

THE MESSENGER

A Pastor's Ponderings

In the constant busyness and stress of life it is so easy to miss the utter majesty and grandeur of God's creation. We rarely stop and smell the roses as often as we should. We get so caught up in our own thoughts and worries that we give ourselves a kind of tunnel vision that blocks out much of the good and the beautiful all around.

I can imagine that this could frustrate God. We are constantly lifting up our prayers filled with worry, concern and need. We are constantly asking for signs - for proof that God is there. Yet in those same moments because we are so distracted we miss what God is already actively doing.

And every once in a while I can also imagine God thinking - 'you know what I think I'll do something that truly nobody can miss.' And then making it so.

On Thursday, August 20th as our Men's Group concluded its study on Noah, God said 'watch this' and set a rainbow to light up the sky. It was actually a double rainbow that lasted an incredibly long time.



Just as the rainbow was sent by God to Noah as a sign of promise, the rainbow still reminds us of God's abiding presence with us. As I looked up, I was struck with a kind of awe that admittedly I had not felt for some time. The rainbow's beauty reverberated in my soul and brought a tear to my eye.

That rainbow broke through. It broke through my worries and my stress. It broke through all the noise of my life. And in my mind resounded a single verse "Be still and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10).

That rainbow was a reminder that everything will be okay. That the floodwaters of our current moment will eventually subside. That all things are in God's hands.

With all the busyness of back to school, my prayer for you this month is that you stop every once and a while - quiet your heart and mind - and look for God doing beautiful and good things all around you. May God strike you from time to time with a sense of awe and the peace that comes from knowing that our loving God rules over all.

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

Rev. Christopher J. McCloskey

Family Fun Carnival & BBQ

Sunday, September 13th following 10am Worship

Bounce house, carnival games, prizes, ice cream and more!

Hotdogs and Hamburgers will be provided by the Men's Group.

Invite a friend, a neighbor, a cousin, anyone! **ALL** are welcome!



Faith Formation for Kindergarten - 12th grade will begin on Sunday, **September 13th** at 10:30am (1/2 way through worship). Come join Miss Diana for a time of worship, learning and fun. Our year is going to center around discipleship. **ALL** are welcome!

Nursery Update - Sad news; Miss Brittney has resigned. She has moved and the drive is just too far for her to be here Sunday mornings. We thank her for her service. In the short term the nursery will not be staffed until we decide what to do going forward. The TV will be on with the live stream and you are more than welcome to use it with your child. If you have any questions please see Miss Diana.

Adult Education Series

Rev. McCloskey will be offering an adult education series this fall entitled "Neither Holy, nor Roman, nor an Empire: the Holy Roman Empire and the Protestant Reformation." The class will gather on Tuesday evenings at 6:00pm starting on October 6th.

Renew Bible Study

This group will begin gathering again on September 22nd. We will be studying *Why Science and Faith Need Each Other*. We meet on Tuesdays at noon via Zoom. For questions, a copy of the book or a Zoom link, contact Sunny Baldwin, at csunnyb53@gmail.com or 518-320-4562.



KIDS HOPE USA is one caring adult mentoring one 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.

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 & Games
- 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.

Outdoor Worship

Outdoor worship at the 8:00am service will conclude on Sunday, September 6th. On Sunday, September 13th we will be back in the Sanctuary.



Enter for a chance to win!

On July 15th, the members of Judy's Sew n Sew presented Pastor Christopher with a beautiful Quilt to raffle at the Dutch Fair.

Proceeds from the raffle will go to:

Kids Hope USA

Tickets are on sale NOW: 1 for \$5 or 5 for \$20.

The drawing will take place on September 21st.

All Saints Day

For the first time in many years, this congregation celebrated All Saints Day in 2025 with a stand alone evening service to commemorate loved ones who have been called home to God. The service was very well received and appreciated. This service will be offered again this year and we plan to make this an annual celebration. We will gather on Sunday, November 1st at 7:00pm in the Sanctuary. The service will include reading of the names of those who have gone on to heavenly glory. Often the names are only for those that passed in the previous year, but at this service you can submit the names of loved ones to be read no matter when they passed on. Keep an eye out for your opportunity to submit names in the near future.



New Members Classes

In 2025 this congregation welcomed a total of 7 new members! And we hope to see similar numbers this year. To become a member individuals need to complete a brief course of study (two 2-hour classes) led by Pastor Christopher. There are a number of people who have expressed interest in joining the church, so this is your opportunity. Rev. McCloskey plans to offer another series of classes (two 2 hour classes) this Fall if there is interest. If you are interested in being a part of a Fall cohort, or have any questions, please reach out to him.



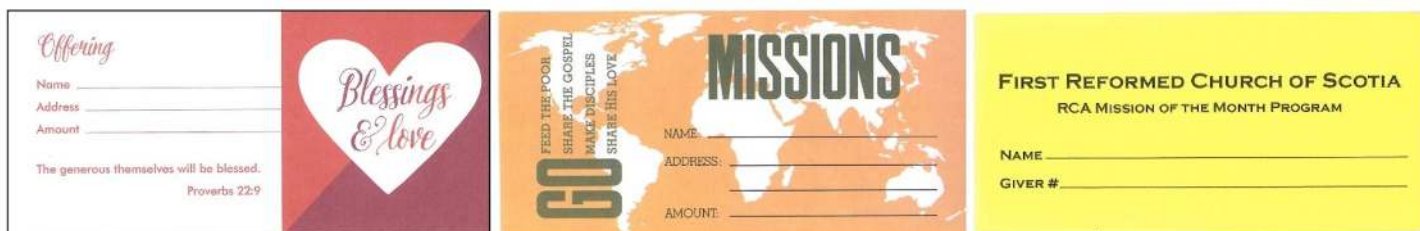
Men's Group Update

The next meeting will be September 22nd at 6:00pm in Brink Hall. ALL men are welcomed at any of our gatherings! The group is studying "Ten Men of The Bible" by Max Lucado. And please, if you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact Bill Shave at 518-573-1098 or wshavejr@gmail.com. Or Bob Baldwin at 518-320-4561 or frcsmen@gmail.com.

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. And good news! I got a new laptop! Also, for those individuals who wish to set up some one-on-one coaching, I invite you to reach out and set up a time to meet. If you have questions, please contact Bob Baldwin via text 518-320-4561 or email Robert.baldwin.acctrng@gmail.com.

Offering Envelopes: In an effort to alleviate confusion, we are going to consolidate to using only three types of offering envelopes. Please use the red "Blessings & Love" envelope for general church offerings. The orange Missions envelope is for FRCS Missions. If you wish to give to a specific mission, be sure to indicate clearly on the memo line of your check, or if donating cash, on the outside of the envelope. The third envelope will be dedicated to our Mission of the Month. Please discontinue use of other varieties of envelopes. If you have any questions or need additional envelopes, please contact Karen Shaffer in the Church Office.



Other Ways to Give to the Church! We are living in an increasingly cashless society. Here at First we are striving to adjust with the times. We currently offer 2 cashless ways to give. The first way to give is through our Automatic Debit program. This is available to anyone who banks with First National Bank of Scotia. If you would like to give this way please reach out to the office and we can assist you in setting up automatic monthly giving. Second, is through a service through 'Tithe.ly.' This service works much like Zelle, CashApp or Venmo. To find the link to our Tithe.ly account go to our webpage (firstreformedscotia.org), hover over "Giving", and click on the dropdown option to "Give Now". By clicking the link on that page, you will now be able to give via credit or debit card. There is also an app you download onto your phone. You can set up recurring donations or simply offer a one time gift. You also may opt to pay the transfer fees, or not. Please know that no matter how you give, that we are always so very appreciative of your support to First's ministry and mission!

Joint Youth Mission Trip to Highland Park Reformed Church in New Jersey June 28 – July 2, 2026

23 people representing 7 churches traveled to the Reformed Church of Highland Park, NJ to participate in the multiple non-profit ministries for housing, feeding, advocacy and assisting vulnerable people associated with our sister church.



Through your prayers and support, in four super-hot days, we were able to accomplish quite a bit and have lots of fun along the way. We broke into small groups that each went to various sites around the area each day where we:

- Built three dressers at the wood shop for the *Accompany Now!* Program for youth needing housing assistance.
- Sorted donations of furniture, helped organize the distribution center and helped move an office and two different families.
- Scraped and painted a large porch at the parsonage of South River Reformed Church
- Power washed the “Haven House” which currently houses a Ukrainian refugee family.
- Painted the stairwell and hallways in the apartments at Reformed Church of Highland Park.
- Cleared brush from a yard.
- ‘Weeded at “The Farm”’.
- Built a foundation for what will be a shed at another house.
- Passed out and put up flyers for DIRE Legal at area businesses to help people know their rights and get assistance if they have or someone they know has an interaction with ICE. (Almost every business permitted us to put up flyers in their windows!)

From our church Riley said, “My favorite part of the trip was being able to help people. I learned about the experiences people had with ICE such as people having their asylum revoked and being harassed by ICE. I enjoyed building the dressers and eating at the Global Grace Cafe.” The other youth on the trip from our church were Ryan, Annabella, Anneka, and Shaeli. They were accompanied by Diana Ackner and Lynn Makrin.

We also played ping pong and foosball, had morning and nightly reflections together, ate GREAT food from the Global Grace Café every day and at the home of our host coordinator, met lots of people and heard many stories of their journeys and testimonies of God’s goodness and grace, even amid great hardships.

Thank you for your prayers and support! It was a wonderful trip!

SAVE THE DATE: The group of churches working together is planning to continue youth gatherings for middle and high school students beginning with a dinner and bonfire on September 20th at Christ Community Reformed Church in Clifton Park from 6-8:30pm.

Missions Computer Access: We are excited to announce a new resource for Missions volunteers! We now have a computer station in the Church Office that can be used for projects such as spreadsheets, flyers, brochures, etc. If you are interested in using it, see Karen Shaffer for log-in instructions.

Communication Form: Does your committee have an event that you would like to promote? Go to firstreformedscotia.org/events/ and fill out the Communication Form to request promotional assistance such as a TV slide, bulletin announcement, Constant Contact post, or an announcement on our new digital sign. All requests are subject to review and approval.

The Prayer Chain

As you may or may not know, First has a prayer chain. When prayer requests are received by the office by phone, email or in person, an email is sent out to those email addresses on the prayer chain list. If you would like to be added to this list please email the office at office@firstreformedscotia.org and clearly identify yourself. We ask that you have been worshipping with us at least 6 months before you request to be added as sometimes personal information is shared. If you find yourself or a loved one in need of prayers, please let the office know and we will make sure it gets out to this faithful group so that a chorus of prayers may be with you.

September Mission of the Month - School Food Programs: High School Food Pantry, and the Backpack Program & Distributions

September Mission of the Month is all about feeding children and teens in our area. Your gift this month will be shared between the Scotia-Glenville High School Food Pantry and the Backpack Program, which includes special distributions.

The High School Food Pantry is a designated space in the high school where 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.

The Backpack program is a weekly food distribution that serves elementary and middle school students in the Scotia-Glenville School District. The social workers and staff at each of the schools identify students in need of extra food and get parental permission to participate in the program. In addition to the weekly bags of food, we provide large boxes of extra food during vacation periods. The cost of this program continues to increase year after year. We have never said "no" to any student being referred to the program, nor have we limited the number per family.

Please join us this month in making sure no child goes hungry. Thank you!

Backpack Facts



FRCS sponsored BPScotia 2025-2026 school year.

-  Total Bags Distributed: 1800
-  Average Weekly Enrollment: 60
-  Maximum Weekly Enrollment: 60
-  Average Weight of Weekly Bags: 14
-  Total Pounds of Food Distributed: 25,029




You can make a difference.
\$300 allows you to sponsor a Backpack child this school year!

Checks made out to FRCS, note Backpack in the memo line.

	○ Pounds of Free Food Distributed: 11,955
	○ Pounds of Purchased Food Distributed: 13,074

-  Equivalent Meals Distributed: 30,035 = **30,035 meals**
-  Meals Distributed Per Child Throughout the School Year: 417

Backpack Update: Our Backpack Program provides much needed food assistance to families in the Scotia-Glenville School District. Each week during the school year, participating students take home a backpack full of food to assist in providing meals over the weekend. During the summer months, participating families receive monthly distribution boxes of food. Some of these families require delivery of their distribution boxes. Want to help by being a delivery driver? Contact June Coryer (junecoryer@gmail.com). Thank you!

BACKPACK PROGRAM



Community Cupboard Update

Our Community Cupboard has had a busy summer. Thank you for the wonderful response to the summer food drive. The traffic we have had with people using the Cupboard really did show that hunger indeed does not take a summer vacation. We can know that our church's efforts made a difference for many in our community.

As we enter the new school year we can think about food donations to help ease things for busy families:

Fruits & Snacks: 100% fruit cups, applesauce, raisins, and pretzels.

Breakfast: Instant oatmeal packets, whole-grain cereals, granola bars, and shelf-stable milk.

Questions? Cindy Taft & Karen Wentworth are always happy to speak with you!

COMMUNITY CUPBOARD



Community Meal Update by Mark Holley

What a summer it has been for our Community Meal and Grab-and-Go Lunch program! Camp Care has been a big hit, and we have enjoyed serving a variety of delicious meals. For our main courses, we have had hamburgers, hot dogs, brats, and cheddar brats. A special thank-you goes to Bill Shave for helping us get a donated Blackstone griddle to cook them on. We have also enjoyed potato bacon salad and tuna macaroni salad, and this month we will be serving macaroni and cheese. Our wonderful desserts have been provided by Laura Bull, Sunny Baldwin, and Linda N. Thank you all for sharing your time and talents!

In July, Sue Pitts taught our guests how to make old-fashioned potholders, and we celebrated Christmas in July. A big thank-you goes to the Makrin family for donating 10 looms, and to Dianne for donating another one. Our guests also had fun decorating sugar cookies with frosting and colored sugars.

So far, we have served a total of 9,028 meals! What an amazing accomplishment, and it would not be possible without the generosity and support of our community. Looking ahead to fall, we will be holding a Chicken & Biscuit Dinner fundraiser in October to help raise funds for our Thanksgiving meal.

Health and Wellness Note

Each year National Preparedness Month is observed in September. The official 2026 theme announced by FEMA is "**Americans Stand Ready**," focusing on individual self-reliance, protecting family and friends, and strengthening community resilience during disasters. There are four core action steps:

- **Know your risk:** Understand the types of emergencies common where you live and explore local disaster plans on Ready.gov.
- **Make a plan:** Create a family emergency communication and meeting plan, and list important medical and contact information.
- **Build a kit:** Gather essential supplies like non-perishable food, water, medications, and a battery-powered radio for your home and a mobile go-bag.
- **Get involved:** Take local first aid or CPR courses, or join a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program.

Sunday, September 27th after the 10 am Worship service, the Health & Wellness Team will hold an Emergency Preparedness Workshop led by Sunny Baldwin, Faith Community Nurse. The workshop will be based on the FEMA Emergency Course that she attended in May. Resources will be available to assist.

In case you cannot attend or would like to learn more detailed information, the next course will be offered at the KB Johnson Main Library on October 17th. Per the library website: "Experts from the New York National Guard and the NYS Offices of Emergency Management and Fire Prevention and Control will lead this introduction on how to respond to a natural or human-caused disaster. Participants are advised on how to properly develop family emergency plans and stock up on emergency supplies. Free disaster go kits will be available. For tweens/Teens, ages 11+, and Adults." Pre-registration is required.

September Anniversaries

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

September Birthdays

Linda Willoughby	3	David Walsh	16	Bill Faubion	22
Kristen Faubion	7	Gerry Rossman	17	Karen Wentworth	23
Susan Hoefer	10	George Squires, Jr.	17	Jillian Bull	24
Doug Shaw	11	John Ackner	18	John Pierce, Jr.	24
Angelia Hoffman	12	Jennifer Willcox	19	Margo Snyder	24
Betty Lauer	13	David Schalekamp	20	Joanna DeSilva	25
Paul Retersdorf	13	Karen Trbovich	21	Trudi Thun	25

Address Service Requested

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