

The Reformer

Lawyersville and Sharon Reformed Churches 174'

Mission Statement: As disciples of Christ, we are empowered by the Holy Spirit to join together to worship God, to study his Word, and use our gifts to extend God's grace and love to others.

July 2016

What's Inside:

Interim Pastor's Page
Church Review
Calendar of Events
Children's Fun Page
Birthdays-Anniversaries



LRC - Church Service

9:00 A.M.

**Sunday School
following worship**

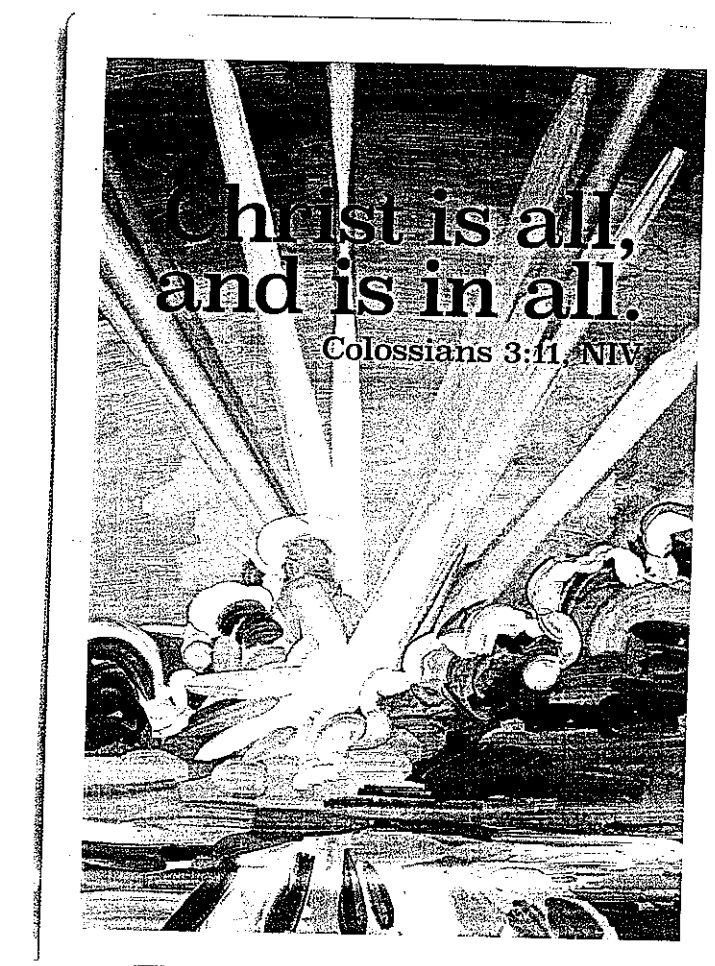
SRC - Church Service

11:00 A.M.

Sunday School

9:30 A.M.

Rev. Paul Ferenczy



A good place

This country will not be a good place for any of us to live in unless we make it a good place for all of us to live in.
—Theodore Roosevelt

Coffee hour after services

Looking for the Right Church

by the Interim Pastor

On Sunday afternoons I used to be involved in a Jail Ministry at the Schoharie County Correctional Facility. I persistently and almost selfishly held on to that responsibility through my pastoral years in Middleburgh and through my Interim assignments. I did so because I got more out of it than what I put into it. I wanted to be there. I needed to be there. I discovered that God has a way of returning twice to you what you may choose to give to Him. Unfortunately, the jail is closed while they repair the terrible damage it incurred after the hurricanes of 2011.

My ministry to the inmates had to be simple and basic. Some of them were there for short term. Some have never been inside a church. Some were hearing about Jesus for the first time in their lives. While they came voluntarily to "church" (as they called it), those that chose to attend, for the most part, were open to the gospel and seeking for some direction in their lives. I always referred to them as my "captive" audience. It was exciting to minister to a group that was so eager to hear what I had to say.

Their responses to the teachings of Jesus amazed me. At times they were so "right on" --- asking the perfect question which I was eager to answer. Then there were those that challenged me with an attitude that "dared me" to tackle some difficult question of faith. They put me to the test many times and that was good for me. It kept me on my spiritual toes.

I had been challenging them with the idea of seeking out a church family in which to belong when they left prison. A few shared with me their sad experiences with church people who rejected them and were hypocritical about their concern for those who are down and out.

While I took into account the bitterness and resentment that some of them held toward any and all institutions, there were those who were being honest about the unkind and indifferent attitudes that they found in church people. So the question arose in our discussion: *How do you know when you've found the right church to join?* The immediate response you would expect from a minister would be that you find a church where the gospel is preached according to the scriptures. But that's not so easy for a new-born Christian or one searching for faith to determine. The inmates came up with the idea that you can tell a real church by the way people in it treat each another. (See what I mean about them being "right on"?) They used the words - family - respect - love - concern - help - and the idea that people in a real church would take the time and make the attempt to understand what you have been through and what difficulties you face. I really could not have said it better myself. I brought their attention to that passage where the Apostle Paul describes the church as a group who have been blessed by God with "gifts of the Spirit" - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Out of our further discussion the group determined that a real church would be a place in which you could not only find people who could help you but they would look to you for help. In other words, a church is where you find your needs fulfilled and where you are needed. A real church gives you a feeling of worth. Suddenly, one of the descriptions that the Bible gives of the church, *the body of Christ*, took on a clearer and deeper meaning in my own mind and heart.

So there I was, sitting among a group of prisoners, whom society often wants to forget, discovering anew the meaning of what the real church is truly all about. They were discovering what I was re-discovering with their help, that a real church is where you meet Jesus who makes you feel worthy; who helps you in your times of need and who calls you to reach out to others in their need. Not a bad definition of a real church. I miss my sessions with the inmates which serves as a reminder to me that I needed them as much as they needed me. They reaffirmed for me something that I have always suspected to be true - every person you meet has something to teach you if you are willing to listen.



Prayer Requests

Church

Jean Wormuth/home
 Muriel Homes/St. Johnsville Nursing Home
 Steve DiCicco/hip pain/pending surgery
 JJan Liberti/chemo treatments
 Sandra Kloss/knee surgery
 Bob Speidell/retinopathy
 Dawn & Rachel/health issues

Family/Loved Ones

Margaret Springstead/cancer on face
 Ava Baker/18 month old/brain tumor
 Debbie Anderson/hearing surgery
 Carol Coltrain/slow recovery

Those homebound/in nursing homes:

Helen Holmes (LRC)
 153 Hansen Rd.
 Cherry Valley, NY 13320

Muriel Holmes (LRC)
 St. Johnsville Nursing Home
 7 Timmerman Ave.
 St. Johnsville, NY 13452

Josephine King (SRC)
 418 Ridge Rd.
 Broadalbin, NY 12025

Richard Nirschl (SRC)
 St. Johnsville Nursing Home
 7 Timmerman Ave.
 St. Johnsville, NY 13452

Community

Our sisters and brothers in Christ from the Dorloo,
 Hyndsville, Mineral Springs United Methodist and
 Warnerville United Methodist Church
 All Teachers and students
 Family situations impacting students' performances
 in school
 Grand-parents serving as guardians for their grand-
 children
 All families impacted by alcoholism and/or substance
 abuse
 Increased heroin addiction in our county
 All families and marriages in crisis
 All children suffering from physical, emotional and/
 or sexual abuse
 All God's children impacted by hunger and food inse-
 curity
 All those impacted by Irene, Lee and Sandy
 Schoharie Area Long-Term Recovery (SALT)
 Concerns about the economy, unemployment and
 foreclosures
 All soldiers (esp. those deployed) and their families

Nation and World

Crisis of refugees and migrants
 Extremists' intolerance and violence
 Persecuted Christians
 The global economy
 All unrest in God's world
 Local, state national and world leaders
 Peacemaker groups
 Government dysfunction

**Please let me know of any updates or
 additions so we can direct our prayers
 to them.**

Food donations

Thank you to all who contribute donations of Food for the Food Pantry, held at the Baptist Church. We know, due to the economy, that there is an increase in requests. Some who have donated in the past find themselves in need of help. Please continue to give as you are able. Thank you for participating in this ministry of care. First Sunday of each month.



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Editor: Lola Fletcher, 756 Loonenbergh TPK., Sharon Springs, NY 13459.
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E-mail lola756@wildblue.net
Deadline: July 27th Thanks to all for your information and contributions.

MEMO BOARD

July

3,10,17,24,31

LRC Worship 9:00 A.M.
Coffee hour following church
SRC Sunday School for all ages 9:30 A.M.
SRC Worship 11:00 A.M.
Coffee hour following church
LRC Consistory 5:15 P.M.

21

The consistory at its June 16 meeting decided to serve Communion 5 times a year instead of 12. These times will be: World Wide Communion- October 2, Advent- November 27. Dates in 2017 are: Lent- March 6, Maundy/Good Friday- April 13/14, Pentecost- June 4 and World Wide Communion- October 1. This will be revisited in one year (June 2017) and decide if we will continue this way. Any questions, please see an elder.

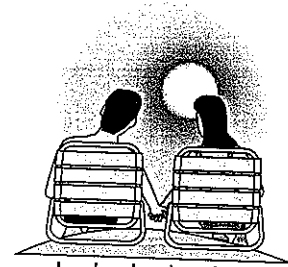
The parsonage repairs are progressing nicely. the bathrooms as well as wiring and other concerns have been addressed and fixed. The concert netted \$1114 With a total of almost \$2700 to date. Thank you to all who have helped and donated money. We couldn't do it without your help!



JULY BIRTHDAYS

July

- 2 Steven DiCicco
- 4 Debbie Stanton
- 5 Michelle Keaney
- 14 Karl Cooper
- 17 Bonnie Tryon
- 19 Richard Palmer
- 28 Kristen Stidle
- 29 Ruth Mereness
- 30 Erin Cullen



JULY ANNIVERSARIES

July

NONE



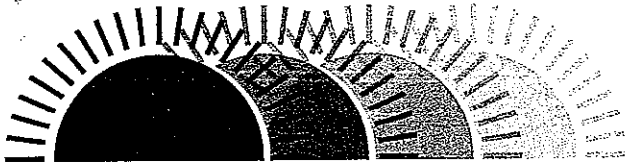
**PRAYER
IS SIMPLY
AN
HONEST
CONVERSATION
WITH
GOD**



“Prayer at Sunrise”

O greater Maker of this thy great sun,
Give me the strength this one day's race to run,
Fill me with light, fill me with sun-like strength,
Fill me with joy to rob the day its length.
Light from within, light that will outward shine,
Strength to make strong some weaker heart than mine,
Joy to make glad each soul that feels its touch;
Great Father of the sun, I ask this much.

—James Weldon Johnson



[image above: SUN_14197, SUN_14197C]

Help needed

When I've taken sacred vows — confirmation, marriage, ordination or as part of a congregation committing to support the just-baptized or new teachers — I've felt genuine gratitude for words such as these in the ceremony: “May God, who gives you the will to make these promises, also give you the power to perform them.” I'm relieved God doesn't leave me on my own to fulfill what is easier said than done.

Adults who guide youngsters can follow God's lead by committing to this kind of help. For example, my young son often declares, “I *promise!*” about a requested behavior. He means it, but when distractions arise or energy sags, when he's hungry or tired or frustrated, when the task feels overwhelming ... he needs help obeying or delivering on his promise. As a parent, I can say, “Let's do it together,” or “How about setting the timer and doing the job in 10 minutes?” or “Afterward, we can play.”

God doesn't leave us to rely on our own power. Likewise, adults can pledge inwardly to children: “May I, who have motivated you to promise this, also help you perform it.”

—Heidi Mann

Citizens of heaven

Keep yourself as a pilgrim and a stranger here in this world, as one to whom the world's business counts but little. Keep your heart free, and always lift it up to God.

—Thomas à Kempis

• “Always be a little kinder than necessary.”

—J.M. Barrie

Running the race

During three Olympic Games, American triathlete Hunter Kemper never placed higher than seventh. But his athletic performance never defined him. “Whether I win a gold medal or not, I get my character as a person from my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,” Kemper said. “That's who I'll always be, and therefore I can never be let down. You can never be let down if your faith is in the Lord.”

Kemper, now 40, said, “Trust in the Lord, and he'll give you the strength to be on top. And if you don't end up on top, that's okay too. Ultimately for me, I want to run my race ... and give [God] credit, whether in victory or defeat.”

Love's freedom

Love is the power to grant freedom without desiring to limit or inhibit its exercise. It is the power to give freedom without any will to take it back. And it is only Omnipotence that can refrain absolutely from trespassing upon freedom. Only God can give and not take back ... [God] suffers within himself the entire consequence of allowing man absolute freedom. That is his love

Thus, the existence of evil and suffering in the world is a proof, not that God is either good but powerless, or all powerful but not good. On the contrary, it is a proof that God is both loving and omnipotent. Only absolute love could grant unhindered freedom, and only omnipotence can endure the operation of that freedom.

—D.R. Davies

The gift of grace

Grace is something you can never get but only be given. The grace of God means something like: Here is your life. You might never have been, but you are because the party wouldn't have been complete without you. Here is the world. Beautiful and terrible things will happen. Don't be afraid. I am with you. Nothing can ever separate us. It's for you I created the universe. I love you.

There's only one catch. Like any other gift, the gift of grace can be yours only if you reach out and take it. Maybe being able to reach and take it is a gift too.

—Frederick Buechner, *Wishful Thinking*

• “I really only love God as much as I love the person I love the least.”

—Dorothy Day

• “I wish that every human life might be pure transparent freedom.”

—Simone de Beauvoir

• “Prayer is where the action is.”

—John Wesley

Kid's Page

SUMMER FRUIT PIZZA



Celebrate summer with this tasty dessert pizza, using your favorite summer fruits as the toppings.

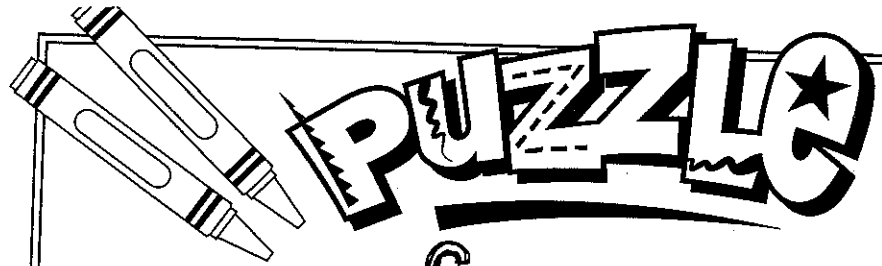
What you need:

- 1 tube slice-and-bake sugar cookie dough
- Knife
- Round pizza pan
- 8 ounces cream cheese
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 cups sliced fruit
- Adult help



What you do:

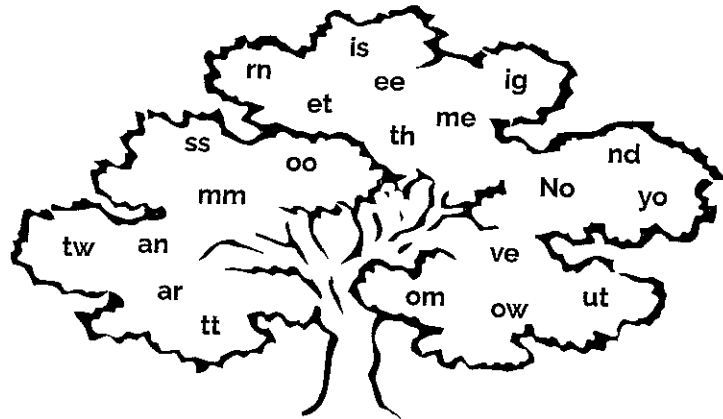
1. Cut the dough into slices 1/8-inch thick. Place slices on the pan, overlapping them slightly.
2. Bake at 375 degrees for 12 minutes. Let cool.
3. Combine softened cream cheese, sugar and vanilla, mixing well. Spread this "frosting" over the baked-cookie "crust."
4. Arrange fruit on top of the pizza.
5. Slice and enjoy!



Signs of summer

Jesus told his disciples that fig trees indicate when summer is approaching.

Directions: Complete the Bible verse below by placing the letter pairs from the tree into the correct blanks.



" ___ w lea ___ th ___ le ___ on
fr ___ the f ___ tr ___: As s ___ n
as its ___ igs g ___ te ___ er ___ d
its lea ___ s co ___ o ___, ___ u
kn ___ ___ at su ___ er is ne ___."

Ma ___ hew 24:32, NIV

Answer: "Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near."
Matthew 24:32, NIV