
The Rev. Christopher McCloskey, Pastor

THE MESSENGER

From Pastor Christopher's Desk:

What is theology? According to theologian Daniel Migliore, theology is “faith seeking understanding.” In other words, theology is simply the act of contemplating God. Thus if you have ever thought deeply about God, even for a moment, you are a theologian. Being a theologian doesn't require an advanced degree or any formal education for that matter. Human beings are natural born theologians. We are all born with a desire to seek the divine.

However, what most people are thinking of when they think of theology is actually systematic theology. Systematic theology is the act of forming one's understanding of faith into a self-consistent whole. To do systematic theology usually requires, not just thinking and reading, but also writing.

So I am setting a challenge before you. One that will likely stretch you and your understanding of faith beyond where most people ever go in their lifetime. I challenge you to write a personal statement of faith.

Doing this is required of all people seeking ordination as a minister and an updated one is required every time a minister receives a new call. So I thought I would share with you my personal statement of faith that I wrote as I sought the position as your minister. I look forward to being a part of your theological formation as your faith continues to seek ever greater understanding.

“I believe that God is mystery and in many ways beyond our knowing. Yet this same God is also profoundly personal choosing time and time again to reveal Godself in love. In creation, our Creator formed matter in the palm of a caring hand for the sake of love. God made the world in harmony and set humanity as its stewards. Yet, humanity, the special bearers of our Creator's image, turned away from God and recoiled from God's covenant of love and peace. But God is steadfast and abounding in love. God yearned for creation to return to God in love and so chose to limit Godself and take on the form of a human being. In doing so, God in Jesus Christ, led a life of love, setting the example for humanity, calling all back to God, and preparing them for God's ever approaching kingdom.

This life of love led Jesus, our Savior, to the cross. There suffering pain and death for the sins of the world. Revealing that we are so loved that God would give God's very life for God's beloved creation. So very loved are we that God chooses to see us as clean despite living sinful lives. And so this Jesus was raised from the dead proving God's ultimate triumph over sin and death. This Jesus ascended into heaven, but did not abandon his beloved, sending to us his Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is the herald of God's continuing love in the world. The Spirit inspires, challenges, and sustains. The Spirit calls us to welcome all regardless of gender, race, creed, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. It calls us to live lives of radical love and hospitality even when it makes us profoundly uncomfortable. We are called to do so in response to the love God has already shown, is showing and will show the world. We are called to turn the values and norms of this world upside down and love all without hesitation.

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From Pastor Christopher's Desk, continued:

This Triune God calls us to live in the brokenness of the world. We, the Church, are called to walk with the other on their difficult paths and proclaim to them the Good News of the Gospel. We are called to prepare a way for the Lord even in the wilderness. We are called to love and to opposed fear, for there is no fear in love.

God has chosen to revel Godself in Holy Scripture, both Old and New. The Old Testament proclaims God's goodness in Creation, covenant, and liberation. This Testament also points people of faith towards the coming of the Messiah. The New Testament fulfils the prophecies of the Old Testament. It preserves the life and works of Jesus, the Christ. It proclaims the Good News of salvation through the sacrifice of this Savior. It then commissions all believers to share the Good News and calls all of humanity back to God. The New Testament also commissions those who love Christ to go out into the world and baptize. This sign and symbol of incorporation into Christ's Church is open to all who confess faith in Christ and to children who are yet unable to confess this faith remembering God's immense grace. This baptism is sustained and remembered in the sacrament of holy communion. In this meal, we are called to remember Christ's sacrifice and victory. We are called to recommit ourselves to our faith and be emboldened to serve the world according to God's will. We are called to experience Christ's presence in our lives.

In all things, we are called to respond in gratitude to our God who loved us first, knew us first and claimed us as God's own. We are called to be dependent on the will of God and interdependent with all of humanity and God's creation. We are called to worship God and extend grace to one another taking the example of the grace that God first extended to us. We must live our lives dedicated to the Creator, Savior and Sustainer knowing that nothing can ever separate us from the wellspring of love, which is our Triune God."

Sincerely Yours in Faith,

Rev. Christopher J. McCloskey

Preaching Elder:

Dear First Reformed Church of Scotia Family,

After many years of study and personal growth, I am pleased to invite you to the Schenectady Classis RCA meeting on Tuesday, October 24, at 7:00pm for a worship service which will include the commissioning of me as Preaching Elder by the Ministry Oversight Committee. My three year course of study with the Albany School of Ministry included courses in Old Testament Introduction and History, RCA Doctrinal Standards, New Testament Introduction and History, Biblical Exegesis, Preaching and Sermon Preparations, and Systematic Theology. All the courses were taught by RCA Pastors who are experts in their particular area of study. My work was overseen by my advisor Rev. "Uncle" Kent Busman, and continually supported and encouraged by women in ministry including Classis President Kitt Jackson, Rev. Heather Kramer, Pastor Jan Hoffman, and Pastor Megan Hodgin. I am very excited to continue supporting the church with these newly found gifts of preaching and sharing the Word of God in worship.

Thank you FRCS Family for your love, encouragement and support. I hope you can join me for this evening of new beginnings.

In Christ's love,

Lynn Makrin

Mission's Corner -

Mission of the Month, October 2023: Samaritan Care Fund: Our October Mission of the Month is the Samaritan Counseling Center's Care Fund, known as Active Samaritans. The Samaritan Counseling Center provides therapy for individuals, couples, and families, and is the largest nonprofit interfaith counseling practice in the Capital Region. The Care Fund provides assistance to uninsured and underinsured clients, and helps them continue their therapy. To learn more, call the Center at 518-374-3514 or go to www.samaritancounselingcenter.org

BackPack Program: I (*Linda Lewis*) have been in touch with each of the 6 schools in S-G regarding the number of students needing food for the Backpack program this year. Although the numbers are still coming in to me, the social workers have commented that they are going to be higher than last year. By the time you read this, we will have had a distribution of extra food on 9/26, including a large box of food (breakfast, entrees, fruit, vegetables, condiments, and snacks), meat (ground beef, whole chicken, hot dogs, meatloaf, sausage), eggs, cheese and bread.

We are anticipating distributing this food to 45 families. The meat, cheese, and eggs were free from the Regional Food Bank but we had to buy the rest of the food for about \$1400.00. We have never spent even \$1,000.00 before on a distribution, but these families need the food. Most of them are working families, at jobs that pay minimum wage, with no paid time off. If they stay home with a sick child, they do not get paid.

The price for the bags for each child for a year has increased in 2 years from \$183.00 to \$ 273.00. This includes a milk and egg card, good for 1 gallon of milk and 1 dozen eggs at Stewarts, every other week. For the last several years, we have decided to include these cards every week but believe that we cannot do so this year.

There was important information about this in September's newsletter so if you happened to miss it, please look at it on the church's website. The December Cookie Walk has in the past raised over \$3,000.00, exclusively for the extra food distributions before the vacation periods. It is never too early to start baking and freezing those Christmas cookies! Of course, monetary donations are appreciated at any time.

We have never said no to a request for a backpack of food and we have never limited the number of bags per family. With God's guidance, we will find a way to continue to finance this essential program.

~ Linda Lewis

Community Meal: The Community meal had guest cooks in August. Katherine and Ryan Makrin made and cooked the pigs in the blankets. They did a great job! We are blessed to have them in our church community. Cindy Tygert and Karen Faulkner assisted our younger cooks and it was a great team effort. We didn't have anything leftover and 80 meals went out.

The Grab and go lunch had 56 meals go out for September. The total meals are 4,499 meals so far.

The Chili cook off is Friday October 27, from 4:00-7:00 pm. The Cost is \$15 and you get 10 samples of chili, a salad, cornbread, and dessert. We are looking for donations of chili. We would like to have 20 crock pots of chili. Plus we are having a brownie auction. If you would like to donate a 9x13 pan of brownies that would be great. You can add extra ingredients for example nuts, m&m's, frosting and marshmallows for the auction. Laura Bull has agreed to auction them off. Thanks Laura! We will have a sign up genius email going out soon.



The Thanksgiving meal has started taking names of guests who would like to have a dinner delivered. We are signing up guests at our September and October meals. If anyone would like to donate a pie either apple or pumpkin please do on the 21 of November.

Thank you to all the volunteers and staff that make this meal possible. Plus the church's commitment to make sure our guests are fed. God bless.

~Mark

Family Ministry Corner -



Sunday School News: Starting in October we will divide into 2 Classes. Miss Diana will lead K-6th grade and Miss Sunny, Miss Claudia and Mr. David will lead 7th-10th grade. This will give the 7th - 10th graders an opportunity for more advanced study and discussion.



Youth Group:

We will meet the second and fourth Sundays after church to share, get to know one another and plan for events and service projects.

Youth Group Fall Calendar

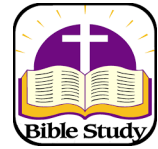
- Oct. 8 - 11:30-12:00 - Gather for snacks/plan for Christmas shoeboxes
- Oct. 29 - 11:30-12:00 - Start planning for Hanging of the Greens
- Nov. 12 - 11:30-12:00 - Last day for Christmas shoeboxes
- Nov. 26 - 11:30-12:00 - Final prep for Hanging of the Greens
- Dec. 3 - 11:30-12:30 - Hanging of the Greens
- Dec. 17 - 11:30-12:00 - Christmas party

ALL are invited to our annual Congregational Family fun day at the Mabee Farm

Sunday October 29th from 3:00-6:00pm
 Save the date! We'll have lots of fun playing games, walking the nature trail, playing with animals, eating smores, fall and halloween crafts and much more.



Bible Studies for teens and adults:



The Renew Bible Study also known as the “Upper Room Bible Study”, will resume Tuesday, October 3 at 12:00pm. This fall the group will explore the lives of 12 Catholic Saints, using resources from Christina Sine’s “Godspace” Celtic spirituality resources and St. Loyola press. This study will be for six weeks, October 3 – November 14, 2023. Please contact Sunny Baldwin at 518-320-4562 or csunnyb@nycap.rr.com to obtain the *new* Zoom link and resource packet.

Ten Commandments study led by Pastor Christopher, will meet *Wednesdays at 6:00pm* for 8 weeks. This will be a hybrid meeting style and will begin Oct. 4th. See Pastor Christopher for details.

“God, Discovering the Divine” will be a 6 week series, led by Miss Diana on *Thursday mornings at 9:00am*. This hybrid meeting will start on Oct. 5th.

****Please let these leaders know if you are interested in participating so we can gather materials.*

Kids Hope: KIDS HOPE USA is one caring adult mentoring an at risk child one hour every week. When kids feel loved and valued, they are better able to learn, grow and succeed. Another important piece of this program is the prayer partner that each mentor and student pair have praying for them. We are entering our 14th year of this important ministry and we need your help! The list of kids who want and need mentors is growing. You can make a difference in a kid's life! Volunteer today! If you are interested in becoming a mentor or a prayer partner contact Miss Diana, education@firstreformedscotia.org.



Time Change:

We return to Standard Time on the first Sunday in November -- this year on Sunday, November 5. Make sure to set your clocks and watches back one hour the night before and enjoy an extra hour of sleep.



Welcome to Consistory and Church Council Meetings:

All meetings of the First Reformed Church of Scotia are open to all.

Consistory meetings are held on the third Monday evening of each month at 7:00pm.

Councils meet at various times over the course of each month.

Please reach out to the Council Chairs, listed here, if you have any questions or would like to know when their next meeting is scheduled.

If you would prefer to call someone on this list, please call the church office and they will provide you with the phone number.

Also, Consistory Minutes are posted on the bulletin board outside of Pastor Christopher's office.

THE COUNCILS:

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Join Camp Fowler for their 12th Annual Harvest Gathering: Sunday, November 6th! After a 2 year hiatus, Camp Fowler will be hosting their annual fundraising and friend-raising dinner, this year at the beautiful Brink Hall at the First Reformed Church of Scotia. This important event gathers the Fowler community together to celebrate and support the ministry of Camp Fowler. Become a Table Sponsor or reserve your tickets by visiting campfowler.org/harvest-gathering. Tickets are \$50 for an individual ticket or \$400 for a table. Catering will be provided by the Turf Tavern. Please contact Josey Brady with any questions: sjbeird@gmail.com.

October Blood Drive: Tuesday, October 10 from 12:00 to 5:00 in Brink Hall. Come donate and give the gift of life!. To schedule an appointment and skip the lines call 1-800-733-2767, sign-up on line redcrossblood.org, or walk-in's are welcome. If you are unable to donate blood, please consider donating your time at the registration or hospitality table, or even by making a batch of cookies. See Joyce Murray or Sunny Baldwin for more details.



Health and Wellness Note: This month our Health & Wellness team is offering a Community Safety Day October 15 after the 10:00am service. Our team consists of Ed Naumowicz, PA, Anita Brudos, RN, Joyce Murray PTA, Susan Damon, PT, Pam Walsh, Labyrinth Coordinator, Lay People: Dave Walsh, Bob Baldwin, and Margo Snyder, and Sunny Baldwin, RN. Faith Community Nurse and Team Coordinator.

The theme is Safety: Within and Outside our building. There will be activities, for youth and adults, followed lunch where there will a delightful Fall Harvest soup that includes a gluten-free and vegetarian option. Activities include:

- Opioid Overdose Awareness education- what are the signs, prevention, and how to obtain Naloxone and FentaNYL test strips.
- Seaker Stacy Blanden who will share her experiences and work with New Choices, which offers a comprehensive array of programs and services to individuals in recovery from substance abuse and other issues.
- A Building safety Scavenger hunt
- A Physical Activity Challenge can you do the Flamingo?

All are welcome and we hope to see you there!

Cookie Walk: We will hold our 7th COOKIE WALK on Saturday, December 9, 2023 from 11:00am-2:00pm (or until sold out).

Could you donate cookies to the Cookie Walk? We ask that you bake a MINIMUM of 5 pounds of the same cookie. (This is equivalent to a 3-4 batches.) Cookies can be made by individuals or groups at the church in the commercial kitchen. TIP: Think of making a recipe that you can prepare now, make into a log and freeze - that way you can slice and bake them the week of the sale!

We need smaller, colorful cookies. Ethnic cookies, festive Christmas cookies, are big hits. Huge or heavy cookies do not sell well. Fudge and bark would go well too!

Please drop your cookies off by Friday, December 8. Between 12:00am-5:30pm. This is important – so we can prepare for the event. Please bring with you a description - telling us the name of your cookies, name of baker(s) **and indicate if it contains nuts**. The more we know about the cookies, the more we can talk them up to potential buyers! We will also need volunteers for the day of - so keep your eyes open for a sign-up.







OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

Mike and Wendy Carpenter	3	Brad and June Coryer	14
Paul and Heather Kramer	5	Mark and Deborah Rahn	17
Paul and Tee Munson	8	Mark and Denise Lansing	23
Tom and Jane Lansing	9	Michael and Linea Kilgallen	24
Bill and Kristen Shave	10		

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

2 Betsey Homer, Bella Willoughby	15 Katherine Penn	25 Michael Benedict
5 Jackson Bodden, Linda Falcon, Michael Naumowicz, Lee Poremba, Ken Willcox IV	17 Sue Alibozek	26 Diane Faubion, Mary Grumbling
7 Heather O'Shea	19 Kent Busman, Cheryl Cook	28 Dustin Madison
9 Joshua Kohout	21 Michael Trbovich	29 Mike DeMasi
10 Lorraine Gonyea	22 Patty Marré	31 Lynda Benedict, Michele Swain, Ken Talbot
12 Alayna Steciak	23 Bev Crandall, Ed Rosenberg III	
	24 Victoria Healy, Mary VanPatten, Bruce Wurz	

Address Service Requested

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