

THE KERK

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

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The Domine is In Bonhoeffer-Discipleship Part 3

We have already considered the two approaches to discipleship which Bonhoeffer deemed not to be discipleship at all. These are following Christ on one's own terms, and following Christ through legalism. There is only one way to respond to the call to discipleship and that is what we will consider in this last installment.

Obedience is the only possible response to Jesus' call to follow. "Follow me, walk behind me." It's not a goal, it's not a program. It's nothing an individual can implement. It's not about what we will get out of it. There are no accolades or grand displays of gratitude. Following Christ is to follow for the "sake of following the call," nothing more nothing less. It is a massive risk. Disciples are called to step out of their previous forms of existing. It means that "former things are left behind." We are to move forward always following Christ, and *without* all of our expectations and existential baggage in tow.

It means that the doing of things as they had been are completely given up. We lose those things which we once clung to as our security in life. We step out from security into "complete insecurity." We step into the unforeseeable and abandon those things that were foreseeable. We step out from this "calculable realm" into one that is incalculable. We step out from the "realm of limited possibilities into the realm of unlimited possibilities." When we enter into such a relationship with the living Christ and when we follow Jesus in this way; then we are following the call of Christ. There is no place to fall in life's path and travails save into his arms should we stumble, as all other things have be left behind in our obedience to the call of Jesus.

The "call to discipleship is a commitment solely to the person of Jesus Christ." Lest we take Bonhoeffer the wrong way here, we should also note that while discipleship is a commitment solely to Christ, it does not mean that Christianity can ever be a "Jesus and me" and that's it proposition. While discipleship links us with Christ alone our Christian vocation (and everyone one of us who are Christ's disciples have one!) arises from that relationship. And this vocation means radical obligation to the Body of Christ (the Church) and unfailing faithful service to the world.

Peace,
Pastor Eric

CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

The new program year for Sunday School is off to a great start. It is a real blessing to see the classrooms full of students, eager to learn more about God and His Son, Jesus, and to see what is going to happen each Sunday morning.



Thank you to all those who have stepped forward to help us teach the three classes. This fall we have one class for the pre-readers, 3-6 year olds, another class for the 2nd & 3rd graders, and then one for the 4th graders and up. With one worship service, we are trying to insure that teachers get a chance to worship and participate in communion as often as possible. This necessitates lining up 2-4 teachers per class.

Please be sure to register your child with us again this fall. It's important to have the most up-dated contact information on file, especially with allergies or health concerns. We also need a solid head count so that we can order enough children's resources/curriculum. Copies of the parent letter, Sunday School calendar and registration form can be found on the table in the fellowship hall. Registration forms can be turned into Coordinator of Children's Ministries Desiree Albizu, or placed in her mailbox in the education wing.

We have God's Story cards for the Sunday School families which go along with the Bible stories that your child is learning. They are part of the *Dwell* curriculum for Grades two through six. The cards are a tool to help your family get into the Bible stories and provide activities that you can do together at home. Please see Desiree if you have not received a box of cards yet.

We will hold our fall **bake sale on Sunday, November 10**. Proceeds go to a mission project. Perhaps the children can be involved in the baking, too.

The **annual used toy sale is coming up November 23 during the Christmas Bazaar**. As you clean closets this fall, please set aside those outgrown toys and children's books for our sale. Check the November *KERK* for drop off dates. We need help to sort and set up toys on Thursday evening, November 21 or Friday, November 22 during the day, or to take a short shift at the toy sale during the Bazaar. Money earned goes to purchase Christmas gifts for the children and the teachers.

BOOK LOVERS CLUB

Readers will meet Monday, October 14 at 11:15 a.m. in room 3 to discuss *A Month in the Country* by J.L. Carr. Anyone who has read the book or listened to it on tape is welcome to join in the discussion.



November's selection is *The Clockmaker's Daughter* by Kate Morton. The meeting date is Monday, November 18 at 11:15 a.m.

THE SCHOOL FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING & SERVING - Fall 2019 Course Offerings

Making Friends with Your "Inner Enemies"

(General Interest)

Instructor: The Rev. Ann Akers
Date: Saturday, October 12, 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Location: The Reformed Church of New Paltz, 92 Huguenot St., New Paltz, NY, 12561
Tuition: \$20, plus books and materials

Jesus said, "Love your enemies." Sometimes the "enemy" is within ourselves and shows up in the form of an inner critic, a haunting negative belief, or a strident part that drives us to fatigue that is difficult to shake. This seminar will include a review of last spring's seminar on Internal Family Systems as a foundation towards learning a pathway of healing and discovering a sense of emotional and spiritual well-being. Then it will focus on how to turn towards the "enemy" with compassion and discover an inner peace in the midst of suffering from negative beliefs about ourselves that haunt, harangue or lead us to question our self-esteem or create emotional and spiritual fatigue.

Recommended (not required) reading is Introduction to the Internal Family Systems Model by Richard C. Schwartz.

Course registrations need to be received by the Registrar one week prior to the course unless otherwise stated. All registrations and tuition need to be mailed to the Registrar unless other arrangements are made in advance. Please register in time to insure the class will run. Scholarships are available from the School. Please contact the Registrar for financial assistance, (518) 537-4221 or albizu@gtel.net.

SCLS Registration Form

Name _____ Phone no. _____

Postal address _____

Email address _____

Church affiliation _____

Course name(s) _____

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Mail to **Desiree Albizu, SCLS Registrar, 575 County Route 19, Hudson, NY 12534**

SCUDDER NEWS

Elephants!! At Scudder: Three St. John's members will share with us their recent experiences in Thailand with the people, their culture and their relationship with the elephants and nature.

All of the congregation, men and women, (and their guests) are invited to the Scudder meeting on **October 3, 1pm in the fellowship hall** to enjoy a delicious dessert and hear what Frank and Susan Vitolo and Carra Bartles experienced during their stay as volunteers at the Karen Hilltribe Elephant Sanctuary. They've got great photos and video footage and are eager to share their mission in Thailand with us.

-Beth Mead



"Many thanks for all the expressions of sympathy over Wanda Sutton's passing in July, and for your attendance at her memorial service in August.

I also thank all of you for the prayers and support following my recent car accident. My church family means so much to me.

In Christ,
Beth Sutton"

Mission & Outreach October 2019

Hurricane Relief is October's Giving Opportunity. As we head into October, we have already seen major damage to the Bahamas from Hurricane Dorian, where the death toll is rising and more than 1,300 remain missing. A new Hurricane Karen also is threatening Puerto Rico, which is still reeling from the 2017 Hurricane Maria which decimated the island. Today there are still 30,000 people there living under tarps rather than permanent roofs.

St. John's had discussed a mission trip to Puerto Rico to assist, but for a variety of reasons that never materialized. However, if anyone from the church still wishes to go to Puerto Rico to assist with the rebuilding still needed, there are opportunities through the RCA and its partnership with World Renew Disaster Response Services. Another organization that we have worked with before is Group, which has partnered with mayors and churches in Puerto Rico for more than 15 years. There are trips at different times of the year and many skill levels are needed. Volunteers can go as an individual, a couple, or a group. If you want more information on joining one of these trips, see Nancy Titus.

Friendship Sunday a success!

Our Friendship Sunday on Sept. 15 was a success with lots of information about groups within the church and ways for congregants to get involved. Check out some of the pictures on the Bulletin Board! If you didn't get around to all the tables and want to join a group, check out the regular sign-up table or find a committee chairman.

For our part, Mission and Outreach is always looking for new members. You can join the committee, which meets monthly, or just volunteer for an event or project. Our members just helped staff the booth for the Crop Hunger Walk at Hardscrabble Day in September, and we plan our annual Block Party and upcoming mission trips and prayer events. There are lots of ways to help, including decorating our bulletin board in the fellowship hall or even decoupageing our file cabinet! See Nancy Titus for more info!

— submitted by Nancy Titus,
Mission & Outreach, chairman

CONSISTORY NOTES

Pastor Eric encouraged everyone to get the Overflow app for their pads or smart phones; it gives you the liturgical readings for everyday.

Pastor Eric opened the meeting with the reading from Overflow for tonight. Psalm 74 starting at verse 12. The opening prayer is from evening Vespers.

The agenda for tonight was approved. A motion was made by Glenn Countryman to receive the minutes from the June meeting; seconded by Serena Winchell and approved.

Pastoral Report: summer stats were submitted. A fall schedule including Confirmation Information meeting for parents, Confirmation Classes, Adult Education, Communicants Class and House Blessings was submitted. Pastor Eric will be speaking October 4, at Trinity Episcopal Church in Tivoli on St. Francis of Assisi Day on the topic of peace.

PR1: Winter event-Mark Twain Show, with Joe Baer, with food and wine and beer sales with proceeds to go to the general fund.

A motion was made by Serena Winchell to proceed with the pastoral recommendation. The motion was seconded by Colleen Grover and approved.

Financial Review:

monthly review, Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss reports were reviewed. It was noted that we are still in the black even with the \$16,000 grant backed out.

Committee Reports:

Faith and Education

Finance

Property

Mission and Outreach

All reports were reviewed and a motion was made to accept the reports (with some spelling corrections to the Property report) by Mary Hennessy. The motion was seconded by Glenn Countryman and approved.

Working Recommendations and Special Reports

FR1: Finance committee recommends that the church administrator, music director and organist receive the full CoLA adjustment based on the Urban CPI (consumer price index, not Social Security.

The motion was seconded by Mary Hennessy. Discussion: figures will not be released until Mid-October, so the correct numbers will not be in the budget. Minister's salary is set by Classis and includes a 2% increase. The motion was approved.

Correspondance:

The Clerk read a letter from General Synod Secretary, Eddy Aleman, regarding Vision 2020. General Synod has two requests: 1. That Classis send the same pastor and elder delegates that attended last 2019 General Synod for continuity sake and 2. That a modification be made to the RCA's *Book of Church Order* so that a simple majority of Classes rather than two-thirds majority would need to approve any decision made by General Synod 2020 in response to Vision 2020's recommendations.

From the Classis of Mid-Hudson regarding the General Synod's assessment funding method with covent shares, a funding method based on a percentage of income. This will be discussed at the October Classis meeting.

Keeping our vows: Chapter 3 of *For The Life of the World* was highlighted by Pastor Eric with the points he wanted Consistory to get. We are to re-read Chapter 3 and ask how do we think and use our time; Sabbath versus relaxation. Is your average day sacred or profane?

The meeting was closed in prayer by Susan Vitolo.

-Shari Juranic,
Clerk of Consistory

**The Reformed Church Women of the
Hudson Valley**

It's time for our fall breakfast gathering which will be on **Saturday, Oct. 5, at the New Hackensack Reformed Church**. All are welcome to the breakfast and program. The speaker will be Ruth Faircloth, Coordinator of Rural and Migrant Women's Outreach, Rural and Migrant Ministry. We can look forward to hearing about this important ministry. Please sign on the sign-up sheet, or call Evie Seils (758-6968) if you are interested. Registration will begin at 9:00 AM. Let's carpool from the church.



Jackie Fenaroli for all the office and Food pantry work she did for two weeks; you are the best.
Serena Winchell and Nancy Titus and Mission and Outreach for Friendship Sunday!

Please sign up in the fellowship hall if you can greet on a particular Sunday in September. No extraordinary skills needed. The work entails a warm greeting and handing out the bulletins. No age limits!



Happy Anniversary wishes to **Richard and Eileen Wambach** who recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. May the Lord bless them with many more anniversaries.

Second grader **Gabriella Coon** who completed her "God and Me" unit and earned herself a Boy Scout badge for it! Great job, Gabriella!

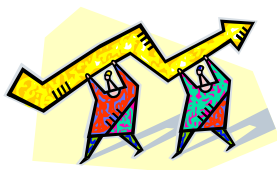


Deadline for the **November** Kerk is **October 10.**

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.

St. John's Reformed Church



Financial Report

August 2019

Income	\$ 13,345.46
Expenses	<u>\$ 14,862.92</u>
	-\$ 1,517.46

Year To Date

January - August 2019

Income	\$ 167,029.68
Expenses	<u>\$ 148,577.11</u>
	\$ 18,452.57

MISSION OF THE MONTH

Thank you for your generous contributions to our Mission of the Month programs.

Mission of the Month for August was the Deacons' Fund and \$608 was collected. September's Mission of the Month is CROP Walk.

"Did You Know ?"

What is a Cost of Living Adjustment?

When I was a kid, a candy bar cost fifty cents. Now, I need to visit the ATM before I go to the candy store – why is that?

The purchasing power of a dollar changes depending on the economic environment. If the costs of doing business are increasing, inflation typically eats away at the purchasing power of a dollar. And, your dollar doesn't buy what it used to.

We have been in an economic environment of relatively low inflation since the 2008 recession. This means that the purchasing power of a dollar has been slowly eroding. Put simply, you may need a dollar and ten cents to buy what used to cost a dollar in 2008.

The St. John's Finance Committee reviews staff salaries annually and makes a separate adjustment to compensate for inflation. This is called a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA). It is better to make modest adjustments every year than to experience large adjustments after longer intervals.

Denominational Assessment Payment Due to the RCA

What is an Assessment?

Members of the Reformed Church of America pay an annual denominational assessment. This mandatory fee allows the RCA to sponsor programs that help churches, similar to “union member dues.”

“Every year, RCA churches contribute a set amount of money per church member to the denomination. These are called assessments.

The word assessment sounds a little nerve-racking, like you’re back in school and have to take a test, but don’t worry. There are no tests. Assessments are actually really helpful! They make all kinds of ministry possible.

With assessments, the RCA is able to equip churches—that means you, too—for ministry and to care for the pastors who serve it. Whether a church is just beginning or has been around for centuries, assessments help us to live and love like Jesus in more vibrant, faithful ways.”

--RCA website

Each of the churches in the Reformed Church of America pays a yearly assessment to the Denomination. **St. John's share this year is \$9,695.23. This number is based on the assessment of \$111 per member, and we have 88 active members.** Many of you responded to this need at the beginning of the year, and we were able to pay most of the first two quarterly payments with your donations. We thank you for that! **We still owe \$4,848 for this year**, with half of that due soon. Anything you can contribute toward that now would be helpful.

Church Calendar

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.

Worship

Sundays at 10 a.m.

Children's Ministry Program

Sundays at 10 a.m.

Coffee Hour

Sundays at 11 a.m.

Counters

Mondays at 9 a.m. in the office

Food Pantry

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

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

Living Resources

Mon. - Fri. 7:30 a.m. to 8 a.m and 3:30 to 4 p.m. in room 4

Cooking class: Mondays 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the assembly hall

Senior Exercise

Tues. and Thurs. 9 to 10 a.m. in the fellowship hall

Bible Study

Every Tues. 10:15 to 11:15 a.m. in the fellowship hall

EVENTS

Mission and Outreach meeting

Wed. Oct. 2, 7:15 p.m. in room 3

Scudder Circle meeting

Thurs. Oct. 3, 1 p.m.

Three St. John's members will share with us their recent experiences in Thailand with the people, their culture and their relationship with the elephants and nature.

An Ecumenical Prayer for Peace Using the Meditative Songs of the Taize Community of France at St. Paul's and Trinity Parish, Tivoli, guest speaker, the Rev. Dr. Eric Titus

Fri. Oct 4, 7 p.m. 6:40 p.m. special prelude music featuring guitarist David Temple

Confirmation Class

Saturdays Oct. 5 thru Oct. 26, 10 a.m. -12:30 p.m.

St. John's Concerts

Sun. Oct. 6, 4 p.m.

A program of hymn duets. Jane Bier, organ and Edward Forstman, piano.

Finance Committee meeting

Mon. Oct. 7, 7 p.m. in room 3

Property Committee meeting

Tues. Oct. 8, 7 p.m. in room 4

Old Dutch Village Garden Club meeting

Thurs. Oct. 10, 12:30 p.m.

Healing Service

Fri. Oct. 11, 7 p.m.

Book Lovers' Club

Mon. Oct. 14, 11:15 a.m. in room 3

A Month in the Country by J. L. Carr

Wealth, Property, and Social Justice in the Early Church and its Meaning for Us is the fall adult education opportunity with Pastor Eric. Wednesdays, Oct. 16 - Nov. 6, 7 - 8:15 p.m.

Elders' meeting

Thurs. Oct. 17, 7 p.m. in room 3

Consistory meeting

Thurs. Oct. 17, 7:30 p.m.

Red Hook Area Council of Churches meeting

Wed. Oct. 30, 10 a.m. at the United Methodist Church



Shepherds Page

October 2019

HOLDING HANDS

When you see a father holding his child's hand, its easy strolling until they make their way to the driveway. He instructs his child to hold on as tight as they can. Fathers hold on a lot tighter than their children in case they were to trip over a rock or lose their footing and fall down.

This is a beautiful picture of what it is like to walk with God. There are times when it feels like a lovely stroll through the front yard. We are surrounded by family and friends. Times are good and all is well as we hold onto Him and He holds on to us. Then difficulties come. The ground becomes uneven and our steps aren't as sure. Rocks can cause us to stumble. Someone we love becomes ill, a spouse leaves, or a job is lost just to name a few.

Even though we have been holding on as tightly as we could, we would hit the ground for sure if God weren't also holding onto us. This is the promise we have in Christ: nothing can separate us from the love of God. His grip is strong and nothing that this life throws our way can ever make Him let go. If you sit down in silence and hold onto someones hand can give them the strength they need to face their challenges and could help them from falling or stumbling down. It is not what you may say to someone but just being there is important. Why not try reaching out and try holding someones hand as it may be what they have been waiting for a long time.

We are still continuing to pray for the many committees of the church each month. On another note, I'm still reaching out to the congregation to see if there could be a few people available to drive a member of our congregation to a doctors appt if the need arises. If you need to talk to me further about this, I can be reached at 518-537-4093.

**Eileen Zeliph- Shepherd Coordinator
Shepherds Ministry serving St. Johns Reformed Church**

Desiree Albizu

Nancy Castillo

Kayla Bell

Nancy Finkle

Linda Nielson

Stan Tremper

Carolyn Carr

JoAnn Fisher

Denise Gilhooly

Marie Votava

Michael Carr

Terry Laibach

Judy Rockefeller

Eileen Zeliph