

THE MESSENGER

A Pastor's Ponderings

There are few, if any, words more frightening to a Mainline Protestant than the word evangelism. Partly this is because the term evangelical has been co-opted by a certain subset of Christians who share a very specific and narrow theological and social outlook on the world. It is also a scary word because it has to do with us sharing our faith with others and inviting them to be a part of our faith community. And most of us tend to like to keep our faith to ourselves.

Despite the baggage that the term has picked up in modern times, evangelical and evangelism are both ancient and biblical terms. The Greek root of these words simply means message or messenger. This is where we get the word angel because they are God's heavenly messengers. You can still find the word angel hidden in the English (evangelical/evangelism). Specifically, in a Christian context, evangelism is sharing the good news or message of the gospel.

Mainline Protestants need to get better at and more comfortable with talking about their faith with others. This does not mean shoving your beliefs down another's throat as is often the accusations of Christians who call themselves evangelicals. No, we simply need to be open and honest about our experiences of faith in a humble and respectful way.

Many of us worry about the future of the church and our church specifically. I know among many of you there is a deep desire and hope that our congregation will grow. If this is truly our aspiration, all of us must be an active participant. A whopping **70 to 85%** of people visiting a church for the first time or for the first time in a long time were invited by friends or family. There is no other single avenue of outreach more effective in growing a church than this. All three of the church's newest members were brought here this way. While I and all the staff here at FRCS promise to do all

we can to grow the church, our church's growth depends on you, the members.

I acknowledge that having conversations about faith can be hard and inviting someone to church today might be seen as or received as a faux pas. While we need to be ready for and accepting of rejection, we need to trust in God's Spirit to strengthen and encourage us. When talking to a friend or relative, keep the stakes low. Tell them that you would love for them to just check out worship once. Offer them a ride. Emphasize how warm and welcoming our congregation is. Let them know that worship here is judgment free and the messages are always meant to be uplifting and life-giving. (You could even mention that you have a nice new pastor, if you think that would help). I would be happy to talk with you about strategies to talk to friends or relatives. In August, I am planning a group conversation about evangelism that I hope will help people tactfully and lovingly break the ice.

Now is the perfect time to strategize and think about who you might approach with a personal invitation. Summer worship here is fairly relaxed and might be more appealing to some. In September Sunday School and many other activities start up. If your friends or family would feel more comfortable hiding in a larger crowd, you should think about inviting them in the fall.

Evangelism does not have to be a scary thing. Together we can make a difference and be messengers of the good news of Jesus Christ to our hurting and weary world. Together we will grow, if not in numbers, than certainly in faith.

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

Rev. Christopher J. McCloskey



Ice Cream Social!

We will be having an Ice Cream Social on the Plaza on August 4th after the 10:00am service. There will be flavor favorites including a gluten free option.



Fresh Table Community Pop-up Pantry

On the third Wednesday of each month there is a FREE distribution of fresh produce, meat, and dairy products. Although normally scheduled for the parking lot of the First National Bank of Scotia, from 6:00-7:30 pm, make sure to check freshtable.org for location changes. No identification is needed - just show up and get what you

need! It is called the Fresh Table Community Pop-up Pantry. Please let your neighbors that need fresh food know about this service. The next date is August 21st and is sponsored by the Regional Food Bank and volunteers in our community.

Community Lunch Update by Mark Holley

A man was beaten, near death on a side of the road...Many passed but wouldn't stop to help. In fact they crossed the road to the other side. A good samaritan, however, did stop and clothed, fed and found lodging for him. He didn't hesitate to give assistance to one of God's family.

This could be the same story today. Many suffer and others judge. Luckily in our First Reformed Church Community, we are the exception to this. We have a church family that supports our guests and helps to make a difference in their lives. We have a core of volunteers that care and give the help that is needed. Our volunteers help feed and give basic items needed to help our guests. They listen and care about our guests and they have become part of our family.

The Community Meal has been blessed by the generous donations from our church members. We are very thankful to our volunteers and church staff that have been so instrumental in this process. I would like to thank Pastor Christopher for his support and the beautiful memorial service he did for David, who was one of our Community Meal guests. I would also like to thank Lynn and Ryan Makrin for the wonderful music performed during that service. It was a very heartfelt service for everyone.

We are at a total of 5,679 meals so far!

Backpack Program



Our summer lunch/backpack program is off to a slow start but we are confident that numbers will increase over the next several weeks. We have been offering a free lunch each Tuesday and Thursday at Church from 12:00-1:00. It consists of a sandwich, fresh fruit and vegetables, a drink, a snack and a dessert. We also give a free bag of food, similar to the bags distributed during the school year, consisting of several small boxes of cereal, 2 entrees, fresh fruit, snacks, and a milk and egg card to Stewart's.

Please encourage your friends and neighbors with children to come, either to "grab and go" or to eat lunch in air-conditioned comfort.

We are also planning a special food distribution in early September for families that participated in the Backpack program last year. We know that this is a challenging time for families, with the cost of school supplies and school clothes, so they are especially grateful for the extra food. We have received a generous donation from the First National Bank of Scotia to help fund these distributions, which is greatly appreciated. The regular Backpack program will begin in mid-October, giving the school staff time to identify the eligible students.

Mission of the Month: The Scotia Food Pantry

Our mission of the month is The Scotia Glenville Food Pantry. Located in the City View Church on Mohawk Ave, this community accessible location provides food to neighbors in need. It is open from 5:30pm-7:00pm on Tuesdays and 9:00am-11:00am on Fridays. Please consider a donation to help this important local mission that provides access to nutritious food to anyone without question.

Kids Hope 2024-2025

I am so excited to start another year as your Kids Hope Director. I have started planning for the 2024-2025 school year, but I need your help! WE NEED MENTORS and prayer partners! If you love kids and want to have a fulfilling and amazing experience, contact me. Want to learn more? Contact me. I'm happy to meet with anyone and share this experience of changing the world one kid at a time. Thanks for trusting me with this awesome program!

~ Diana Ackner

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Most people are aware that regular exercise is essential for health and wellness. Some might aim to walk 10,000 steps a day and what better time than during summer when you can get outdoors and also enjoy the fresh air. Walking is considered to be an easy sport because no special equipment is required other than wearing proper running or jogging-style, supportive footwear. Start slow and gradually

increase your steps each day.

Surprisingly, the number 10,000 was selected in 1965 by a Japanese company to help market their sale of pedometers. It wasn't until 2016 the Centers for Disease Control started recommending 10000 steps, but it also found that a total of 30 minutes of other physical activity every day has health benefits. To motivate you to get started, here are the benefits of walking or other physical activity:

- **Immediate benefits-** Walking or other physical activity helps one feel, function, and sleep better. This includes improved thinking or cognition for children 6 to 13. Regular physical activity can also help keep thinking, learning, and judgment skills sharp as you age, and reduce the risk of depression and anxiety.
- **After One Month-** Your energy level is increasing, and by continuing to exercise, it can help motivate you to develop other healthy habits, like reducing your amount of cigarette smoking or improving your diet by eating more fruits and vegetables or decreasing saturated fat. Walking also increases bone strength and promotes weight loss.
- **After Six Months-** At this time, some of your health risks could be decreasing. When you start walking almost every single day, your blood pressure can drop, your cholesterol lowers, and your blood sugar becomes more regulated. Physical activity may help reduce the risk of serious outcomes from infectious diseases, including COVID-19, the flu, and pneumonia. Physically active adults have a significantly lower risk of developing several commonly occurring cancers, as well as lower risk of several other cancers. Research shows that adults who engage in greater amounts of physical activity have reduced risks of developing cancers of the: bladder, breast, colon, endometrium (innermost lining layer of the uterus), esophagus, kidney, lung, and stomach.

So what are you waiting for? Strap on those sneakers and take the first step!



75th Annual Dutch Fair

The Dutch Fair will be here before we know it! This year's Dutch Fair is Saturday, September 21st, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. It's time to start cleaning out your closets!

Acceptable items: Gently used clothing and shoes, linens, small household items, books, toys, & jewelry.

Not accepted items: Candles, office supplies, TVs, computer monitors, & non-microwave safe dishware/flatware.

If you would like to volunteer please contact Laura Bull, Sue Pitts, or Linda Naumowicz. We are always looking for volunteers to help sort donations, set up, work the day of the Fair and clean up. Teenagers, this is a great way to get some community service hours needed for school!

This year will be the 75th Dutch Fair. Let's all help to make it a great one!

If you have managed an area in the past, please let us know that you are willing to do so again this year. If you would like to help in any area - contact us as well! This year our event chair is Laura Bull, 518-369-4180. So far, we have confirmed the following area leaders:

- Bake Sale: Linda Lewis
- Books and Media: Don Bowers
- Craft Fair:
- Clothing:
- Jewelry: Ann Armstrong (Please bring jewelry to the office to be secured.)
- Kiddie Fair (crafts, games and bounce house):
- Kitchen:
- Linens & Things: Jane Brehm
- Pick-A-Pocket Lady: Kristen Shave
- Plants: Fern & Stan Lee
- Toys:
- White Elephant:

We will be accepting donations! Clothing, Linens, Books and Media can be donated starting Sunday September 15th after 10am worship and Monday-Thursday from 9-1 in Brink Hall. Toys and housewares (white elephant) can be donated by dropping off to the Missions shed Sunday September 8th and September 15th between church services, September 19 and 20th from 9-1 or by contacting Laura Bull, Linda Naumowitz or Sue Pitts.

Camp Fowler Letters



Don't forget to send letters to our campers.

Camper list is on the Fowler bulletin board.

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

CRAZY Family Fun CARNIVAL

Sunday, Sept. 8th following 10AM Worship

Bounce house, Carnival games, Prizes, Ice cream making and more!

Everyone is invited! We are all family!



Summer Bingo Project

If you haven't played yet, it's not too late to start! Have some fun while building your faith this August? Let's play some BINGO! The object is to see if your household can get a BINGO before the month ends.

Want a bigger challenge? Can you fill the whole card? Just follow the directions in each box to X that box out. Who will get a BINGO?

The card and links are posted on the church's website (firstreformedscotia.org). Let Miss Diana know if you get BINGO.

Your name will go into a drawing for a special prize in September!

FRCS	SUMMER	BINGO	PROJECT	2024
B	I	N	G	O
BELIEVE	INTENTIONAL	NO SCREENS	GO SERVE	OFFER
Choose a verse(s) from the Bible for your household to memorize throughout the summer	Guided Meditation: Food Insecurity Watch and Listen to this link: Food insecurity meditation	Go to the link below and play Table Topics without using technology. Table Topics link	Volunteer at the Sycamore collaborative (formerly SICM)	Offer kindness to someone who is having a rough time
Read Psalm 100 then write down 3 things you are thankful for	Guided Meditation: Peacefulness - Watch and Listen to this link: Peacefulness meditation	No Tech Family Scavenger Hunt - Here's a link for ideas. Family Scavenger Hunt	Bring toilet paper(individually wrapped) to FRCS Community Cupboard	Offer your reading skills to a child or an elderly person who is struggling to see(perhaps at a nursing home)
Read Mark 6:30-56 - Show compassion by creating a card and sending it to someone who needs some compassion	Take a 30 minute summer sabbath - here's a link for ideas: Sabbath ideas	Mindful Nature Walk - Click this link to find suggestions: Mindful walk ideas	Donate peanut butter sandwich crackers, snack chips/pretzels or water to Over the Bridge ministry here at church	Offer a meal or snack to someone in the church that you don't know very well and would like to learn more about them
Read John 6:1-21 - This miracle shows God's love; Write down 2 ways you can show God's love	Pray Daily - anytime, anywhere - here is a link with some ways to pray: prayer ideas	On a clear night sit under the stars and marvel at God's universe. Thank God for his creation	Donate food to a food pantry near your house	Offer a homemade treat, card or flower to someone who is in need of encouragement
As a household, choose 1 fruit of the spirit you want to grow in this summer and go head first into it: read books, make a list of ways to practice it, point it out in others!	Begin EVERY day by greeting God and end EVERY day by thanking God	Have a game night with Family, Friends or neighbors; no tech allowed!	volunteer at the regional food bank	Offer to help someone with free yard work or housework

August Anniversaries:

James & Rebecca Penn 6
Dave & Pam Walsh 6
Steve & Amiee Warfield 7
Peter & Glenda Lewis 9
Cheryl & John Miller 9
Bruce and Barbara Wurz 11
Tom & Chris Bodden 12
Christine & Nick Stryjek 15
Ken & Michele Swain 18
Ron & June Shaw 22
Keith & Lynn Makrin 26
Patrick & Allison Beauchemin 28

August Birthdays:

John Sheehan 5
Barbara Graber 9
Rylan Beauchemin 12
Bill Shave, Jr 16
Russ Garrison 19
Olivia Munson 21
Rebecca Jarcynski-Okpoti 24
Amy Grumbling 28
James Rooney 30

Joyce Murray 7
Lori DeMasi 10
Barbara Robinson 14
Nancy Landry 17
Linea Kilgallen 20
Alex Atchley 22
Michael Marré 26
Emily Kohout 30
Patrick Beauchemin 30

Bowden Stryjek 7
Fern Lee 10
Karen Squires 15
Miles Torelli 17
Aaron Madison 20
Abbey Naumowicz 23
Tee Munson 27
Lillian Rooney 30

Address Service Requested

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