EDUCATION

CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES



Spring curriculum units were mailed out to each child/family. We plan to have a children's program on May 23, the Day of Pentecost. Children ages 3 years through fifth grade will be dismissed after the Children's Message in worship. If you would like to help with the children's program in the months ahead, please let Desiree Albizu know, albizu@gtel.net or text (518) 965-7538.

UPCOMING BOOK CLUB READS



The Book Club will meet on Monday, May 10 at 10 a.m. in the fellowship hall. May's selection is The Gown: A Novel of the Royal Wedding. Jennifer Robson is the author. The book is about the wedding gown of Queen Elizabeth with timely photos due to the death of the Prince of Edinburgh.

June's book will be The Dutch House: A Novel by Ann Patchett. Date TBA. Summertime's read is a long one, well over 600 pages, My Dear Hamilton: A Novel of Eliza Schuyler Hamilton. The authors are Stephanie Dray and Laura Kamoie.

RE-OPENING COMMITTEE

The Re-Opening Committee continues to work with the Tech Team to provide the best worship service we can with the equipment that we have. Updates are being made all the time. Feedback is welcome. Some week's we learn you can't hear the organ well. Others it may be that the choir members' voices are muffled.

The Tech Team is seeking a few volunteers to help during worship. If you could help even a couple times a month, it would help the Team spread the work around.

Sunday worship bulletins and new lists of items needed for the food pantry are available on the church website. You may want to visit the website right before you open your Zoom link. You can then access the bulletin if you keep your internet server open.

The Committee members know that many in the congregation have received one or both vaccinations. For now we will continue to follow all CDC and local regulations regarding mask and social distancing. Our hopes are that by fall we may return to some sort of normal regarding worship and Sunday School classes.

CONSISTORY NOTES

April 15, 2021

Pastor Don opened the meeting with prayer.

The agenda, and the minutes from the March meeting were approved.

Pastoral Report: was submitted to the Elders.

Financial review: monthly review, balance sheet and profit and loss reports were excepted.

Committee Reports:

Faith and Education

Finance

Mission and Outreach: April Mission of the Month is Red Hook Responds. There is a link on the St. John's website to Red Hook Responds.

Reopening committee: it was reported that there is a core group for in person worship and also one for Zoom worship. The topic of getting people to return to in person worship was discussed again.

Search committee: the minister of word and sacrament position has been posted with the Albany Synod and six or seven resume's have been received. Only two people have filled out the RCA profile form which the Search Committee has asked applicants to fill out and return.

Technology: still learning, still trying to resolve organ issues for Zoom and YouTube.

Need volunteers to help during the services.

Committee reports were accept.

Working recommendations and special reports:

a. Colleen will write a letter/email to the congregation with information on a "bring your own food" picnic, weather permitting, for Edward and Addie Rose Forstman on June 6th which is Edward's last day at St. John's.

b. **Resignation of the sexton:** the Administrator has notified personnel that the sexton will leave at the end of the month (April). Peter noted they are following a lead.

c. **Deacon of education replacement for Linda Search who is leaving in June.**

Her term expires at the end of 2021.

A motion was approved to ask Eileen Wambach, from the greater Consistory, who has previously served as Deacon of Education to fill Linda's unexpired term. Installation will take place on May 30th.

The meeting was closed in prayer by Linda Search.

Respectfully submitted,
Shari Kilgour Juranic,
Clerk of Consistory

SCUDDER CIRCLE NEWS Thursday, May 6 at 10 a.m.

The Scudder Circle will meet Thursday, May 6 at 10 a.m. in the fellowship hall. The program will be about friendship which we have all found so important during this pandemic. There will be a short business meeting at the start of the meeting.

Scudder Circle continues to support 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 Reformed Church.

MISSION AND OUTREACH

Thank you to everyone who donated to the February and March Mission of the Month, Gifts of Hope.

A total of \$350 was collected and will put toward the following:

Give more water with less effort-\$140, give women seeds, tools and training-\$60, Give Medical Care-\$100 and Chickens for two families-\$50.

MISSION OF THE MONTH
May and June
Shadow of His Wings Home.

The following describes what the important work that is done there:

“Shadow of His Wings Children’s Home is a program of James Project of Latin America. The purpose of the program is to serve children who have been abandoned/neglected, physically abused, sexually abused, and/or trafficked. Sometimes these children have suffered in all or multiple areas.

Every child we serve is court appointed and supervised. We are an accredited program that works with government agencies to care for these children. We have the capacity to care for almost 90 children, but currently care for approximately 70. This number varies based on funding and natural turnover.

Shadow of His Wings is not an orphanage, but a home for children in need. Our purpose is to serve the children that we receive, until their biological family is ready and able to care for them themselves. Because there is no functioning foster care program in Guatemala, homes like ours serve as temporary foster homes for these children. And just like the foster care system in North America, some kids stay with us longer than others.

The most important thing is not how long a child is put into our care, but how well we serve that child while he/she is with us. We cannot control when a child leaves our home, but we can guarantee they will have been cared for in the best way possible. Each child is well fed, well educated, well disciplined, and much loved. That is our purpose and our promise.”

Your contribution to the Mission of the Month would help support the people that do the work and the children that benefit so greatly from it. Thank you for any contribution you can make, great or small, it all makes a difference in the lives of these children who so desperately need someone on their side.

Kate Peterson, Mission and Outreach



Thank you to all who provided flowers for Easter worship. They added beauty to our sanctuary that special morning;

The Red Hook Rotary for the donation of personal care items to the Food Pantry;
Pete, Eileen and Marian who continue to man the Food Pantry every week;
Everyone who has dropped off items or donated to the Food Pantry.



Dear Friends at St. John’s,

We thank you for your prayers and cards after the passing of our grandson Jordan. Your kindness has sustained us through these difficult times.

We are grateful.

Blessings,
Dave and Marvella Hondorp

Thank you for a lovely Easter Sunrise Service!
Sue Henninger



to the family and friends of **Gelletia Bartles**, Steve Bartles' mom, who died April 3.



Deadline for the **June Kerk** is **May 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.

CONCERT

Presenting: *THAW: Music of Revitalisation*. Soprano Gileann Tan, mezzo-soprano Hailey McAvoy, and pianist Bethany Pietroniro present works of Handel, Ravel, Debussy, Brahms, and others in a prerecorded concert which originally premiered in April and will be receiving an encore performance, **digitally hosted by St. John's, on May 9 at 4 pm**. The program meditates on themes of isolation and reentrance into community-- themes which the artists have been reflecting on throughout the pandemic. It is our privilege to share this concert with you!

Sermon Texts and Titles for May:

Sunday, May 2

Texts: Titus 3:3-8

Title: "The Personal Touch"

Mother's Day Sunday, May 9

Texts: Isaiah 66:5-14, Acts 8:26-40

Title: "The Motherly Love Of God"

Sunday, May 16

Texts: Luke 24:50-53 Ephesians 1:15-23 Title: "Under His Feet"

Pentecost Sunday, May 23

Texts: Acts 2:1-24, Eph. 2:17-22

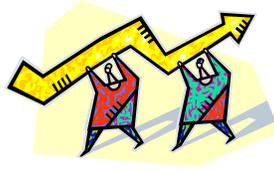
Title: "No Longer Strangers"

Trinity Sunday, May 30

Texts: Psalm 104, Matt. 6:28-30

Title: "From Chaos To Cosmos"

St. John's Reformed Church



Financial Report

March 2021

Income	\$ 26,651.99
Expenses	<u>\$ 14,421.82</u>
	+ \$ 12,230.17

Year To Date

January - March 2021

Income	\$ 59,840.17
Expenses	<u>\$ 42,591.44</u>
	+ \$ 17,248.73

Did you know?

The Finance Committee is extremely grateful to those of you who have continued to bring or send your offerings to St. John's during this Covid pandemic. We have a substantial checkbook balance, due to your giving and to the reduced expenses of an interim minister and the pandemic. However, that balance isn't a true reflection of our financial status. During the pandemic schedule, while many congregants faithfully send in their envelope offering, a significant number only give when attending or have stopped giving all together. The Finance and Search Committees are concerned about our ability to support a full time minister as we exit the pandemic and call a new minister candidate. We offer this prayer:

Heavenly Father:

The pandemic has altered our congregational support and giving base, making our ability to support a full time pastor unclear. None of us have experienced anything like the unprecedented time at hand, and yet, we're called to make financial decisions crucial to the future of this congregation. This may be new to us, but previous St. John's Congregations have been in similar positions. For well over 200 years, St. John's leadership made decisions during unprecedented times of world wars, economic panics, previous pandemics and even a long Civil War. In our uncertainty, we will do what others have done before us. . . . Use facts and statistics to make evidence based decisions, and then we will have FAITH that you are guiding us according to your ultimate plan. It is a great comfort to know this. Amen.

Thank you to everyone who donated to the March Mission of the Month, \$175 will go toward Gifts of Hope.



Shepherds Page

May 2021

God's Beautiful Creatures

For many years we have had several bird feeders in our yard and have seen many different kinds of birds appearing. This year I have particularly noticed the red cardinals. I remember seeing advertised sayings "When red cardinals appear, angels are near." I am finding that since the death of my sister Nancy, I have seen more and more cardinals appearing every day. So I decided to do some research.

You pay attention when they appear as they catch your eye and brighten your day. They are a message from the Spirit and for good reason. They will find away to do so and bring you joy. If a loved one wants you to know that they are around, they might send messengers from the animal kingdom like bright bugs, birds, and butterflies. Their message could be a simple acknowledgement that your loved ones are always around. Cardinals play an important role in the Native American culture also. There are some connections between Christianity and cardinals. Four of the seven archangels are cardinal angels, which have rulership over an element Fire, Water, Air, & Earth. The Spirit offers guidance, protection, and direction through messengers. The red cardinal has played many prominent roles throughout our history. It bridges the gap between Earth & Spirit. It also brings the wisdom of the universe to our doorstep in a bright and beautiful way. All we have to do is pay attention.

Cardinals are symbolic of beauty in the midst of darkness, hope in the midst of sorrow and renewal in the midst of winter. I recently went to a wake of a friend and I mentioned this about the cardinals. They went on to tell me about a butterfly that appeared after their loss. So we need to look for God's creatures and pay close attention to them. It is a new start after the end so we have to move in a forward direction and not look back. Remember God is present and keep looking for these beautiful creatures. I recently got a book from a dear friend called Gift of the Red Bird by Paula D'Arcy. I highly recommend it.

My blessing to all and please stay well- Eileen Zeliph
HAPPY MOTHERS DAY TO ALL

Shepherds Ministry serving St. Johns Reformed Church

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

A VIRTUAL COLLAB
**BEFORE BODY
MEETS EARTH**

Featuring compositions by Judith Cloud,
Robert Owens, Melissa Dunphy, Anne LeBaron,
Undine S. Moore, Felix Jarrar, Margaret Bonds, Karl
Loewe, Michael Lewis, Francis Poulenc, Richard Strauss

5:30 pm May 23rd, 2021

Digital release



Michael Lewis

piano he/him/his

Ellen Jackson

director she/her/hers

CodyRay Caho

performance artist she/they

Chelsea Fingal DeSouza

she/her/hers soprano

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. May 6, 10 a.m. in the fellowship hall

Book Lover’s Club

Mon. May 10, 10 a.m. fellowship hall

The Gown: A Novel of the Royal Wedding by Jennifer Robson

Finance Committee meeting

Mon. May 10, 7 p.m. on Zoom

Property Committee meeting

Tues. May 11, 7 p.m.

Elders meeting

Thurs. May 20, 7 p.m. on Zoom

Consistory meeting

Thurs. May 20, 7:30 p.m. on Zoom

Concerts at St. John's is excited to present "Before Body Meets Earth," a concert by Aural Compass Projects, featuring artists CodyRay Caho, Chelsea Fingal DeSouza, and Michael Lewis, directed by Ellen Jackson. Due to the Covid-19 vaccination schedules of the artists, they have decided to delay their concert by two weeks, which will now premiere on the St. John's Youtube channel at **4 pm on May 23rd.**