

The Rev. Jason White, Lead Interim Pastor

THE MESSENGER

From Pastor Jason's Desk

Though in reviewing the incidents of my administration I am unconscious of intentional error, I am nevertheless too sensible of my defects not to think it probable that I may have committed many errors. Whatever they may be, I fervently beseech the Almighty to avert or mitigate the evils to which they may tend. I shall also carry with me the hope that my country will never cease to view them with indulgence and that, after forty-five years of my life dedicated to its service with an upright zeal, the faults of incompetent abilities will be consigned to oblivion.

*From George Washington's Farewell Address,
Sept. 19, 1796*

I just saw Hamilton at Proctors. The excerpt above is showcased during the play as Washington (and Hamilton) prepare for new chapters in their lives. These lines have been running around in my head ever since, as I, and you, prepare for new chapters. While I have not served you for forty five years, it does seem like a lot has happened over the last five and half. And I, like Washington, am too sensible of my defects not to think it probable that I may have committed many errors, and I beseech the Almighty to avert or mitigate the evils to which they may tend. However, what I know to be true is that despite my failings and shortcomings, you showered me in grace. This was my first call after ordination, and I was learning how to be a full-time ordained minister. You showed me patience, you gave me trust and you treated me like your own son, grandson, brother, or nephew, and friend. In a nutshell, you showed me love, in all the human ways we do that kind of thing. Sometimes it was beautiful and profound, other times it was messy and complicated, but love nonetheless.

I'm grateful you gave me space to grow, to learn, to struggle, and to have few answers. I'm grateful that you said, "let's keep doing this body of Christ thing together," even in the midst of a pandemic, a minister's resignation, and all the upheaval those things bring. I'm grateful that you kept serving

your community and one another in a variety of ways, teaching and reminding me about the resilience we were created with at the beginning of all things. What an honor to see it alive and well. It reminds me that life keeps going, love keeps happening, that this body of Christ is gifted in so many ways, and similar to what Washington said, all that light that shines from you hopefully consigns my faults and incompetence to oblivion.

Farewells are often bittersweet. You have helped me take steps toward who I want to be, personally and professionally, but it's difficult to leave a space like that. You value love and care, and at the same time it was your love, care, and graciousness that made me realize a new calling in my life, mental health counseling. Called to make space for others to work toward wholeness and healing. Even as we bid farewell, perhaps through tears, know that I carry your love with me. Which gets me thinking about Jesus' farewell discourse. Notice what he does on his last night. He prays for his flock. He stops everything and prays. I would argue that prayer is an act of love.

I'm not saying I'm Jesus, and I'm not headed toward crucifixion, but let me pray for you. I pray that you continue to experience different things, and meet different people who will inspire you and nurture you. I pray for you to believe in yourself as a faith community and dream big for yourself. I pray that you use your voice for good, to have an opinion about things and be strong in your convictions. I pray that your curiosity about the little things in life never leaves you. I pray that you can use your God-given gifts to enrich and nourish this body of Christ and your neighbors. I pray you feel freed from oppression and free to live a life like Jesus did, serving others in an attempt to unite the world and tear down barriers. I pray that you can see from different perspectives, and ask questions to those who are different from you to gain understanding. I pray you remember

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that God created the world without barriers, without distinctions, without favoritism, so that you can love every part of this world that God created and gave as a gift to all humanity. You are a great shining light in a darkened world. I pray that you follow your path, and walk it with grace, compassion, and love, as Jesus walked his path.

I couldn't end without giving thanks. For all the staff that supported me and the mission of the FRCS. Your love for this place and its people is so evident. For all the Consistory members who served during one of the most difficult moments in this church's history. Your energy, creativity, and time were truly heaven sent. A special thanks to Sunny

Baldwin, who was, like Hamilton for Washington, my right hand man, or in this case, right hand woman. As VP during the pandemic and pastoral transition she did so much to keep me and the rest of the Consistory organized, on task, and working toward goals, and I literally could not have led this body of Christ during this time without her. And for all of you, thanks again for your kindness, encouragement, patience, space to grow, words of encouragement and challenge, and for living into your call as a body to be light on a hill for this community.

From the bottom of my heart,

Jason

Holy Week and Easter Worship:

April 2: Palm Sunday, Celebrate Communion

April 6: 6:30pm Maundy Thursday Service

April 7: Good Friday, Sanctuary open for prayer and reflection
6:00-8:00am
12:00-2:00pm

April 9: 6:20am Sunrise Service on bank overlooking Collins Lake
7:00am Continental Community Breakfast
8:00am Service in the sanctuary
10:00am service in the sanctuary

April 16: Second Sunday of Easter: John 20:19-31, *Pastor Jason's Last Sunday*

April 23: Third Sunday of Easter, *Rev. Christopher McCloskey begins*

April 30: Fourth Sunday of Easter



Thanks:

Thank you so much for everything from everyone during a time that no one could have predicted and took the wind out of our sails. Thankfully, I am great! I am back to packing backpacks with a wonderful group of friends and sharing many laughs! Through the Meal Train, our meals were something we didn't have to think about and it was so comforting to both Duke and I. I am so grateful for the prayers and the many cards I received as well as the beautiful flower arrangement. Thank you doesn't even express what I want to say. Knowing so many people were praying for me and my family was an awesome feeling. I know Duke and I will sign up to provide meals in the future and are looking forward to preparing delicious food with love and prayers, paying it forward! I am so grateful for you all...love and peace. It is a bright and sunny day!

God is love. I am love. We are love. AMEN!

~Love, Linda and Duke Shaw



Let's Stay Connected! If you aren't on our Constant Contact email list, this is a great time to add yourself, so that we can all stay connected! Please go to the church website: firstreformedscotia.org, and click on the "NEWSLETTER" tab. If you scroll all the way to the bottom, you will need to click on "JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST."



From there, you just fill out your information, and click "SIGN UP." We look forward to hearing from you!

Missions April 2023:

Mission of the Month - Community Lunch

- For almost 4 years we've taken a Saturday each month to prepare a meal and offer it free of charge to the people of our community. Prior to Covid, we often had over 100 people gather during the lunch hours to not only have a meal, but connect and get fellowship that is so deeply needed in today's world. We've begun to have in-person meals and have added grab-and-go lunches one Wednesday a month and are glad we are able to serve and support more people.. Thank you for all of your support of this important ministry.

April 4: Easter Sunday -- Regional Food Bank 5 Local Pantries

- Our Easter services take an offering for our local food pantries. The Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York has been helping to feed the poor and hungry in our communities since 1982. The Food Bank collects large donations of food from the food industry and distributes it to charitable agencies serving hungry and disadvantaged people in 23 counties. From Plattsburgh to Newburgh, in urban, rural, and suburban communities, the food bank provides over 30 million pounds of food a year to 1,000 agencies.

Update on Community Lunch Program: The community meal and Grab and go lunch has grown in the past two months. More people are eating in person and the personal care bags are a hit.

We had 103 meals go out for the February Community Meal. It consisted of pulled chicken, coleslaw and fruit cup. We had 45 "Grab and Go" lunches given out for the March 8 meal. The total is 3,652 meals so far.

The Community Meal is the mission of the Month for April. Our guests have shown the need this meal has filled. Please help us keep our mission going forward. Thank you for your support.

~ Mark Holley

Backpack Program & Food Distribution: We are busy planning for our fourth food distribution of the year, just before the Spring vacation break. Families look forward to having this extra food while their children are home for the week. Along with the regular food items, we also are able to include some Easter candy! There will be an extra bag including personal care items (toothbrushes, toothpaste, shampoo/conditioner, body wash/bar soap) and paper products (toilet paper, paper towels, facial tissues) that the Scotia-Glenville students are collecting. Hannaford in Glenville is again donating apples, oranges, and potatoes. We are a community that supports each other!

Kids Hope USA News – Life Together Is Life at Its Best:

It seems like it was only a few weeks ago that we were eagerly anticipating our first meeting with our students, and now we are planning our end of the year ice cream sundae party! One student responded to the question about what he liked best about Kids Hope was that he had someone to talk to and play with each week. That may sound like a simple thing but to these students whose lives are often unpredictable and chaotic, knowing that a caring adult will be there each week, just for them, is powerful. Teachers have been commenting on improved attendance, better behavior, increased reading skills, and positive attitude. These are known to be some of the many of the positive outcomes of the mentoring relationship. If you have an hour a week that you can spare, please consider becoming a mentor next year. There is always a waiting list.

Come Walk the Labyrinth during Holy Week:

The Labyrinth offers us a space to reflect, to recognize that God is with us at every turn on the path, and is always full of love for us. The small labyrinth will be available to walk during office hours in Holy Week, April 2-April 8 in the Lakehill Library during office hours.



Health and Wellness Note: This month we join the National Safety Council in promoting Distracted Driving Awareness Month to help everyone get home safe. Distracted driving isn't just risky for you, it can be deadly for every nearby driver, pedestrian, bicyclist and worker. In fact, at least eight people a day are killed in distracted driving crashes. So when you're behind the wheel, your only job is to drive. According to AAA, distractions take a motorist's attention off driving, which can make a driver **miss critical events, objects, and cues or abandon control of a vehicle, all potentially leading to a crash.** Distracted drivers put not only themselves at risk, but everyone else using the road. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has found that **texting** is the #1 distraction. Sending or reading a text takes your eyes off the road for 5 seconds. If you're driving 55 miles per hour, you have just driven the length of a football field!



Instead of S-M-A-R-T goals, here are S-M-A-R-T ways to prevent distracted driving:

[S]tay focused on driving: Keep your eyes on the road, scan surroundings for hazards; keep both hands on the wheel, and check for blind spots.

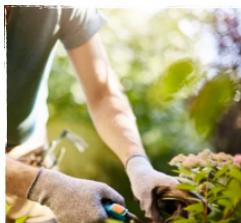
[M]ake preparations before you begin: Secure children and pets, find your sunglasses, store loose items, set the stereo, navigation tools and climate controls, complete personal grooming or clothing adjustments clothing, and fasten your seat belt before you start your engine.

[A]void all other activities: Don't use your phone, wait until the vehicle is stopped before: Looking for loose items, changing vehicle controls (air conditioner, mirrors, etc.), searching for music or changing the radio, consuming food or drink, and looking at a map or GPS.

[R]ely on passengers: To make phone calls or texts, navigate your route, secure pets or help children, look for things in the vehicle, and to adjust radio or climate controls.

[T]ext or talk later — leave your phone alone! Ask friends and family not to contact you when they know you'll be on the road, be sure others know that you don't use your phone while driving, and then return the favor by not calling or texting others when you know they're driving.

Remember you and those in your car are precious cargo!



Flower Garden Help Needed: It will soon be time to begin working on our church's gardens. We hope to recruit enough people so that each of our church's several garden beds will have a person or several people caring for them, keeping them weed free. This is a terrific way for some of you to help us make a positive impression on the many people who walk through our church campus or who drive past on Route 50. Please call the church office, 518-370-4751, and let us know that you'll stop by from time to time to weed.

Spring Work Day: The year's Spring Work Day has been set for Saturday, April 15, 8:00am-12:00pm. If you are looking to get outside for some fresh air and exercise, you can help take care of the grounds and facilities we have been entrusted with. We have a number of tasks to do including: raking any leaves left over from fall and prepping our lawns for summer mowing; setting out hose reels; trimming grape vines behind the church; washing Brink Hall windows.

Bring your rakes and see Paul Retersdorf or Jim Pierce as to what needs to be done. We will have coffee and donuts set up outside on a table at the Brink hall entrance.



Dutch Fair Plants: Attention all plant enthusiasts. As requested, the plant booth will be brought back to the Dutch Fair this Fall. Stan Lee recommends that if you have house plants to donate, now is the time to get them in pots. As Springtime arrives, it will be time to split up your outside perennials to get them potted to ensure that they will be robust plants come Fair time. It will be wonderful to have this much loved booth back at the Dutch Fair!

Renew Bible Study: Which meets Tuesdays 12:00-1:00pm via Zoom, is beginning a 6 week study using the book, Climbing the Sycamore Tree: A Study on Choice and Simplicity by Ann Hagmann April 25. Using the story of Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-9) as its inspiration, this is a 6-week study of faithful stewardship that uses scripture and consumer statistics to show how our buying habits affect certain people and perpetuate systems that contradict good stewardship and love for God's creation. Used books are available on line and can be ordered through Diana Ackner, 518-428-2914. For questions contact Sunny Baldwin, 518-320-4562.



Spaghetti Supper THANKS! A HUGE **THANK YOU** to all who volunteered at the Fowler spaghetti supper! We raised over \$2800 for our scholarship fund. A special Thank you to Mark Holley, our cook extraordinaire. We couldn't have done it without all your time and effort. And to Laura Bull, our Auctioneer, Kristen Shave, our Cake auction coordinator. It was great to be back "in person" enjoying dinner, bidding wars and being part of a great community!

Youth Group Schedule:

April 1st - Saturday 10:00am Easter egg hunt and brunch
Come help Miss Diana at this special event
April 2nd - Pack non food boxes (for distribution) 11:15-12:00
April 9th - School vacation - no meeting
April 16th - Pastor Jason Celebration
April 23rd - TBA
April 30th - TBA

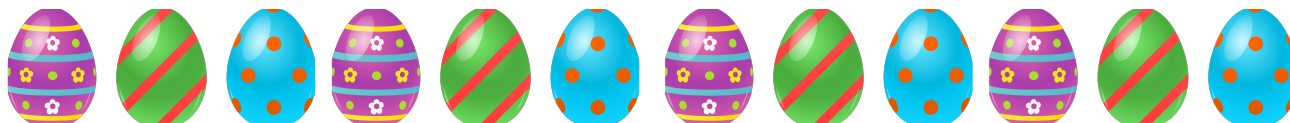


Easter Egg Hunt & Brunch:

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.



APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Judson Hoffman	3	Eric Carpenter	12	Jordan Zenner	17	Jane Lansing	27
Jeff Reynolds	4	Peg Foster	13	Katherine Makrin	18	Ashley Zappone	29
Evelyn Torelli	4	Helen Graber	13	Bob Baldwin	20	Micah Faulkner	30
Linda Lewis	6	Walter Pfuntner III	14	Nancy Pfuntner	20	Beth Hoffman	30
Seneca Willoughby	7	Bill Eberle	15	Kimberly Rosenberg	20	Emily Taft	30
Amiee Warfield	9	Janet Fitch	15	Cheyenne Willoughby	22	Cynthia Tygert	30
Paul Rooney	11	Rachel Rosenberg	16	Ethan Schalekamp	23		
Allison Beauchemin	12	Alena Willoughby	17	Kathe Sheehan	25		

APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

Jerry and Tina Haldeman 16 Jeff and Kathy Reynolds 17 Sara and Aaron Madison 26 Todd and Beth Vaccaro 26

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