

# THE MESSENGER

## *Christopher's Corner...*

Most of the central tenets of the Protestant Reformation are still widely taught, understood and appreciated today. Most notably, sola scriptura (Scripture alone), sola fide (faith alone), and sola gratia (grace alone). However, I have found that one very important tenet does not get the airtime that it deserves: the priesthood of all believers. This tenet is grounded primarily in 1 Peter 2:5, which states “like living stones let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be *a holy priesthood*, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ” (emphasis added). In its context it is clear that Peter calls on all members of the church to be a priest. But what does this mean? This means that we all have direct access to God through Jesus Christ, our Great High Priest (see Hebrews). That we do not need a human mediator to bring our prayers or our spiritual sacrifices to God.

This principle clearly undercut the clericalism that had so enwrapped the Roman Church. It challenged the authority of the ordained priesthood, and denied that an ordained priest had any ontological or metaphysical difference from any parishioner. In other words, the leaders of worship and the congregation in worship were on equal footing, for in the eyes of God we are all the same. All believers are perfectly spiritual equals. There is no caste system. Those ordained to leadership are simply servants acting on behalf of local believers.

Though I have been educated, called and ordained to be a minister, I am not any more important in the life of this congregation as anyone else. Though we ordain deacons and elders, these offices do not put those ordained in a different spiritual class. The offices of the church were given to us simply for the decent and orderly management of our earthly institutions.

The priesthood of all believers means that all who believe have equal rights and also equal responsibility. That all believers can and should be

called to all offices of the church regardless of age, sex or race. For “There is no longer Jew or Greek; there is no longer slave or free; there is no longer male and female, for all of you are one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28).

We Protestants need to reclaim this central principle that all believers are priests. As Revelation 5:10 states “you (the Lamb) have made them (us) a kingdom and *priests* serving our God” (emphasis and parentheticals added). That’s right Jesus has made us all priests in order to serve God!



So I urge you to take hold of your priesthood and claim this identity as your own. This principle is meant to humble those who lead and lift up those that follow. In the eyes of God we are all the same! Your leaders, myself included, will make mistakes because we are just human beings like you. But we are all called to serve with energy, imagination and love with all that is within us. No matter what, all believers have equal access to God. All who the Spirit calls to ordained office should be encouraged to pursue that calling without any other pre-qualification, no matter what! No group or class has any more right to ordination than any other. For we are all priests sharing a common priesthood given to us by our Great High Priest, Jesus Christ. Let us never forget that we are a priesthood of all believers.

*-Pastor Christopher*

## **BackPack Program: A Letter From Betsy Dickson at the Regional Food Bank -**

Well, another school year is drawing to a close. And with it, another successful BackPack year. This year, the Food Bank's 243 BackPack schools distributed 188,900 bags, containing *1.8 million meals* for hungry children. This is an incredible achievement that benefitted more than the 6,000 students served by BP each week: we know food from the program is shared amongst household members, broadening its impact.

This year's BackPack Program wasn't without obstacles: supply disruptions restricted variety and inflation increased food costs for families and the Food Bank alike. Unfortunately, BackPack food was not immune to either of these national trends. When we realized that food prices were reaching unprecedented levels, we had to make a choice: cut back on the size of the bags to keep costs low, or maintain the size of the bags and deal with the cost ramifications when the program wrapped. We chose to maintain the size of the bags because we know BackPack is a critical intervention for the families that rely on it.

Please know, our dedicated staff did their absolute best to get you as much variety as possible with available food options. And although costs for BackPack exceeded the \$228/child figure we forecasted in August, it's important to note that the only cost of the BackPack program to our school partners is the cost of the food itself. All operational/administrative costs associated with the program (staff, transportation, etc.) are absorbed by the Food Bank.

Here are the 2022-23 service statistics for BP Scotia (Glen Worden/Glendaal/Middle):

- Total bags distributed: 1893
- Average weekly enrollment: 57
- Total pounds of food distributed: 37,874
- Equivalent meals distributed: 31,562
- Meals distributed throughout the year per child: 550
- Average weight of bags (in pounds): 20.0

We know that these numbers represent more than just food leaving the Food Bank warehouse and getting into the hands of the kids that need it: it's schools making their regular BP pickups, packing bags every week around already-full schedules, breaking down cardboard once the bags are packed, and working with kids to make sure that they get on the bus on Fridays with the food that they need. And you do it all because you know that there are hungry kids in your school, and this program helps fill their weekend food gap. We are so appreciative of the work that you do. We know that this program, and all of the bags distributed, could never happen without your support. Thank you for all that you do!

Here is an overview of BP Scotia (Glen Worden/Glendaal/Middle)'s financial activity for 2022-23:

- Total BackPack 2022-23 cost: \$21,865.64
- Funds remaining on account: \$ 0.00
- **End of year shortfall: \$786.91**

As reflected above, your BackPack account at the Food Bank is depleted. We recognize that food cost inflation is largely to blame for this circumstance as the vast majority of our BackPack sites are diligent fundraisers and sustain their program year-in and year-out. Our hope is that you have internal funds to cover this shortfall.

We will be reassessing the food costs of BackPack 2023-24 this summer, and when we have updated forecasts, will be sure to get them out to all partners so you can plan accordingly. If you would like to discuss your BackPack program's financial standing in greater detail, or have any questions, please feel free to contact me or any member of our Children's Program department.

On behalf of Sara and our entire team, please know how much the Food Bank appreciates you, your BackPack crew, and your collective hard work. We are grateful for your partnership and look forward to partnering with you in 2023-24.

Enjoy your summer!!

In partnership, Betsy Dickson

**Kids Hope News!** It is a great pleasure to announce that Diana Ackner has agreed to add Kids Hope director to her director of education job here at First Reformed.



Please consider becoming a mentor to a child. One hour a week makes a huge difference!! Please contact Diana if you would like to learn more!

**Health & Wellness Note:** It’s summertime and chances are you have already purchased sunscreen, which is just one of the ways to provide skin protection and prevent skin cancer. So with all the choices, you might wonder what is the best sunscreen to use? The Skin Cancer Foundation believes that the best sunscreen is the one you are most likely to use! Just be sure it provides safe and effective protection, and is broad spectrum with a SPF of 15 or higher. **With the exception of babies under six months, who should NOT have sunscreen applied, everyone should use sunscreen every day.** Infants should stay out of the sun, stay in the shade, and wear sun-protective clothing.

Here’s the 5 W’s and 1 H from The Skin Cancer Foundation to help you remember:

- WHO Should Wear:** Everyone under the sun, including those who tan easily.
- WHAT Sunscreen to Use:** Indoors? Use a broad spectrum SPF 15 or higher; Outdoors? The SPF should be 30 or higher.
- WHEN:** Every day; 30 minutes prior to going outdoors. Reapply every two hours.
- WHERE:** All exposed skin
- HOW:** One ounce (shot glass full) to the entire body for each application.
- WHY:** Reduce your risk of skin damage and skin cancer! Remember you skin is damaged by sun exposure over your lifetime, whether or not you burn.

**For more detailed information The Skin Cancer Foundation at:**  
<https://www.skincancer.org/skin-cancer-prevention/sun-protection/sunscreen/>

**Photos are being accepted for our Brink Hall photo board!**

Take advantage of those beautiful, sunny days of summer and take a photo of your family in the great outdoors. If that doesn’t work, meet us at the Ice Cream Social, August 6, on the Plaza. We’ll grab a quick shot and submit it for you. Photos you take an be emailed to Kristen Shave at: [office@firstreformedscotia.org](mailto:office@firstreformedscotia.org).



Call Sunny Baldwin, 518-320-4562, if you’d like to arrange another time.

**Ice Cream on the Plaza:**

Ice Cream on the Plaza is Coming August 6 after the 10:00 am service! Don’t miss your opportunity to cast your ballot for your favorite ice creams by July 16. We’ll serve the top 3 favorites, and be sure to have a gluten-free option. If you haven’t already, you’ll also have an opportunity to have your picture taken for the photo board.

**Ice Cream Ballot:**

**Summer’s Here- Pick Your Top 3 Favorites**

*Mark an X by your 3 choices*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nutty Buddy        | <input type="checkbox"/> Ice Cream Bar                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fudgesicle         | <input type="checkbox"/> Orange Dreamsicle               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Popsicle           | <input type="checkbox"/> Chocolate;Vanilla Ice Cream Cup |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ice Cream Sandwich | <input type="checkbox"/> Chipwich                        |



## Family Ministry Page

**From Miss Diana's Desk:** I can't say loud enough how awesome the kids did on Youth Sunday! Thank you all for an absolute glorious program year! And a huge thank you goes out to everyone who helped and supported Sunday School and Youth group throughout the year. Although Sunday School and youth group will not formally meet during the summer, I'll be thinking about all of you. I'll want to hear all about your summer adventures. Summer packets, with some summer activities, will be delivered to your homes soon. Also, all youth, if you are interested in Lighting the candle or helping out with passing the offering plates during worship service please let me know. Lastly I wanted to share Shaeli Gravell's poem she read on youth Sunday. Have a great Summer!

### Shaeli's Faith Poem

(As read on youth Sunday)

1/8 of faith might be the case  
He will love you even if you go at your own pace.

2/8 of faith were looking for a chase  
God is still here if your stuck like a deer  
God will wait for when your time has come

3/8 of faith we're almost there  
God will be waiting the day you make it there.

4/8 of faith I see him now  
God is our savior no need to run  
God has no judgments

Just take your 8/8 of faith  
Might not ever come  
But if for you it does good luck in the long run

### **Camp Fowler Letters:**

We have so many campers attending Camp Fowler this summer, it's going to be amazing! Consider writing letters to those taking part and the volunteers from our church as well. Check out the Fowler bulletin board for information on who's attending which weeks and send a quick note saying hello. It's always fun to get mail... and they get to "Kiss the Moose" if they get 3 letters!!!



Send mail to:  
Camp Fowler  
Camper Name (Week #)  
P.O. Box 207  
Lake Pleasant, NY 12108



**Mission of the Month for July:** is the Schenectady Classis Student Care Fund. Schenectady Classis, made up of 15 Schenectady area Reformed Churches, is committed to providing part of the balance of a seminary student's tuition, after deducting for other scholarship or grants a student may qualify for. This care fund has supported many students in the past years, including Rev. Heather Kramer, Rev. Jason White and his brother, the Rev. Jordan White at West Glenville.

## **St. Pauly Textile Shed is HERE and ready for your donations!**

What is accepted at the St. Pauley Textile Shed? All clothing, shoes, belts, purses, blankets, towels, sheets/bedding, curtains, and stuffed toys. Please have your items bagged and tied closed. If you would like to volunteer to move donations away from the donation slot, please speak to Linda Naumowicz.

How does this benefit our community? A 24 hr option for clothing recycling, keeps clothing out of the landfill. (an EPA study says that 85% of clothing in the U.S. is ultimately thrown away instead of donated).

How does this benefit our church? St. Pauly Textiles pays us 4¢ per pound, keeps the overflow of clothes (more than we can handle) out of the green shed.

**Community Meal:** In our small community we don't have a Thanksgiving meal that is made in Scotia. We have many churches that do much for our community, but we don't have a thanksgiving meal here. The Salvation Army and Equinox will deliver to the area, although we should have a meal that is exclusive to Scotia-Glenville. This meal would foster community by having our church work with the fire department to provide for our own.

The meal will consist of turkey, dressing, gravy, green beans, sweet potatoes, rolls. I will be asking any of our members who would like to donate pies (apple or pumpkin) so each meal will have a pie. We are looking to have 100 pies. The meal will be cooked Tuesday the 21 of November and will be packaged up and sent out on the 22.

The delivery of these meals will take place at 11:00 am on Wednesday November 22. The fire departments of Alplaus, Beukendual and Thomas Corners will be helping with the delivery of the meals. (*Thanks to Richard Doyle, Wayne Penn and Walt and Walter Pfunter for their support of this endeavor.*)

Sign up for these meals will be taking place at the September and October Community lunch. If any of our members are interested in having a meal please come to those meals to sign up. I would like to thank the consistory for their approval. The meal is capped at 100 meals.

At the end of May we will have surpassed 4,000 meals given out, with the grab and go meal on June fourteenth we hit 4,089 meals so far.

I would like to thank the volunteers who always show compassion and caring for our guests, plus the kind words they included in the June newsletter. I couldn't do this without them. I would like to thank the Missions crew for their support over the past 4 years. Linda has led this group for many years now and she is absolutely wonderful to work with. Lastly, the staff of our church are fantastic. Kristen, Paul and Vicky have been instrumental in helping us with the Community meal.

A side note of thanks to Spike, Bill, and Mark for helping clean the attic. You guys have been so helpful and willing to finish that project.

God Bless. **Mark J. Holley**





## July Birthdays:

1 Don Bekkering, Julie DeBrita	11 Barbara King, Peter Lewis	22 Jessica Bodden, Keith Makrin
2 Dave Schaefer	12 Jennifer Getter	23 Jerry Haldeman
3 Paul Munson IV	13 Lou Crisci	24 Emma Willcox
4 Marcia Davis, Christopher McCloskey	14 Savannah Willoughby, Amanda Zenner	25 Brian Westervelt
5 Leo Crisci	15 Wendy Carpenter, Tony Crisci	26 Laurel-Le Lipski
6 Liesl Falcon	17 Sheryl Pelkey , Belle Warfield	27 Benjamin Graber
7 Bill Monaghan, Carolyn Norris	18 Jill Busman, Lonnie Hojnacki, Edward Rosenberg II	29 Christina Stryjek, Claire Beauchemin
8 Doug Bartling, Tom Falcon, Marty Gilgore	21 Bill Faulkner	30 Daniel Hoffmann
10 Jack Arnold, Mary Jane Crowley		

## July Anniversaries:

Allison & Michael Atchley	2	Bill and Martha Eberle	11	Josh and Jess Kohout	25
Chris & Amy Grumbling	2	Donald and Sue Steciak	16	David and Karen Wentworth	25
Randy and Cheryl MacNeil	8	Richard and Terri Doyle	20	David and Joyce Murray	28
Bob and Sunny Baldwin	10	David and Lorraine Gonyea	20	Diury Alvarado & Joe Carosella	29
Lou and Stephanie Crisci	11	Chris and Abbey North	22	Rick and Jessica Crisci	30

Address Service Requested

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