

The Rev. Jason White, Lead Interim Pastor



FIRST REFORMED CHURCH
SCOTIA

THE MESSENGER

From Pastor Jason's Desk...

Lent is a time to explore more deeply our lives of faith and our connection to God and those around us, which gets me thinking, is “faith” a noun or verb? The simple answer of course is, both. But the distinction matters when it comes to how we understand our faith in our daily lives; do we, on a day to day basis, think of faith primarily as functioning as a noun in our lives or as a verb?

If it's a noun, then our faith is primarily about what we should believe. Creeds, catechisms, statements and formulations of faith, and so on. Faith understood primarily as a noun stresses the thinking part of our faith. And while this is important, it can easily devolve into concerns not simply about what we believe, but about believing the “right” things and, if we're honest, about whether our neighbors (especially those with whom we disagree) are believing the right things. More than that, over-stressing the cognitive dimensions of faith – faith as a noun – I think can lead to a static faith, one focused on getting your theology in order rather than doing anything.

This is one reason that, while faith understood as a noun was a main way of accessing faith a generation or two ago (when denominations flourished by clarifying what they believed differently from other Christian traditions), many in an emerging generation interested in making a difference in the world find approaching faith primarily as a noun relatively off-putting.

Which is why I think reclaiming faith as a verb is really important. Faith understood this way is more active than cognitive, as it stresses living our faith in the way we treat others, in how we spend our money, vote at elections, care for those in need around us, and much more. Faith understood as a verb is about our daily activities

and practices and stresses acting on our faith rather than just thinking about it. This kind of faith, in other words, invites us to get out of our heads and into the game – the game of life, of loving neighbor, of trying to do the best you can in any given situation and then being part of a faith community for confession, forgiveness, encouragement, and sending.



This kind of faith not only allows but actually invites questions. The point isn't getting it right but figuring out what we believe together, trusting that one of the best ways to figure out questions of faith is to try to live our faith and see what answers and responses suggest themselves while we do.

I'm not against thinking theologically – But I think we've sold our faith short when we think of it primarily as a noun rather than a verb and risk losing an emerging generation. But inviting people to serve, to act, and generally to do something is a great way for folks – especially those not that familiar with church – to get involved in a low-key way, build relationships, and have an opportunity to act and feel their way into faith rather than just think about it. So I'm curious: do you experience faith more as a noun or a verb? And what might we do together in our faith community to invite a more active, verb-like life of faith?

Pastor Jason

MISSIONS PAGE:

Mission of the Month: The Mission of the Month for March is Camp Fowler Ministries. Camp Fowler, located near Speculator, NY does not receive direct financial support from Albany Synod. The annual budget for the camp is at least \$150,000, which is raised from churches, organizations and individuals who share its vision for ministry. One goal of Fowler is to keep the fees affordable for the children who attend. Camp Fowler is an important part of the life of this congregation. We contribute and receive incredible benefits from this partnership. Won't you consider the importance of this ministry and give generously to the March offerings?



Special Offering: Summer Lunch Program in Scotia -- For more than 20 years the SICM free summer meals program has helped hungry children in Schenectady. Without this program, many children would not have a regular midday meal throughout the summer. At most of SICM's summer lunch sites nearly 100% of the children qualify for free lunches. On average nearly 2000 meals in Schenectady county each day, and they are available to youth 18 and under.

Community Lunch: It has been a very busy month and a half for the community meal and grab and go lunch. The January grab and go lunch had 38 meals given out.

The Christmas edition of the January Community lunch was a big success. We gave out all the towel sets and blankets given in donation for our guests. We had minestrone soup, crescent rolls, and salads. We gave out 70 meals and Brink Hall was full of happy guests eating and enjoying themselves.

The coldest night of the winter so far witnessed the First annual Chili Cook off. We had 15 types of chili, corn bread and salads. We had a good turn out that night and sold more chili and salads on Sunday. We raised \$734 for our church and the community meal. The winner of the first cook off is Linda Willoughby. CONGRATS LINDA! There is a trophy awaiting you in the office. I would like to thank all the volunteers and members who donated chili. The time and effort is greatly appreciated. Thanks to Kristen Shave who helped organize the voting and her wonderful signs.

The grab and go lunch guests for February were treated to chili that was left over from the cook off. The guests really enjoyed this treat. We had 45 meals given out. The grand total for meals given out so far is 3,504. I am very thankful for our members and volunteers. From the blankets and towels sets, to the donations of chili, of time and effort, our guests have a wonderful support system at our church.

Please remember we are collecting full size bottles of shampoo, shaving cream, toothbrushes, regular size toothpaste and feminine products for our guests. This will continue throughout the year. ~ Mark Holley

BackPack Program: As has been reported in this newsletter, we are committed to providing extra food for vacations for families participating in the Backpack Program. For the February break, our volunteers packed 45 boxes of food containing not just staples such as bread, cereal, pasta, sauce, and rice but also fresh fruit, eggs, cheese, yogurt, ground beef, hot dogs, and chicken. We also included some snacks such as granola bars, chips, salsa, cookies, and even some candy. The Glenville Hannaford once again generously provided bags of small oranges and 200 beautiful apples as well as peanut butter, a two-pound box of pancake mix, and syrup. Easter is early this year, so we are already planning the distribution in early April. The Middle School Student Council is organizing a student drive for personal care items such as shampoo/conditioner, tooth paste, and body wash/bar soap. The restock of the school will also be helping by collecting items that cannot be purchased with food stamps: dish detergent, toilet paper, paper towels, facial tissue, etc. Scotia-Glenville is truly a community that cares for and helps each other.

March Worship:

Sunday March 5 - Communion,
Matthew 4:1-11, Pastor Jason Preaching

Sunday March 12 - Dr. Lou Smith Preaching

Sunday March 19 - John 9 Excerpts,
Pastor Jason Preaching

Sunday March 26 - Design Team Day,
Rev. Jonathan Vanderbeck Preaching

Sunday April 2 - Palm Sunday, Communion

Thursday April 6 - Maundy Thursday
Service, 6:30pm

Sunday April 9 - Easter Sunday
Services at Sunrise (6:25a), 8:00a and 10:00a

Spring Forward:

Daylight Savings Time begins on Sunday, March 12. Set your clocks and watches ahead one hour the night before.

Blood Drive: The next blood drive is Tuesday, March 14, from 12:00-5:00pm in Brink Hall. This is your opportunity to give the gift of life for as many as 3 people! Call 1-800-733-2767 or go to redcrossblood.org to schedule your donation time. Walk-ins are also welcome. Hope to see you there!



Prayer Shawl Ministry:

Are you a knitter, crocheter, or quilter who is looking for a new project to start? We have just the thing for you to make that is smaller and quicker! We are looking for others to help make more Prayer Shawls to restock our closet. Instructions are available or there are lots of ideas on Pinterest. Contact Sunny Baldwin, 518-320-4562, with questions and interest.

Easter Plants:

On Easter we dress the sanctuary with lilies and tulips that are later delivered to those we want to remember. You can help by making a donation to the Flower Fund. Flower Fund donations not only help to purchase Easter lilies and tulips, they also help provide fresh flowers for worship throughout the year. Dedicate your gift in celebration of some event, or in honor or in memory of some person and it will be printed in the Easter bulletin insert.



Please submit dedications by Monday April 3.

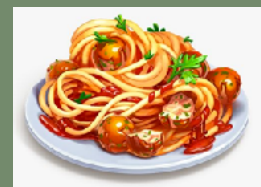
Fowler Spaghetti Supper:

Saturday, March 18, 2022 from 4:00-7:00

It's that time again to think about the Camp Fowler Spaghetti Supper and Cake Auction! Spaghetti, Meatballs, Salad, Bread, & Dessert, all for \$15 for adults, \$8 children under 10. Family Style for \$50. Pre-sales will be available.

Deadline for Pre-sales is Friday, March 10.

Volunteer opportunities will include: food prep help, servers, dessert cart, dessert cake cutters and bakers, dishwashers and clean-up help. Sign up to help at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D4BAAA2AABFAC52-fowler>, or call the church office.



Cake Auction:

How could we have a spaghetti supper without a CAKE AUCTION?!?!?

And this year - the auction is back IN PERSON!

Please drop of cakes on Friday 3/17 or Saturday 03/18 by 3:00pm

So get your ovens warmed up and get baking! We look forward to another successful Cake Auction!!!



Health & Wellness Note: March is National Autoimmune Diseases Awareness Month. According to John Hopkins Medicine, 23.5 million Americans have one or more autoimmune diseases and nearly 80% are women. These diseases are on the rise, and becoming a health risk. Autoimmune disease happens when the body's natural defense system can't tell the difference between your own cells and foreign cells, causing the body to mistakenly attack normal cells. There are more than 80 types of autoimmune diseases that affect a wide range of body parts.

Common autoimmune diseases in women include:

- **Rheumatoid arthritis**, a form of arthritis that attacks the joints
- **Psoriasis**, a condition marked by thick, scaly patches of skin, and **Psoriatic arthritis**
- **Lupus**, a disease that damages areas of the body that include joints, skin and organs
- **Thyroid diseases**, including Graves' disease, where the body makes too much thyroid hormone (hyperthyroidism), and Hashimoto's thyroiditis, where it doesn't make enough (hypothyroidism) of the hormone
- **Type 1 diabetes**, a condition in which the immune system damages the insulin-producing cells in the pancreas

Symptoms and the severity of autoimmune disease differ from person to person, but many have debilitating fatigue. The symptoms and severity are related to genetics, environment, and personal health. It is important to let your health care provider know about unusual symptoms you may have rather than trying "to live with it". If you are someone who has an autoimmune disease, here are some ideas that may help:

1. ***Take it easy.*** Don't try to do too much. If you get tired, take a nap or do something restful like reading, listening to music, meditating, or a creative activity. Schedule rest breaks throughout the day if that helps.
2. ***Plan ahead.*** If you have limited energy, use it for the most important activities on your calendar. If you have a busy day ahead, make plans the night before to make the day go easier.
3. ***Inform family and friends.*** Tell people you are close to about your condition and explain that it can cause fatigue so they will understand if you need to cancel or modify plans.
4. ***Eat a healthy diet.*** Eating a healthy diet may be helpful for anyone with an autoimmune disease. With some autoimmune conditions, you may need to follow certain dietary restrictions or special diets.
5. ***Get regular exercise.*** Physical activity can keep your body in good condition, which will help boost energy. Try to keep a regular schedule of exercise that you can tolerate
6. ***Get enough sleep.*** Sleep is important, but it needs to be restorative sleep. To get better sleep, practice good sleep habits.
7. ***Find support.*** The challenges of coping with a chronic disease can wear you down. Mental fatigue can sap your energy. If your mood is low, talk with your doctor about ways to find emotional support.

The Health & Wellness Team has scheduled a **Blood Pressure Screening clinic March 19 after 10:00 am worship**. If you missed our January clinic or have been advised to have your BP rechecked, we'll be in Memorial Lounge waiting to help you!

Lent Bible study: Every Wednesday in Lent, Starting 3/1 @ 7:00pm. In person or zoom, High school through adult. "The Rock, The Road and the Rabbi"

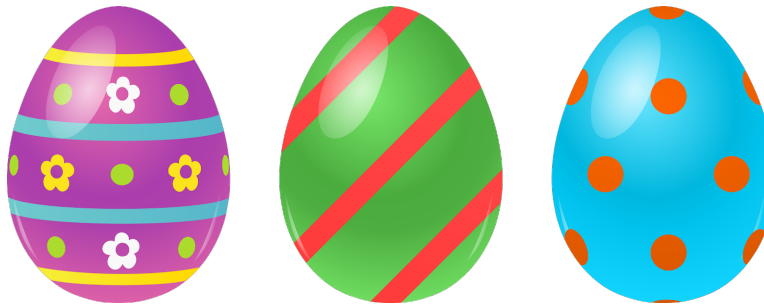
Interested? please contact Miss Diana education@firstreformedscotia.org Call or text (518)428-2914

Soup & Storytelling: Join us for Soup and Stories! Sunday, March 5 in Brink Hall, at 11:15 am, we'll hear captivating tales presented by master storytellers, Kent Busman and educator Heath Ahnert, former FRCS worshiper, and Camp Fowler camper. A warm tuscan soup will be served at lunch time. What a great way to take a break from winter!

YOUTH GROUP

Calendar of Events

- March 5 - Soup & Stories with Uncle Kent 11:15- 12:30
- March 12 - Sunday School and Youth group will bake and decorate cakes for Fowler 10:30-12:00
- March 18 - Saturday 4:00-7:00pm, Fowler spaghetti dinner
- March 19 - No Meeting - Rest after your hard work at Fowler dinner
- March 26 - Easter cards & crafts for our shut ins 11:15-12:30
- April 1 - Saturday 10:00am Easter egg hunt and brunch. Come help Miss Diana at this special event.



EASTER EGG HUNT AND BRUNCH

The annual Easter Egg Hunt/Brunch
will be on Saturday, April 1st.

Please join us at 10:00am for brunch.
The Egg Hunt will begin at 11:00am.

If participating in the egg hunt, bring **12 filled eggs per child.** Kids will be provided a bag to decorate while the eggs are being hidden. Stories, games and crafts as well.

Feel free to contact Diana Ackner: education@firstreformedscotia.org

Kids' Hope USA: We are at the midpoint of the school year for our Kids' Hope mentoring program. There are 10 dedicated mentors that show up each week to spend an hour with a student at Sacandaga Elementary School. As reported by the Kids' Hope national organization, "Each hour an elementary student spends with his or her mentor is an opportunity to develop and strengthen valuable life skills that are applicable in a variety of life situations." The goal for each hour is relationship building by having fun with a trusted adult, but it is so much more. These are some of the activities mentors share with students and the skills they strengthen:

- Activities: Card and board games, reading together, art activities and projects, playing ball, helping with academics, and solving puzzles, etc.
- Skills that are developed: Time management in planning how spend the hour, decision making, following rules, reading for comprehension, delayed gratification, conversation skills including empathy, and confidence.

These simple, ordinary components of the hour can be life-changing for a child. Please consider becoming a mentor for the next school years. There is always a waiting list.

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Bruce Greeley	3	John Hoffman	12	Deborah Rahn	26
Ellie Zenner	5	Ryan Makrin	13	Jeff Taft	26
Sheila Dort	8	Tom Pirigy	15	Duane VanPatten, Sr.	26
Michael Kilgallen	9	Anneliese Conley	16	Sharon Locke	28
Bob King	9	Jae Schalekamp	16	Ellie Parker	29
Dave Murray	9	Wayne Penn	17	Kristen Shave	30
Ken Willcox III	9	Nancy Passer	24		
Georgia Grant	11	Megan Carpenter	25		
Beth Worthley	11	Jacob Hoefer	25		

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

Dick and Carol Haight	15	Edward and Kim Rosenberg	28
Jack and Carol Arnold	20	Dennis and Sheryl Pelkey	30
Jay and Judy Harlow	27		

Address Service Requested

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