

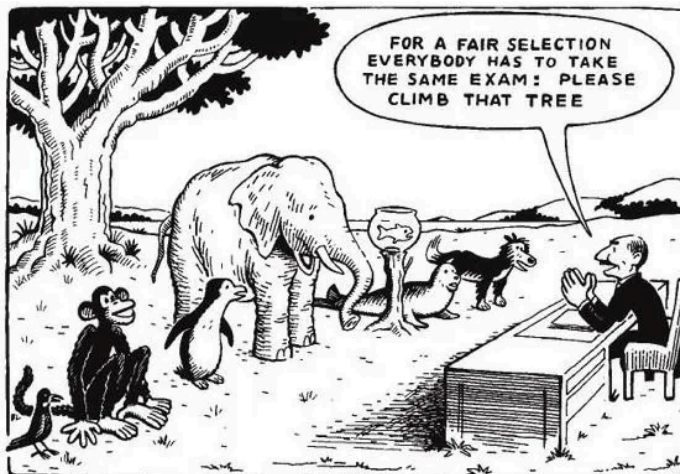
# THE MESSENGER

## *A Pastor's Ponderings*

*"The same water  
that softens a potato  
hardens an egg."*

As social creatures, we tend to look to others to help us understand how we fit into this crazy world. We are always comparing ourselves to others to gauge the appropriateness of our reactions and how proficient our abilities are. We quickly learn under what situations it is appropriate to cry, or laugh, or yell. In school this comparison continues as we gauge our "intelligence." Since our work in school is evaluated in a presumed impartial manner, many students, including myself, start to believe that this is an accurate measure of if we are "smart" or not. We tend not to realize, at least not until we are much older, that a test generally only evaluates how good you are at taking tests, and tells you very little about how intelligent you actually are.

In the first grade, I was placed in Special Education. I was struggling to read at grade level, which was an issue that continued for many years. As an elementary student, I started to believe that I was dumb. I looked around and saw that the majority of my peers were not struggling like me. And in this process of comparison, I came to the conclusion that there was something broken in me.



It was in sixth grade that my Special Education teacher showed a comic that changed my life (see the image below). She told me to stop comparing myself to others and simply be the best 'me' I could be. Schools ask everyone to climb the same tree, she told me, thinking this is fair, but we are not all monkeys. She told me that it is okay that I am not a monkey.

And this is true for every faucet of our lives. We will all learn differently. We all have different skills and abilities. In life we will all deal with crises differently, or grief differently, or pain differently. And if your abilities, reactions or coping mechanisms are different from most people, that is okay. There is

not something broken in you, it does not mean in any way that there is something wrong with you. While many people will cry in the face of tragedy some will laugh and make jokes. The same water that softens a potato hardens an egg. There will be as many different reactions to the world as there are people in the world. Some of us are

potatoes, others are eggs. And that is okay.

Comparing people is never comparing apples to apples. People are not fruit. So give yourself a break and stop the comparisons. For truly comparison is the thief of joy. And I truly wish nothing for you but joy.

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

*Rev. Christopher J. McCloskey*

## The Conversation Project

Following church on Sunday, September 29<sup>th</sup> the Health and Wellness Team along with the Congregational Care Council are sponsoring an informative program about The Conversation Project. We will be joined by Bishop Anthony Green, Director of Pastoral Care at Ellis Medicine. A light lunch will be provided.

The Conversation Project is an initiative of the Institute of Healthcare Improvement to inspire conversations about care through the end of life. Since 2012, homes and communities have used the Conversation Starter Guide to start conversations about care wishes now and through the end of life. Everyone, regardless of age, is encouraged to have these conversations.



the conversation project

The Conversation Project will be introduced using two brief videos that explain the rationale and purpose of the project. Rev. Green will discuss the role healthcare has in aiding these crucial conversations.

For more information on TCP use the following: [theconversationproject.org](http://theconversationproject.org).

## Renew Bible Study

Fall is almost here. Have you been thinking about learning more about the Bible? The Renew Bible study could be just the way to start. We will resume Tuesday, September 10<sup>th</sup>, 12 noon via Zoom. To get the year started, we will discuss readings from The Upper Room.

October 1 the group begins a new book [Interpretation Bible Studies: Philippians and Galatians](#).

Last spring the group studied the life of Paul and wanted to continue to learn more about this man who was so instrumental in bringing Christianity to the world. This book explores the letters he wrote to the Philippian and Galatian congregations and illustrates the passion and intensity of Paul's writing. Together these letters provide a compelling portrait of a complex original thinker who probably was the most significant missionary of his day, a theologian and social critic of rare power and insight whose legacy continues today to spark heated debate. It's possible if you catch even a little of Paul's vision, you are likely to be transformed.

For more information and to sign up, contact Sunny Baldwin at 518-320-4562.

## Pastor's Bible Study

Rev. McCloskey will be leading a 7-week Bible Study this fall entitled "In the Shadow of Empire: The Geopolitics of the Bible. The first class will be on Wednesday, October 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00pm in Brink Hall. The course will run on Wednesday evenings through November 13<sup>th</sup>. During these 7-weeks we will cover the following empires: Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, Seleucid, and Roman. We will discuss how geography has shaped nearly every aspect of human life from the dawn of time up to today. All are welcome!



## 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](http://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 September 18<sup>th</sup> and is sponsored by the Regional Food Bank and volunteers in our community.

## Community Lunch Update by Mark Holley

The community meal, at the end of July, had 77 meals go out. We had a turkey gobbler wrap which was very well received. The Grab and Go in August had 50 meals go out. We are at a total of 5806 meals so far. I would like to thank Vicki and her daughter, Molly, for the delicious cookies and coleslaw.

In September we are going to have a baked potato bar with fixings.

The Chili Cook-off will be October 25<sup>th</sup>. We will have a signup sheet soon for crockpots of chili. During the Chili Cook-off we will also be having a brownie auction. We are looking for the most outrageous brownie combinations we can get.

The Thanksgiving meal will be cooked on the 26<sup>th</sup> of November and delivered or picked up on the 27<sup>th</sup>. If you would like to donate pies, we will have a signup sheet in late September.



## Backpack Program Update by Linda Lewis

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION! PLEASE READ!** If you have ever wondered if your donations to the Backpack program have really made a difference in the lives of children, please read these statistics carefully for this past school year.

- Total bags distributed: 2,257
- Average weekly enrollment: 73
- Average weight of weekly bag: 22.1 lbs
- Total pounds of food distributed: 49,816 lbs
  - Pounds of free food distributed: 13,706 lbs
  - Pounds of purchased food distributed: 36,110 lbs
- Equivalent meals distributed: **41,513**
- Meals distributed per child throughout the year: 570
- Cost per meal: \$0.68

**Total Backpack 2023-2024 cost: \$28,426.97**

**Grant from Schenectady Foundation: \$6,006**

**Total cost to FRCS: \$22,420.97**

You, as a congregation, should be so proud of yourselves! I am so proud to be a member of this congregation and the S-G community that so generously supports our children and families in need. Thank you!

## Mission of the Month: Scotia-Glenville High School Food Pantry

While most Backpack programs only provide bags of food on the weekend for elementary aged students, our Church provides food to students in **ALL** of the schools in the district. The food in the bags for the regular Backpack program is determined by the Regional Food Bank at a set cost per bag, but the Food Pantry is run differently. There is a designated space in the high school and students can choose the food that they need. A number of students are not living at home and "couch surf" at friends' houses, bringing food from the pantry with them. The coordinator at the pantry also packs food for a number of students each week and the students either take the food home or we deliver the food directly to their homes. This past year, 8-10 students had food delivered, 7-9 took food home, and an unknown number picked up food when needed. This September will begin the sixth year for the Food Pantry, which unlike the Backpack program that begins mid-October, begins the **first** day of school. Please designate on your donation that you want to contribute to the HS Food Pantry to support our High School students in need.

## Kids Hope 2024-2025

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 15th 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 or want to learn more contact Miss Diana, [education@firstreformedscotia.org](mailto:education@firstreformedscotia.org).



## CRAZY Family Fun CARNIVAL

Sunday, Sept. 8<sup>th</sup> following 10am Worship  
Bounce house, Carnival games, Prizes, and More!  
Everyone is invited! We are all family!



## No more Sunday School...What!?

The current educational weekly traditional model we have been using is not supporting our families to the best of our abilities. Families have gone through a lot of change so we will be using a monthly model with pieces for family and intergenerational learning and growing opportunities for all ages. Sunday SCHOOL has a negative connotation to some and implies only children and we want to engage all our congregants. So we are changing the name to **“Faith Formation”**

The Monthly model will be as follows;

Week 1 - Faith formation for K-12th grade w/Miss Diana

Week 2 - Family/Intergenerational learning experience

Week 3 - Faith formation for K-12th grade w/Miss Diana

Week 4 - Stay in worship and share/participate more meaningfully in worship

There will be No “youth group” but once a month family/intergenerational events that will include some faith formation. There will be service/mission activities throughout the year for ALL to participate and serve our God. There will be online content for anyone to access on our website to help families with faith formation at home.

## Confirmation Class Interest Meeting

Are you in Middle school or High school? Would you be interested in a confirmation class to explore your faith? Parents, do you want your child to explore their faith? If you are interested in finding out more about confirmation classes there will be an information meeting on October 13<sup>th</sup> at 11:15 with Pastor Christopher and Miss Diana.



## Choir - Let's Make a Joyful Noise Together!

Yes, we have new choir leadership! Diana Ackner and Sarah Cordts are going to co-lead the choir for the coming program year. And we need singers! Choir will start rehearsing Thursday, September 12<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm. We will sing our 1<sup>st</sup> anthem of the year on Sunday, September 15<sup>th</sup>. Want to join in on the fun? We would love to have you!



September is suicide awareness month. Suicide can touch anyone, anywhere, and at any time, devastating families and sometimes even communities. But it is not inevitable. If you are feeling alone and having thoughts of suicide—whether or not you are in crisis—or know someone who is, don't remain silent! **Call or text 988** to chat with the lifeline.

Three places you can find more more information is at:

- <https://www.samhsa.gov/mental-health/suicidal-behavior> for information about the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.
- <https://www.samhsa.gov/mental-health/suicidal-behavior>. For more information about suicide, recognizing suicidal behavior, actions you can take.
- [FindTreatment.gov](https://www.findtreatment.gov) or call SAMHSA's National Helpline at 800-662-HELP (4357) to locate treatment facilities or providers.

**Remember to take action and save a life! Call 988 for a suicide crisis.**



## 75<sup>th</sup> Annual Dutch Fair

The Dutch Fair is just around the corner! This year's Dutch Fair is Saturday, September 21<sup>st</sup>, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

### DONATING

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

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

Clothing, Linens, Books and Media can be donated starting Sunday September 15<sup>th</sup> 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 8<sup>th</sup> and September 15<sup>th</sup> between church services, September 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> from 9-1 or by contacting Laura Bull, Linda Naumowitz or Sue Pitts.

### VOLUNTEERING

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

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

## August Financial Update as of August 26th, 2024

	Annual Budget	YTD Budget	Total to Date	Over/Under
<b>Congregational Giving</b>	\$ 227,000	\$ 152,090.00	\$ 169,767.00	Over 11%
<b>Other income</b>	\$ 202,240	\$ 240,903.86	\$ 147,058.00	Under 39%
<b>Income draw from Fenimore for HVAC</b>		\$ 250,000.00	\$ 250,000.00	
<b>Total Income</b>	\$ 429,240	\$ 392,993.86	\$ 316,825.00	Under 19%
<b>Expenses</b>	\$ 583,358	\$ 392,993.86	\$ 310,874.00	Under 21%
<b>**HVAC project</b>		\$ 300,000.00	\$ 296,403.00	Under 1.5%

**September Anniversaries:**

- Kenneth III and Jennifer Willcox 3**
- Mike and Mary Jane Crowley 5**
- Karen and Mike Trbovich 5**
- Jason and Maggie White 13**
- Tom and Liesl Falcon 19**
- Mike and Patty Marré 20**
- Andrew and Emily Kohout 22**
- Walt and Nancy Pfuntner 24**
- Ed and Linda Naumowiz 26**
- Bill and Amanda Faulkner 28**

**September Birthdays:**

- Linda Willoughby 3**
- Marian Gilgore 7**
- Angelina Hoffman 12**
- Dave Walsh 16**
- Joshua Rosenberg 18**
- Karen Trvovich 21**
- Jillian Bull 24**
- Joanna DeSilva 25**

- Kayleigh Denney 5**
- Brian Schaefer 8**
- Betty Lauer 13**
- George Squires, Jr 17**
- Jennifer Willcox 19**
- Bill Faubion 22**
- John Pierce, Jr. 24**
- Trudi Thun 25**

- Kristen Faubion 7**
- Susan Hoefler 10**
- Paul Retersdorf 13**
- John Ackner 18**
- David Schalekamp 20**
- Karen Wentworth 23**
- Margo Snyder 24**
- Cheryl Miller 25**

**Address Service Requested**

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