

THE MESSENGER

A Pastor's Ponderings

There are many different ways of serving the church. Each of us according to our gifts and talents are called to do what we can to support and upbuild their local worshipping community. Sometimes God places these callings directly on our hearts and other times God uses others to make us aware of a need we are being summoned to meet.

Our congregation is currently facing one such need. Annually, a number of elders and deacons rotate off of the Consistory (the board that administers the church) and new members need to be added. This is in order to encourage the inclusion of new voices and perspectives. It is also so that fresh energy can be injected into the body in order to keep our governance flexible, agile and responsive.

The Consistory at FRCS is a body of 12 members with equal numbers of elders and deacons. These elders and deacons also serve as the leadership to our church's seven councils. A term on the Consistory is three years with the ability to serve up to two terms in a row.

We are currently looking for 2 members to serve as deacons and 3 members to serve as elders. One of the elder terms is only for one year in order to get us back into proper rotation, while the others are for terms of three years.

The major practical difference between a deacon and an elder is that elders are required to meet separately at least once a quarter.

The councils that have leadership positions open are Administration, Christian Education, Missions and Buildings & Grounds. So if any of these areas are of interest to you, I encourage you to enter into a time of discernment to explore if God is calling you at this time to service on the Consistory.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me. If you are not currently a member, I will be offering a new members class before the end of the year, so do not let this inhibit you.

If Consistory service is not for you there are others opportunities to service.

First, we are looking for three members who would be willing to serve on the 2025 Nominating Committee. This is the committee responsible for looking for new additions to the Consistory. This is not a huge commitment, but you do need to be comfortable talking to people and asking if they would be willing to serve on the Consistory.

Second, we are looking for two members to serve on our Abuse Prevention and Response Team. This is the group responsible for helping to keep FRCS a safe place for everyone, especially children. This team would also respond to allegations of misconduct in the event it is reported.

Finally, we are looking for at least one member to serve on our Cemetery Board that is responsible for caring for our three cemeteries.

I know that it is easy to assume that someone else will step up and volunteer to serve, but if everyone does this then the church will be left without the leadership necessary for it to function at its best.

Truly, many hands make light work. So I hope and pray that each and every person reading this takes at least a moment to consider if they have the time, ability and gifts to respond to the church's need.

Not only will you make the life of this church better, but also my life better. Many have asked since I have arrived what they can do to support me, and stepping forward willing to serve would be an immense support and gift to me. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

Rev. Christopher J. McCloskey

Time Change

Don't forget to fall back an hour on Sunday, November 3rd as DST comes to an end. We will be 'falling back' or 'gaining' an hour.

Conversation Project

Have you had the conversation yet?

The goal of The Conversation Project is to make it easier to initiate conversations about end-of-life issues and to encourage people to talk now and often as necessary so that their wishes are known when the time comes. This is for all ages!

The Conversation Project was launched at FRCS on Sunday, September 29th. Approximately 35 people listened to two short videos explaining how to talk about what matters to you regarding your end-of-life health care. Rev. Derek DeJager, a Pastoral Care chaplain at Ellis Hospital, joined us and explained the role his department has in helping families discuss end of life health care. Starter packets were distributed along with other materials. These materials can be picked up at the office or at theconversationproject.org. A survey was completed at the end of the program and from this information, the Congregational Care Council and the Health and Wellness Team will host other follow up workshops.

The first workshop will be held on Sunday, November 3rd at 11:15am in the Lake Hill Library. Pastor Christopher will lead a conversation on planning a memorial service and writing an obituary.

If you are not able to attend this workshop, but are interested in exploring this topic, Pastor Christopher would be more than happy to schedule an appointment with you.

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.

Election Day Bake Sale

Election day, November 5th, brings lots of people to our church. We need your baked goods to sell. There is a sign up sheet in the Brink Hall lobby.



Renew Bible Study

Renew Bible Study: The study group will be finishing their fall session November 12. Then on Tuesday, December 3 at 12 noon, the group begins its Advent readings from the book, Watch for the Light: Readings for Advent and Christmas, a book that includes a variety of daily readings for the Advent season. Classes, which will be led by David Walsh and Sunny Baldwin, will be on Zoom for three weeks. Each week one reading will be selected to discuss. New participants are invited to join for this special season of the church year. For the schedule and Zoom link, contact Sunny Baldwin at 518-320-4562 or csunnyb@nycap.rr.com

Pastor's Bible Study

Rev. McCloskey is leading a 7-week Bible Study entitled "In the Shadow of Empire: The Geopolitics of the Bible." The course runs on Wednesday evenings through November 13th covering 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!



Mission of the Month: The Deacons' Fund

Our November Mission of the Month is our Deacons' Fund. Our Deacons' Fund enables us to respond to local emergency needs as they arise. The Deacons' Fund also enables our pastor and Board of Deacons to respond to the emergency needs of people connected to our congregation. You can contribute to our Mission of the Month either by using the specially marked envelope in the church pews or on the table in the Narthex, or by writing "Mission of the Month" on the memo line of your check to First Reformed Church of Scotia.

Consecration Sunday and Thank You Coffee Hour

On Sunday, November 10th we will be celebrating Consecration Sunday. During the service, 2025 pledges will be formally dedicated during worship. Following the 10:00am service, there will be a special Thank You Coffee Hour to celebrate everyone who has given service to the church and its mission over 2024.

New Choir Director Hired

We are pleased to welcome Hunter Harville-Moxley as our new Choir Director. Choir rehearses every Thursday at 7:00pm. All are welcome. If there are any adults or children that would like to share their musical gifts for special music on November 24th please reach out to Hunter.



Community Lunch Update by Mark Holley

The Community meal will have the second Thanksgiving Meal event on the 26th and 27th of November. The meals will be cooked on Tuesday and packaged up on Wednesday. Thomas Corners, Beekudual and Alpus Fire Departments will deliver some of the meals while some of the guests will pick up their meals at the church.

We need a total of 100 apple or pumpkin pies. The pies can be store bought or homemade. Please have them in a disposable pan. Drop off for the pies will be Tuesday the 26th in Brink hall. The dinner will consist of turkey, stuffing, gravy, candied sweet potatoes and green beans. A roll will accompany the meal. 65 families/individuals are signed up so far, but we expect more.

The Community hit 6,000 meals served within 6 years in September. We had another 50 meals go out at the grab and go in October. Thank you to all who have made this goal attainable.



Backpack Program Update by Linda Lewis

This year's Weekend BackPack Program started October 16th with packing 69 bags. We are already planning for our Thanksgiving distribution on November 21st. Hannaford in Glenville has agreed to provide 20 free turkeys and another 20 turkeys at the lowest price available. The box of food will include stuffing mix, instant mashed potatoes, gravy, and other Thanksgiving items along with the regular staples.

The BackPack Heroes Campaign, sponsored by WRGB TV, raised **\$85,103** for the Regional Food Bank this year! The Food Bank supports 160+ schools in the area. We were so excited to be selected to host the live TV segments with Liz Bishop this past September. A big thank you to Susan Schwarz, S-G superintendent of schools, the several parents who spoke at the event, and the volunteers who packed 72 bags on air. We also received a generous donation for hosting the event.

Fresh Table Community Pop-up Pantry



FRESHTABLE POP UP
COMMUNITY 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 November 20th. 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.

Thanksgiving Eve Service

On Wednesday, November 27th at 7:00pm, we will celebrate our annual Thanksgiving Eve service with Bellevue Reformed Church. This year Bellevue will be hosting. All are welcome!

October Financial Update

As of 10/24/24					
		Annual Budget	YTD Budget	Total to Date	Over/Under
Congregational Giving		\$ 227,000.00	\$ 181,600.00	\$209,517.00	Over 15%
Other income		\$ 202,240.00	\$ 287,646.40	\$ 189,537.00	Under 34%
Income draw from Fenimore for HVAC			\$ 250,000.00	\$250,000.00	
Total Income		\$429,240.00	\$469,246.40	\$399,054.00	Under 15%
Expenses		\$ 583,358.00	\$ 469,246.40	\$414,843.00	Under 12%
HVAC Project			\$300,000.00	\$296,403.00	Under 1.2%

Operation Christmas Child

Families and individuals can make fun and meaningful memories by packing shoebox gifts for children in need! What a great way to start a Christmas tradition that emphasizes giving—as the Lord says, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). There's nothing like the personal touch of shopping for and filling shoe boxes together to ensure that boys and girls around the world receive quality gifts as they hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

We Need You to pack a shoebox!



- Step 1. Get a shoebox from Miss Diana or from home.
- Step 2. Get Instructions on how to pack a box.
- Step 3. Go shopping - this is the fun part!
- Step 4. Pack your shoebox.
- Step 5. Label your box. Miss Diana has labels.
- Step 6. Leave the completed shoebox on the cart next to Miss Diana's office at church with a \$10 donation, if possible, for shipping cost. Need boxes by **Nov. 17th**

Have more questions? Contact Miss Diana at education@firstreformedscotia.org

Advent 2025

That's right, I said advent. Believe it or not, advent will soon be here. Advent devotionals will be available by Sunday, November 24th. This year's theme is "From the Manger"

Hanging of the Greens

We will be decorating our building for the Christmas Season on Sunday, December 1st after 10am service. Plans are underway so save the date!



Church Cemeteries

DID YOU KNOW. . . ?

Our church is the owner of three local cemeteries. The Church owns the Church Cemetery in front of the sanctuary, the Sanders Cemetery (just down the road toward Mohawk Avenue on the left) and Park Cemetery on Sacandaga Road. There are no more burial sites at the Church Cemetery or at Sanders Cemetery but Park Cemetery is an active, operating cemetery with gravesites available for both caskets and urns.

Running the cemeteries and managing their finances is an important, responsible task. Income from new gravesites and interest must be managed in such a way that all three cemeteries can be properly maintained perpetually, without becoming a burden to the church. The Consistory has given this task to a Board of Trustees which now consists of Ken Willcox, Jr serving as the Chair; Tom Bodden, Richard Doyle, Barbara Wurz serving as members (*we have an opening for another member, please contact Vicki at the church office to volunteer your service*) and Vicki Hayner serving as the Secretary/Treasurer. We are blessed to have Andy Boniewski serving as our cemetery administrator and caretaker. If you would like more information, you can contact Andy at (518) 374-7024. Lot sales and burials are open to the general public.

Women's Epiphany Retreat 2025

It is time for us to think about our annual Women's Retreat! We'll be joining together in the comfort of Chi Rho Lodge at Camp Fowler **January 10-12**. The cost for 2025 will be **\$170** per person if we get 24 people. If we don't get 24 the cost will go up. Cost includes meals, room & board. Sign up with Miss Diana. We'll provide a program including faith focused discussions, games, crafts, fun and more! See Miss Diana for more information.





Health & Wellness Note: 29.7 million people—or 8.9% of the U.S. population—have been diagnosed with diabetes. Additionally, it is estimated that there are 8.7 million people that are undiagnosed. In fact, “Diabesity”, which is the co-occurrence of obesity and type 2 diabetes, is now considered a global epidemic; meaning that excess body fat is the most significant risk factor for type 2 diabetes. According to the American Diabetes Association, there are lifestyle changes you can make in order to control this chronic disease: These are:

- **Fitness:** Regular physical activity is an important part of diabetes management. Look for activities to increase your activity, whether it's walking, running, swimming, or finding another activity you enjoy.
- **Weight Management:** When you have diabetes, being overweight or obese, can increase your risks for diabetes-related complications like heart disease, kidney disease, and stroke. Work with your primary care provider to find the best way for you to eat more healthily and lose weight. So you can maintain a healthy life.
- **Medications & Treatments:** Diabetes medications and treatment plans are different for each person and can change at times. Be sure to ask your provider about your medications, including the names, purpose, and how and when to take it. Also, check which devices and options can work the best for you.
- **Better Choices for Life:** Learn about this program that helps you make informed choices and easily identify food products, health- and wellness-related products, and products designed specifically for diabetes management that meet ADA guidelines. It will help you to learn what to look for the next time you're out shopping.
- **Substance Use & Diabetes:** Substance use when living with diabetes presents risks—but there are ways you may be able to indulge safely. Be sure to find out about the resources and discuss with your healthcare provider.

Fortunately, the American Diabetes Association has a more comprehensive and detailed source of resources at: <https://diabetes.org/about-diabetes>. If you don't have access to a computer and would like to review what information is available, please contact Sunny Baldwin, Faith Community Nurse, at 518-320-4562 for assistance.

With planning and following your plan, you can live a healthy life with diabetes!

November Anniversaries:

Joe & Kristen Bodden 27

November Birthdays:

**Joan Grant 1
Shannon Warfield 9
Spike Ahl 17
Rheana Gravell 18
Philip Hermance 26**

**Al Snyder 2
Maggie White 13
Jay Harlow 17
David White 20
Heather Kramer 26**

**Dave Wentworth 3
Ken Willcox, Jr 13
Jane Brehm 18
Jim Pierce 22
Karen Faulkner 29**

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