THE MESSENGER

A Pastor's Ponderings

With the 250th anniversary of our nation's founding nearly upon us, patriotism is in the air. Some will express this patriotism with firework displays, parades or cookouts. Others with acts of community service, by visiting veterans or through solemn remembrances of those who paid the ultimate sacrifice for this nation we are privileged to live in. But I believe that one of the greatest displays of patriotism, no matter the time of year or occasion, is by continuing to demand and work towards the continued improvement of this nation.

I believe that a patriot is able to celebrate the good and identify the areas that still need work. I believe true patriotism is not blind patriotism. A patriot must acknowledge that our nation has not lived up to its full potential. For we were founded on the lofty ideals of freedom and justice for all – and an honest assessment of the state of our nation reveals we are not there yet. Yes, we can celebrate that this has been achieved for many, but freedom and justice have not yet been attained for all. This kind of honest critique of one's nation is not a failure of patriotism, as some have claimed, but in my opinion its truest form.

I love my nation so much in fact that I want it to be even better. I believe that an inability to see where this country has fallen short will lead to stagnation and regression – an outcome no patriot should want to see.

One of the ways I have always expressed love is by wanting those people and institutions I love to improve. I love this church so much that I have to clearly see this community's shortcomings, so that it can be ever more effective in furthering its mission. The same is true for the people I love. I want all of you to find greater success, wholeness and wellbeing – and this requires the ability to give guidance, support, and advice that actually addresses what is keeping you from reaching their greatest self-actualization.

So as you celebrate the upcoming patriotic milestone, I challenge you to think about what you can do to make the next 250 years even better. How can you contribute to furthering the noble goal of truly bringing freedom and justice for all?

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

Rev. Christopher J. McCloskey

Outdoor Worship

The 8:00am worship service is now being held outside (weather permitting). Make sure to dress accordingly! The 10:00am worship service will continue to be in the Sanctuary.

Men's Group

The Men's Group will meet next on Thursday, July 9th at 6:00pm in Brink Hall. ALL men are encouraged and welcomed at any of our gatherings! The group will begin its study of "Ten Men of The Bible: by Max Lucado at this meeting. And please, if you wish to share your ideas, do not hesitate to contact Bill Shave at wshavejr@gmail.com, or 518-573-1098. If Bill is busy, contact Bob Baldwin at frcsmen@gmail.com, or 518-320-4561.

Dinner With Neighbors

We are so excited to extend a new meal to our neighbors this summer! We will host a Free **DINNER With Neighbors** on Wednesday, July 29th from 5:30-7:30pm. All are welcome to attend! If you are interested in helping to prep, serve, or clean up, please be on the lookout for a sign-up that will be sent out via email in early July. Any questions, please contact Laura Taft Bull.

Save The Date: Celebrating Miss Stephanie and Glenville Co-op

The Glenville Cooperative Nursery School will be closing its doors for the last time at the end of their summer program this August. A beloved partner of First Reformed, it is bittersweet to see the close of this long-standing organization. Miss Stephanie has been the creative, spirited, and energetic positive leader since 2008, guiding children through so many projects, play, learning, and songs! Please join us in celebrating Miss Stephanie and the Glenville Co-Op at a special coffee hour reception on Sunday, August 9th following worship. If you have a family member that attended Glenville Co-Op in the care of Miss Stephanie, please bring a written memory or copy of a photo to share with her as we wish her well on many new adventures.

Genealogy Group

The genealogy group will be meeting next on October 7th at 7-9pm in Brink Hall. We will be convening October through April. Why? May, and through the summer are busy family and activity times. And, September our church is in gear preparing for the Dutch Fair.
And good news! I got a new laptop...no broken screen LOL! Also, for those individuals who wish to set up some one-on-one coaching, I invite you to set up a time to meet.
If you have questions, please contact me, Bob Baldwin via email Robert.baldwin.acctrng@gmail.com or text 518-320-4561.

Summer Lunch Program

Our Summer Lunch Program is ready to serve! The first lunch will be Thursday, July 2nd. We would love to have YOU be a part of the summer fun! Adults and teens are welcome to sign up for dates. Volunteers will help prep food, clean dishes, and help provide amazing hospitality to our guests. Coordinate with friends, neighbors, or co-workers and "sponsor" a day volunteering together! Feel free to bring your favorite puzzle, card game, or fun craft to share! For more info, contact Laura Taft Bull
Check out our sign-up genius here:
https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090A45AFAA2EA7F58-64601805-summer

Community Meal Update by Mark Holley

The Community Meal successfully celebrated its first day of Camp Care. We had cheeseburgers, hot dogs and spaghetti salad. We also had delicious treats at the dessert bar.
The craft was making God's eyes. In addition to adult coloring sheets, sudoku, word searches and crosswords for them to enjoy. We served 70 meals.
The Grab & Go for June served 45 meals. We had sandwiches, macaroni salad, fruit cups and cookies.
The second day of Camp Care will be June 27th. I would like to thank all the volunteers for their hard work. A special thank you to Dianna, Karen and Laura for helping Camp Care happen.

Backpack Update by Linda Lewis

The school year BackPack program ended on June 5th and will not begin again until mid-October. The Missions Council has approved four additional distributions of extra food available to the families over the summer: June 10th, July 8th, August 12th, and September 9th. Students miss the free breakfasts and lunches that are not available during the summer. Also, to help families access free food during the summer months, members of the Council have developed a calendar listing resources in the Scotia-Glenville area for July and August that offer free meals and food items. We are grateful to be part of this community that realizes how important it is to care for each other, especially those in need.

77th Annual Dutch Fair

While summer is now beginning, we also start thinking about planning our 77th annual Dutch Fair! If you are interested in being a part of the planning for this year's festivities, please join us after 10am worship on Sunday, August 2nd. We will have a brief planning session to share insights and ideas for what will make the 2026 Dutch Fair an event loved by all!

This year's Dutch Fair will be held on Saturday, September 19th, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. We will begin accepting donations on Sunday September 13th after 10am worship and Monday-Thursday from 9-1 in Brink Hall.

What We Will Accept:

- Clean, gently used clothing and household linens, towels, & bedding.
- Everyday Household items such as kitchen supplies, small electrical appliances and tools. *(Plates, bowls, and glasses must be dishwasher and microwave safe)*
- Toys
- Books
- Jewelry (Donations *can be dropped off at the office, M-F, 9:00am-1:00pm)*
- Sporting Goods
- Furniture and antiques by appointment only!

What We Will NOT Accept:

- Monitors, TVs or computer screens.
- Computers, printers, keyboards or stereos
- Tires
- Candles or cosmetics (new or used)
- Office supplies

Nothing musty, moldy, or broken!

If you would like to volunteer please contact Laura Bull or Sue Pitts. 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! If you have managed an area in the past, please let us know that you are willing to do so again this year.

Vendor Applications can be found on the church's website (firstreformedscotia.org) under Calendar & Events –> 2026 Dutch Fair.

Over The Bridge

As the weather gets warmer, the items that are needed for the homeless and those at shelters have changed. We still give out 30 sandwiches each week, which are usually eaten immediately! A small orange and a few cookies are also included, as well as a bottle of water.

Shelters in Schenectady have a policy that residents must leave the building by 8:00am and cannot return until 4:30pm, taking all of their belongings with them. This is why so many spend their days in the Schenectady library or on the streets. The availability of fresh cold water is limited, so this is especially important for them. Doug has a large cooler filled with ice and 2 cases of water that disappears incredibly quickly! So, please consider donating **water** to our mission throughout the summer.

Also needed are men's tee shirts in sizes L, XL, and XXL. Summer socks are always welcomed.

We include a stop at a motel in Schenectady that houses primarily families while they await apartments. These children need summer activities such as frisbees, bubbles, coloring books, and sidewalk chalk. Books are always a favorite for a variety of ages.

The people we meet are so grateful just to be acknowledged as individuals being loved by God and not forgotten. Thank you for supporting this amazing mission and please consider riding with Doug some Sunday afternoon.

Community Cupboard Update

Community Cupboard is one of the many ways that we here at First Reformed Church of Scotia are supporting our neighbors. Located outside of Brink Hall, it is available 24/7 and allows for anonymity as well as participation from the community for replenishing with donations of food and personal care items. Thanks to all who responded to the June “Hunger Doesn’t Take a Vacation” donation collection, the Cupboard has been stocked with an assortment of delicious snack and juice items.

Are you wondering what you might help to provide this month? Recently we received a comment from a guest that has found the personal care items extremely helpful. The storage bin for these items is empty! Items to consider donating include

- *shampoo*
- *bar soap*
- *toothpaste*
- *toothbrushes*
- *deodorant*
- *Band-aids* - A particular request from a guest was for first aid items like *band-aids*. We can all help to care for those inevitable scraped knees this summer!

Kids Hope

I am so excited for another year of Kids Hope. I have started planning for the 2026-2027 school year but I need your help! WE NEED MENTORS! 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.

Diana Ackner education@firstreformedscotia.org
518-428-2914(cell)

Faith Formation classes resume on SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13th for grades K-12. Join Miss Diana at 10:30ish for a time of learning and worship.

Take Home Church

Here is a summer resource geared for families but can be used by all. This resource will guide you through scripture readings along with some awesome stories to help you keep connected with God over the summer months. Resources are available on the FRCS website with links to all the stories. Enjoy "worshipping" from home.

Camp Fowler Letters

We have many kids attending Camp Fowler this summer, it's going to be amazing! Consider writing letters to our campers. Check out the Fowler bulletin board or call the office for information on who's attending which weeks and send a quick note saying hello. It's always fun to get mail… and they get to "Kiss the Moose" if they get 3 letters!!!

Send mail to:

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

SAVE THE DATE

CRAZY Family Fun CARNIVAL

Sunday, September 13th following 10AM Worship
Bounce house, Carnival games, Prizes and more!
More info to come!

Health and Wellness Note

It's July and it probably seems like summer vacation has just begun. But it probably won't be long before you hear, "I'm bored, there's nothing to do". (The official definition of boredom is "the state of being weary and restless through lack of interest." It may be a surprise to learn that boredom is generally considered to be a self-inflicted problem.)

Then as the summer goes on all the anticipation of fun fades away and children miss their school friends. The American Psychological Association lists finding little pleasure in life and losing interest in hobbies, is one of the signs of depression. Parents should be aware that extended periods of this stress and boredom can indicate that depression is setting in and take action. According to Beverly Beuermann-King, a Canadian mental health speaker, wrote, "The antidote to stress and boredom is curiosity. Curiosity happens when you start to explore the world." Below are some tips for children to combat stress and boredom. Some may even work for adults when they're bored or stressed.

- **Make up a new sport or game.** When your children have created new games or new rules for an old game, time flies by. So balloon volleyball anyone? You don't need a whole team to play!
- **Have a picnic.** If able, have the children make their own lunch and try to come up with different food combinations or maybe breakfast for dinner. Then walk out to your yard or another outdoor spot, if available. Raining? Take lunch to a friend or family member.
- **Find activities that challenge them.** Look for scavenger hunts, themed walks, paper airplanes or projects for them to do. Pinterest has activities for all age groups.
- **Plan a camp-out in the backyard.** Set up a tent or sleep under the stars. If allowed, roast marshmallows and have them learn how to make a campfire.
- **Learn about another country.** On a rainy day, research a country. Learn about their customs and foods and then make a recipe together.
- **Write a play for the neighborhood.** Scenery and costumes can also be included.
- **Create a list of chores for them to do.** You might be amazed how quickly they find something else to do.

Summer comes just once a year. Let the boredom and fun begin.

2026 General Synod Recap

Dear Siblings in Christ of the First Reformed Church of Scotia,

The Reformed Church in America's (www.rca.org) 219th General Synod met in June in Nashville, TN to do the work of the church. Delegates from RCA congregations the world over convened with equity based hospitality as a guide as well as a desire to live into the vision of Revelation 7:9, and heard reports from the RCA's Ethnic Councils (www.rca.org/about/government/general-synod/racial-ethnic-councils/), including the Native American Indigenous Ministries Council, the African-American Black Council, The Pacific and Asian American Ministries Council, The Hispanic Ministries Council, our partners in Mission (www.rca.org/global-mission/), as well as various General Synod Commissions. The General Synod Commissions (https://www.rca.org/about/government/general-synod/commissions/) include the following groups: Christian Action, Christian Discipleship and Education, Christian Unity, Christian Worship, Church Order, History, Judicial Business, Nominations, Race and Ethnicity, Theology, and Women. Together the delegates of the RCA's General Synod 2026, made moving and powerful statements denouncing Christian Nationalism as a doctrine, supporting the right and proper treatment of immigrants and refugees, validating our rich history and practice of women in leadership as Ministers of Word and Sacrament as well as Elders and Deacons, and much more. If you would like to read more about all of this fabulous work, please see the link below: www.rca.org/general-synod-2026-news-summary/

Finally, and most importantly, the RCA General Synod 2026 worshiped together each day as a body moving toward the Middle Assembly structure and onward as Christ's body in the world. As a Seminarian representing New Brunswick Theological Seminary, I was honored to attend and both witness and learn of the polity of our denomination and its good work. If you would like to hear more personal reflections, please reach out to me, at lynnrmakrin@gmail.com or 518-596-6559.

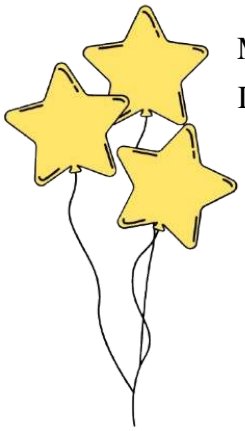
Respectfully shared with gratitude for the amazing work of our denomination,

Lynn Makrin

FRCS Preaching Elder & NBTS Student Under Care of Schenectady Classis

July Birthdays

Don Bekkering	1	Mary Jane Crowley	10	Bill Faulkner	21
Dave Schaefer	2	Jack Arnold	10	Jessica Bodden	22
Paul Munson IV	3	Peter Lewis	11	Keith Makrin	22
Marcia Davis	4	Barbara King	11	Jerry Haldeman	23
Christopher McCloskey	4	Lou Crisci	13	Emma Willcox	24
Al Fedak	4	Amanda Zenner	14	Laurel Le Lipski	26
Leo Crisci	5	Savannah Willoughby	14	Benjamin Graber	27
Liesl Falcon	6	Tony Crisci	15	Claire Beauchemin	29
Tom Falcon	8	Belle Warfield	17	Christina Stryjek	29
Marty Gilgore	8	Sheryl Pelkey	17	Daniel Hoffman	30
Doug Bartling	8	Jill Busman	18		



July Anniversaries

Chris & Amy Grumbling	2	David & Lorraine Gonyea	20
Randy & Cheryl MacNeil	8	David & Karen Wentworth	25
Bob & Sunny Baldwin	10	David & Joyce Murray	28
Lou & Stephanie Crisci	11	Diury Alvarado & Joe Carosella	29
Richard & Terri Doyle	20	Rick & Jessica Crisci	30

August Birthdays

John Sheehan	5	Bill Shave, Jr	16	Rebecca Jarczynski-Okpoti	24
Joyce Murray	7	Nancy Landry	17	Michael Marré	26
Bowden Stryjek	7	Miles Torelli	17	Tee Munson	27
Barbara Graber	9	Russ Garrison	19	Amy Grumbling	28
Lori DeMasi	10	Linea Kilgallen	20	Emily Kohout	30
Fern Lee	10	Aaron Madison	20	Lillian Rooney	30
Rylan Beauchemin	12	Olivia Munson	21	James Rooney	30
Karen Squires	15	Abbey Naumowiz	23	Patrick Beauchemin	30

August Anniversaries

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

July Mission of the Month - Joan Nicole Prince House

The Joan Nicole Prince home provides a safe, comfortable and caring residence for people who have the fewest options and least amount of support during their final days. Over the course of one year, 15 to 20 people are expected to pass through its doors. Volunteers and staff provide care 24 hours-a-day, 7 days-a-week serving as "family" for residents of the home, which is located at 22 Glenview Drive in Scotia. The Joan Nicole Prince home works in collaboration with the Community Hospice to provide medical care for each individual. The love that fills this home is amazing and the love that has surrounded the home through the generosity of the community is awe-inspiring. Please consider supporting July's Mission of the Month.

August Mission of the Month - Samaritan Care Fund

Our August Mission of the Month is the Samaritan Counseling Center's Care Fund. 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

Address Service Requested

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