

THE MESSENGER

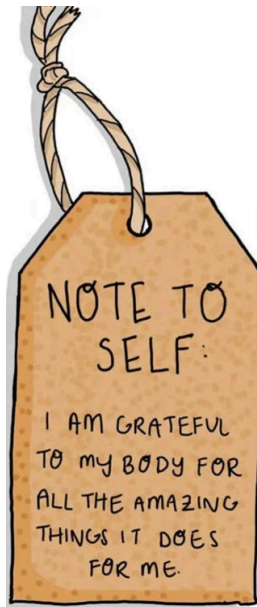
A Pastor's Ponderings

Throughout my life, I have been very blessed to have had very few major injuries and to have generally been in good health. Largely because I have always been relatively averse to physically dangerous or risky behavior, I have never even fractured or broken a single bone. I have had a few stitches and broke an adult tooth following a bike riding accident, but that's about it. Being that I am only in my early thirties, my body has generally always worked when I needed it to.

That was until mid-September when I went to get out of bed one morning, and I found myself physically unable to do so. After a trip to urgent care, I found out that I had herniated a disk in my lower back. While I am well on my way to feeling better and functioning normally, my recent situation has caused me to reflect rather intensely for the first time about how often I have taken my body and its functions for granted. While consciously I have always known I will age and have certainly seen other people age, my recent injury was the first time I feel like I am starting to truly understand what that means.

During this time, I have found two phrases frequently floating in my mind. The first one being 'If you have your health, you have everything.' The second being 'You don't know what you've got 'til it's gone.' I don't think that I have ever really given much thought before to how wonderful it has been that my back has generally worked pretty well up until this point. Or how amazing it is that I have eyes that can see, ears that can hear and a nose that can smell.

This whole ordeal has allowed me to be a whole lot more grateful for the body that I have. And even though at times I have wished to be stronger, or skinnier, or more agile, I am so fortunate to have the body that I have. I hope that I am able to hold onto this gratitude for my body as my years go on.



I can imagine that for those who have seen more years than I or have struggled with a disability or chronic condition, it might often be hard to be grateful for your body. But I hope that as I age I can continue to be grateful for the parts of my physical self that continue to function well and not dwell too much on those parts of me that maybe aren't aging as gracefully. We tend to idealize youthfulness in our society, but I hope that we can find ways to love and give thanks for aging bodies and even bodies with diminished function. I hope that we can always remember how amazing and amazingly complex and intricate our bodies are. It is a miracle that our bodies work as well as they do.

I want to conclude with a final note of thanks to all of you who have been so supportive of me during my recent injury. I so appreciate all the cards and emails, calls and text messages. I am especially grateful to Vicki, Sharon, Diana and Paul for helping to keep everything at the church on track during my absence. While I would have rather not been hurt, it has been another great reminder of what a wonderful community I have been called to serve.

Often as Christians we find ourselves praying for healing and health. And while this is certainly more than acceptable and appropriate, I challenge you to lift up a prayer of thanksgiving to God for the body you have, warts and all. To give thanks even for the wrinkles and gray hairs. Let us all try and better appreciate what we do have while we have it. Life is too short to worry about what may come tomorrow, so let us rejoice and give thanks for all of the blessings we have today.

And again, thank you all for everyday being my beloved community in whom I rejoice!

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

Rev. Christopher J. McCloskey

Renew Bible Study

On October 1st, 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 2nd at 7:00pm in Brink Hall. The course will run on Wednesday evenings through November 13th. 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. It is called the Fresh Table Community Pop-up Pantry. The next date is October 16th. 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.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Save the Date! The Prayer Shawl Ministry will be meeting October 27th at 11:15 in Memorial Lounge. This meeting is to provide support and encouragement for all our knitters, crocheters, and those interested in learning how to participate. For questions, contact Sunny Baldwin, 518-320-4562.



Community Lunch Update by Mark Holley

We have a very busy two months coming up for the Community Meal. In September, we had baked potatoes with a bunch of toppings. We had chili, bacon, broccoli, green onions, two kinds of cheese and sour cream.

In October, the Chili Cook-off returns. We are asking for 15 crockpots of chili for the Cook-off. We are also accepting pans of unique and creative brownies for our brownie auction. Additionally we need brownies for dessert for the meal. The Cook-off is October 25th at 4 pm and ends at 7 pm. Adults are \$15, children ten and up are \$10 and kids under 10 are free. You get 8 - three ounce cups of chili, salad, cornbread and brownies. The Cook-off proceeds help us provide the Thanksgiving Meal for our community.

In November, we will have our 2nd Thanksgiving meal. There will be more information on that in next month's Messenger.

We are currently at 5,927 meals served so far.



Backpack Program Update by Linda Lewis

We're gearing up for the first backpack distribution on Friday, October 18th with packing on Wednesday October 16th and deliveries on the 17th. We hosted the Channel 6 telethon to raise awareness and money for this important program. The total was over \$27,000 with a generous contribution from Neil Golub of \$10,000.

The statistics from last month are worth repeating:

- 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

Mission of the Month: The Backpack Program

The BackPack Program helps provide Scotia-Glenville students with nourishment every weekend when school meals are not available. The program provides bags filled with food that is child-friendly, non-perishable, and easily prepared. Food is picked up by our church volunteers at the Regional Food Bank, and then other volunteers pack bags that are then discreetly distributed to participating children every Friday afternoon.

A typical bag includes two or more breakfast items such as cereal, oatmeal, and granola bars; three or more entrees like mac and cheese, PB & J; milk cards for a gallon of milk and a dozen eggs at Stewarts; a loaf of bread; fruit (fresh when available); canned vegetables once a month, and two snacks. Besides providing needed nourishment, research has shown that students participating in the BackPack Program have better attendance and academic performance and are less likely to face disciplinary action.

The Regional Food Bank charges \$273 to support one student for a year and \$8,190 for 30 students a year. Currently, our church is providing 73 bags a week.

If you have any questions about the program or would like to volunteer in any capacity, connect Linda Lewis or Sue Pitts.

Kids Hope - It's Not too Late to Change a Life

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.



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 13th at 11:15 with Pastor Christopher and Miss Diana.

Faith Formation Update

The first month of Faith Formation a Huge Success!

September's theme was God's creation. In October we will explore how God expects us to care for his creation. We will stay in our new format.

Oct. 6 - Faith formation for K-12th grade w/Miss Diana

Oct. 13 - Family/Intergenerational learning experience
- Confirmation interest meeting @ 11:15am

Oct. 20 - Faith formation for K-12th grade w/Miss Diana

Oct. 27 - Stay in worship and participate more meaningfully in worship
- Mabee Farm Event @ 3:00-6:00pm

Can't make it to church? We have *online resources* on our website that are updated regularly. Go online and check it out!



**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.

Choir Director Search Continues

With the leadership and guidance of Diana and Sarah, the choir has successfully started a new program year. It has been wonderful to have so many new and returning faces. And you can still join us every Thursday evening at 7:00pm for rehearsal!

We are so grateful for Diana's and Sarah's willingness to help us fill in the gap while we continue to search for a permanent choir director. Please continue to encourage your musically talented friends and acquaintances to apply.

Time Change

Don't forget to fall back an hour on Sunday November 3rd as DST comes to an end.





Most likely when you start to see the pink ribbons around, you know it’s Breast Cancer Awareness month. Overall, the average risk of a woman in the United States developing breast cancer sometime in her life is about 13%. This means there is a **1 in 8** chance she will develop breast cancer. Fortunately, the overall 5-year relative survival rate for breast cancer is **91.2%**.

A breast cancer diagnosis is scary and overwhelming. One place to start looking for information is on The National Breast Cancer Foundation website. This Foundation is a U.S. breast cancer organization that promotes breast cancer awareness and education, including awareness, symptoms, treatments and free educational guidelines. It also provides information about free screening services, and supports that are available for breast cancer patients and survivors. Their website, <https://www.nationalbreastcancer.org/educational-guides/>, even offers a free downloadable “Hope Kit” that answers the questions new patients need to know, empowers them as they process their diagnosis, and connects them to the support they need. You can also reach them at (972) 248-9200.

Don’t hesitate to check this out, whether you have a breast cancer diagnosis. Chances are you or someone you know will in the future. Be prepared!

Fowler Harvest Gathering

The 2024 Fowler Harvest Gathering is Sunday, November 3rd at 3:00pm in Brink Hall. This annual event brings numerous friends of Fowler together for an evening for food and fellowship as well as to raise funds to support this invaluable mission and ministry of the church. The cost is \$60 per person.



September Financial Update

Report as of 9/26/24		Annual Budget	YTD Budget	Total to Date	Over/Under
Congregational Giving.		227,000	\$ 170,250.00	\$ 190,974.00	Over 12%
Other income		202,240	\$ 269,668.50	\$ 179,265.00	Under 34%
	Income draw from Fenimore for HVAC		\$ 250,000.00	\$ 250,000.00	
Total Income		429,240	\$ 439,918.50	\$ 370,239.00	Under 16%
Expenses		583,358	\$ 439,918.50	\$ 384,601.00	Under 23%
	**HVAC project		\$ 300,000.00	\$ 296,403.00	Under 1.5%



75th Dutch Fair: One for the History Books!

Many thanks to all those who helped with this year's Dutch Fair! From planning, to setting up; from cleaning up, to working the day of; from donating baking goods, to praying for us from home...each and every contribution is appreciated more than you can ever know! While it was a crazy week with all the preparations, it was wonderful to see so many working toward a common cause. This Fair was a great success because of everyone who helped to make it that way! We are a blessed people. The event brought in over \$11,000 which will be used to support Kids' Hope and the many feeding ministries of the church. May God continue to bless this church.



RCA Restructuring

The Reformed Church in America has been working on a restructuring plan for the denomination the last three years and has begun the process of revealing the fruits of many people's work and time. It is a major change in how our denomination will be structured. If you wish to learn more about it, we will be hosting a meeting in Brink Hall on Sunday, October 27th at 3:00 PM. Please notify the office if you wish to attend so that appropriate materials are sent to you so that you are prepared with any questions you may have.

October Anniversaries:

Paul & Tee Munson 8
Tom & Jane Lansing 9
Bill & Kirsten Shave 10
Brad & June Coryer 14
Mark & Deborah Rahn 17
Mark & Denise Lansing 23

October Birthdays:

Betsey Homer 2
Linda Falcon 5
Ken Willcox IV 5
Sue Alibozek 17
Michael Trbovich 21
Bruce Wurz 24
Dustin Madison 28

Bella Plaske 2
Michael Naumowicz 5
Lorraine Gonyea 10
Kent Busman 19
Patty Marré 22
Diane Faubion 26
Mike DeMasi 29

Jackson Bodden 5
Lee Poremba 5
Katherine Penn 15
Cheryl Cook 19
Ed Rosenberg III 23
Mary Grumbling 26
Michele Swain 31

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