

The Reformer

Lawyersville and Sharon Reformed Churches 161

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.

March 2015

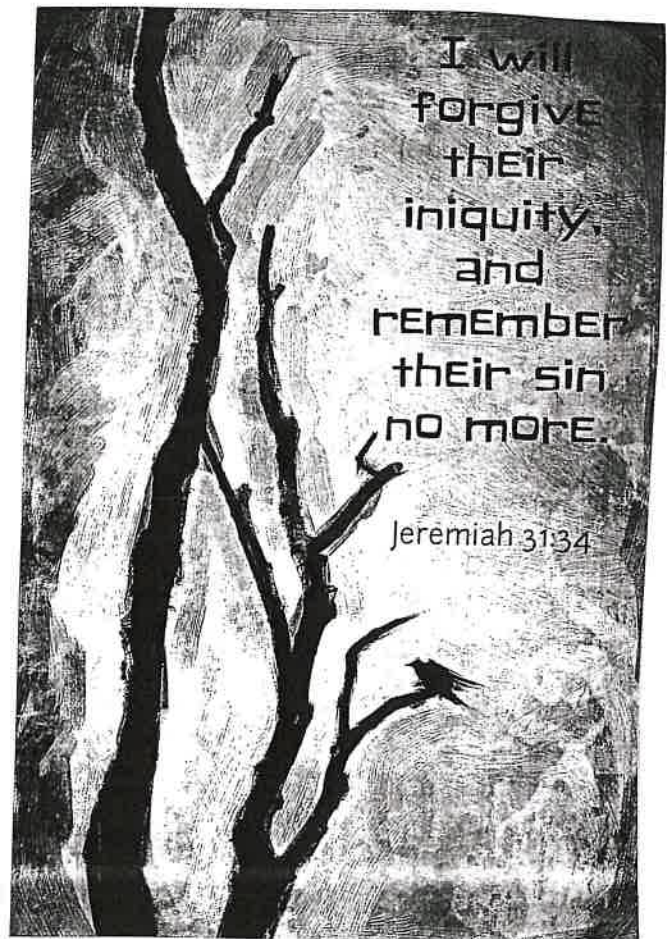
What's Inside:

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. Pacia Vamvas



Special dates

- Second Sunday in Lent, *March 1, 2015*
- World Day of Prayer, *March 6, 2015*
- Third Sunday in Lent, *March 8, 2015*
- Daylight-Saving Time Begins, *March 8, 2015*
- Girl Scout Sunday, *March 8, 2015*
- Fourth Sunday in Lent, *March 15, 2015*
- First Day of Spring, *March 20, 2015*
- Fifth Sunday in Lent, *March 22, 2015*
- Palm/Passion Sunday, *March 29, 2015*
- Holy Week, *March 29-April 4, 2015*

pastor pacia's ponderings

"Then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being." Genesis 2.7.

Just back from Ash Wednesday Service. It was a small, intimate, quiet, reverential time to gather together to mark the beginning of the Lenten season, including placing a cross of ash on the forehead. There were few people there, for several reasons. Some folks do not come out at night; it was cold and snowy; it's school vacation. The two main reasons, I think, are 1. "That's what the Catholics do.", and 2. "I do not want to hear anything that reminds me of my mortality." Ash Wednesday reminds us of a fact we try vigorously to deny – we're all gonna die. We don't want to think about it. More accurately, we do think about it; we deny it will happen. This is the reason people are so resistant to accessing the services Hospice provides, services which have been shown to provide a more dignified death while also supporting family and caregivers.* This is the reason young people resist signing up for health insurance. Yet, despite trying to fool ourselves, a doctor stated "Death occurs in 10 out of 10 cases." At a graveside committal service, we hear "We commend to almighty God our brother/sister _____, and we commit his/her body to the ground, earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust." But that committal portion begins with "In sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

We begin Lent reminded of our mortality; we will all die. On Easter morning we joyfully celebrate the victory of Jesus over death; he was not able to be contained in the ground. We will all die a physical death; that is not optional. But through the death of Jesus on the cross, we are offered the gift of eternal life.

1 Corinthians 15.42-57

"So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body. Thus it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living being"; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. But it is not the spiritual that is first, but the physical, and then the spiritual. The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. As was the man of dust, so are those who are of the dust; and as is the man of heaven, so are those who are of heaven. Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we will also bear the image of the man of heaven. What I am saying, brothers and sisters, is this: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Listen, I will tell you a mystery! We will not all die, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For this perishable body must put on imperishability, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When this perishable body puts on imperishability, and this mortal body puts on immortality, then the saying that is written will be fulfilled: "Death has been swallowed up in victory." "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." grace and peace, pacia

*From Atul Gawande's Being Mortal : "Palliative care is one important way to transform the last chapters of everyone's lives. People tend to think palliative care, often administered through hospices, as nothing more than a sign of resignation: because the patients are going to die anyway, medical treatment is suspended so they can get on with it. This is a gross misconception. Palliative care specialists actively help patients relieve anxiety, realize their hopes and enjoy their remaining days. The results can surprise. One study showed that people enrolled in hospice "suffered less, were physically more capable, and were better able, for a longer period, to interact with others" than those who followed the traditional medical route. In another study, **hospice patients experienced less suffering and lived 25% longer than others.**"

Holy Week

Holy Week consists of the eight days from Palm/Passion Sunday through Easter Sunday. The Season of Lent will end on Easter Sunday with the celebration of the Resurrection of our Lord. Palm Sunday marks Jesus' triumphal entry into the city of Jerusalem. A crowd greeted him as he rode into the city, waving branches and crying out "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" (words we speak in preparation for the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper). "Hosanna" is best translated "Save us!" It is not hard to understand, then, the drastic change in the crowds from Sunday to Friday, when the shout went out, "Crucify him!" Jesus did not deliver on the expected behavior of a Savior, who would deliver the people from the hated Romans. We begin the shift in that mood as the service progresses. [Palm/Passion Sunday theme will be replaced this year with "I Am the Way, the Truth, and the Life" from The God We Can Know/Exploring the "I Am" Sayings of Jesus].

The next named day in Holy Week is Maundy Thursday. Jesus and the disciples gathered for the Passover meal. At the conclusion of the meal, Jesus gave the bread and the cup; "Do this in remembrance of me." This came to be known as the Last Supper, which we celebrate monthly as the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The word "Maundy" comes from the Latin word "mandatum", to command. It refers to John 13.34-35: "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

On Maundy Thursday we will gather @ LRC. Supper (bring place settings and a dish to pass) is 6:00 P.M.; worship in the Hall to begin approximately 7:00 P.M. The service will include celebration of the Lord's Supper and foot-washing. Jesus washing his disciples' feet is also found in the Gospel of John (13.1-17). Foot washing symbolizes humility and service to one another.

Good Friday marks the day of Jesus' crucifixion. Crucifixion was a brutal, beastly manner of execution. "When the cross was prepared the criminal had to carry it to the place of execution. He was placed in the middle of the hollow square of four soldiers. In front marched a soldier carrying a board stating the crime of which the prisoner was guilty. The board was afterwards affixed to the cross. They took not the shortest but the longest way to the place of execution. They followed every possible street and lane so that as many as possible should see and take warning. When they reached the place of crucifixion, the cross was laid flat on the ground. The prisoner was stretched upon it and nailed to it. The nails were usually driven through the wrists. The feet were not nailed but only loosely bound. Between the prisoner's legs projected a ledge of wood called the saddle, to take his weight when the cross was raised upright – otherwise the nails would have torn through the wrists. The cross was then lifted and set in its socket – and the criminal was left to die. Sometimes prisoners hung for as long as a week, slowly dying of hunger and of thirst, suffering sometimes to the point of actual madness." (William Barclay, The New Daily Study Bible). Jesus died that very day, and was buried in a cave, a heavy stone placed at the mouth of the cave. The Good Friday service is called Tenebrae (shadows, or darkness). Scripture from the Gospel of Matthew is read, as candles representing the disciples are extinguished as they flee. The service (7:00 P.M., @ SRC) is an opportunity to fully engage in the death of Jesus.

Some traditions celebrate an Easter Vigil. "The Easter vigil involves gathering on Holy Saturday (Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday are collectively known as the Triduum) at twilight or evening for a service involving a dozen Scripture readings that review the history of salvation from Creation through the resurrection of our Lord. It begins with the striking of "new fire" (often outdoors) with which to light the new Christ Candle, and later, to light the worshipers' candles, illuminating their way to the sanctuary." I Love to Live the Story. (Note the similar pattern as the Christmas Eve service, with Scripture readings and the lighting of candles from the Christ candle).

Easter Sunday begins with the rising of the sun. Some churches hold an outdoor sunrise (Sonrise) service. The empty tomb is found, and a great celebration takes place. We declare with great joy: "The Lord is risen! He is risen indeed!"

Baptism is often celebrated on Easter Sunday, representing being buried with Christ, and raised with him to new life (Romans 6.3-4).

The date of Easter determines the observation of Ash Wednesday, as well as the dates of Holy Week. The formula for determining the date of Easter is the first Sunday after the first full moon after the Vernal Equinox. The Western Church follows the Gregorian calendar; the Eastern Orthodox Church follows the Julian calendar. Those dates for Easter rarely coincide.

As with Christmas, there is a Season as well as a Day of Easter. The Season of Easter runs forty days to the Day of Ascension, then ten more days until the day of Pentecost.

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.



Office Phone #: 234-9811
Web Site: lrcandsrc.org
Pacia's e-mail:
pastorpacia@lrcandsrc.org.



Editor: Lola Fletcher, 756 Loonenbergh TPK., Sharon Springs, NY 13459.
Phone: 518-234-2283
E-mail lola756@wildblue.net
Deadline: March 25th

MEMO BOARD

March

- 1,8,15,22,29 LRC Worship 9:00 A.M.
SRC Sunday School for all ages 9:30 A.M., Worship 11:00 A.M.
3 SRC Elders 5:15 P.M., Deacons 5:30 P.M.; Consistory 7:00 P.M.
4,11,25 Bible Study 9:00 A.M.; Evening Study Group 7:00 @ the Parsonage (white house across the park from LRC, next to JWS Automotive); **No Morning Study 03.18.15**
Confirm Morning Bible Study (234.9811 or 234.2387)
7 Consistory Retreat 9:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M. @ LRC (snow date 03.21.15)
8 Daylight Saving Time Begins
14 Schoharie Classis 9:00 A.M. @ SRC
15 Christmas Collaboration Offering (LRC); Special Offering (SRC)
17 - 19 pastor pacia on (silent) retreat
28 MacFadden's Auction Fund-raiser (SRC)

UNDER COSIDERATION:

A Sunday morning discussion group -
meeting for 6 sessions- (Feb. 22 - March 29)
10:15 a. m. - 11:00 a. m.
at Lawyersville Church

Possible topics (to be decided if group materializes)

"God's Promises"

"How to have a Good Day Every Day"

"Triumph Over Life's Toughest Problems"

"What's On Your Mind?"

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Interested? Call me. (234-7564)
Show up on Sunday, Feb. 22
Invite a friend.

March Worship

03.01.15 Second Sunday in Lent (purple) Sacrament of the Lord's Supper
Genesis 17.1-7, 15-17 Romans 4.13-25
Psalm 22.23-31 Mark 8.31-38

John 6.27-59 +

Lay Leaders LRC Wil and Martha Ivins SRC Linda DiCicco

03.08.15 Third Sunday in Lent (purple)

Exodus 20.1-17 1 Corinthians 1.18-25
Psalm 19 John 2.13-22

John 7.2, 14; 8.12 +

Lay Leaders LRC Wil and Martha Ivins SRC Adrienne Cullen

03.15.15 Fourth Sunday in Lent (purple)

Numbers 21.4-9 Ephesians 2.1-10
Psalm 107.1-3, 17-22 John 3.14-21

John 10.1-10 +

Lay Leaders LRC Wil & Martha Ivins SRC Deylon Davenport

03.22.15 Fifth Sunday in Lent (purple)

Jeremiah 31.31-34 Hebrews 10.5.5-10
Psalm 51.1-12 or Psalm 119.9-16 John 12.20-33

John 15.1-18 +

Lay Leaders LRC Lisa Boss SRC Kaena Davenport

03.29.15 Psalm/Passion Sunday (purple or red)

Palm Sunday texts
Psalm 118.1-2, 19-29 Mark 11.1-11 or John 12.12-16

Passion Sunday texts
Isaiah 50.4-9 Philippians 2.5-11
Psalm 31.9-16 Mark 14.1-15.47 or Mark 15.1-39, (40-47)

John 14.1-7 +

Lay Leaders LRC Lisa Boss SRC Mary Speidell

+ The text(s) pastor pacia plans to use for the next Lord's Day, for the proclamation of the Word of God.

Encouraging the Nurture of the Listening Heart

pastor pacia will attend a retreat, "Encouraging the Nurture of the Listening Heart". The event, mainly a silent retreat, will be held 17-19 March, at Linwood Spiritual Center, Rhinebeck, NY.

Reminder: When calling pastor pacia, please call the Parsonage (234.9811), not the Office (234.2387). The Parsonage messages are checked more regularly.

*** A special offering for a Sunday, March 15th to support the following effort for the Christmas Season:**

The "Community-Wide Christmas Collaboration" in Schoharie County is going into its fourth year of serving families with children for the Christmas holidays. The CWCC was established in 2012 to ensure that families, both young and old, receive support, care and assistance through the holidays. The Collaboration includes representatives of most of the county's non-profit organizations; Catholic Charities, Schoharie County Child Development Council (Head Start), Community Maternity Services, SALT, Schoharie County Community Action Program and a number of churches and individuals and representatives from the CRCS schools. The Community-Wide Christmas Collaboration has begun to plan for the 2015 holiday season. Many families within our community struggle to put food on the table, gas in the car and buy clothing for their children. We would, again this year, like to ask for the community's support in providing assistance to those who would otherwise go without. No family should have to go without a Christmas. Please help us in making this holiday season a memorable one.

* A few more special offerings will be collected in the coming months and one big donation during the Holiday Season.

Please Note: The Collaboration is a service meant to "fill in the gaps" for families who, otherwise, would not receive any assistance with the holidays or for families that have needs that cannot be met other than through this effort.

Thank you for your generosity.



Prayer Requests

Church

Muriel Homes/St. Johnsville Nursing Home
 Helen Brown/Palatine Nursing Home/
 declining
 Vivian Empie/Tarpon Springs Nursing
 Home/on Hospice
 Elli Schubert/cardiac
 Rena Cooper/surgery recuperation

Family/Loved Ones

Cindy Baxter/heart and liver
 Megan and Rachel Bishop/ill
 Kent & Jill Busman/house fire
 Marcia Bember/paralyzed
 Margaret Springstead/liver/heart
 Richard Nirschl/Marchand Manor
 Sue Jones/Marchand Manor
 Mike Bautochka/thyroid problem/bedsore
 Adnan Buxamusa/cardiac surgery recupera-
 tion
 Cindy Shuart/stroke/some improvement
 Joan/improving and Mason Springstead/
 pacemaker
 Heather Bivins/possible new treatment
 Bob Speidell/retinopathy
 Dodi Chechniki/ALS

**Updates on those on the prayer list are
 needed, so that we know how best to
 pray. Inactive requests will be taken
 off the list.**

Those homebound:

Helen Brown (LRC)
 Palatine Nursing Home
 154 Lafayette St.
 Palatine Bridge, NY 13428

Dorothy Hill (LRC)
 2 Tryon Ave., Apt. 306
 Glenville, NY 12303

Community

All Teachers and students
 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
 insecurity
 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

Extremists' intolerance and violence
 Persecuted Christians
 Hatred and violence in the hearts of God's children
 The global economy
 All unrest in God's world
 Local, state national and world leaders
 Peacemaker groups
 Government dysfunction

*There is a group of pray-ers who receive prayer
 requests. If you would like to be added to either list
 (phone or e-mail), simply contact pastor pacia
 (234.9811 or PASTORPACIA@LRCANDSRC.ORG)

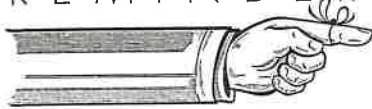
Helen Holmes (LRC)
 153 Hansen Rd.
 Cherry Valley, NY 13320

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

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

Kid's Page

PRAYER REMINDER



Use this fun family activity to remember to pray for other people.

What you need:

- White index cards (at least six)
- Markers or colored pencils (red, orange, yellow, green, blue and brown)
- M&M's candies



What you do:

1. On each card, write a group of people to pray for (family members, friends, teachers, sick people, etc.). Use a different color of writing utensil for each card.
2. While sitting at a table, divide the M&M's among family members.
3. Spread out the cards and explain that each color represents a group of people to pray for. Have each family member choose one candy and consider who they'll pray for.
4. Designate one person to start praying aloud. Go around the circle, and have the last person close.
5. At the end of that round, eat those M&M's.
6. Continue until you've prayed for all the cards. (Make more, if you'd like!)



POWER OF PRAYER

When life gets crazy, worry creeps in. But God tells us exactly what to do — any time and anywhere.

Directions: Circle the word in each group that doesn't belong. Then write those words on the numbered lines below.

1 apple anxious artichoke	2 every eagle emu	3 purple pink prayer	4 Paul petition Peter	5 taste touch thanksgiving
6 rest requests relax	7 God George Greg	8 puddle peace pond	9 transcends train truck	10 unusual unique understanding
11 guard giraffe gorilla	12 hearts hold held	13 many minds more	14 Philadelphia Pennsylvania Philippians	

“Do not be _____¹ about anything, but in
_____² situation, by _____³ and
_____⁴, with _____⁵,
present your _____⁶ to _____⁷. And
the _____⁸ of God, which _____⁹
all _____¹⁰, will _____¹¹
your _____¹² and your _____¹³
in Christ Jesus.” _____¹⁴ 4:6-7, NIV

Answers: 1. anxious, 2. every, 3. prayer, 4. petition, 5. thanksgiving, 6. requests, 7. God, 8. peace, 9. transcends, 10. understanding, 11. guard, 12. hearts, 13. minds, 14. Philippians



MARCH

- 10 Aaron Ray
- 12 Antoinette Clegg
- 18 Janice Van Aller
- 21 Jill Cullen
- 22 Holden Davenport
- 23 Samson Clark



Indulge for Lent?

Rather than sacrificing something for Lent — especially something easy and spiritually insignificant, such as chocolate — Patry Kirk, in *Guideposts* magazine, suggests finding new ways to indulge in God's presence. Surely one can do this by having extra devotions or attending Lenten worship services. But Kirk offers these ideas:

- Spend time outdoors, sensing God's magnificence.
- Spend time with others, extending generosity and compassion. Remember Jesus' promise that when you care for others, you care for him (Matthew 25:31-46).
- Pray for the "little things," coming before God in childlike trust and feeling peace.
- Watch attentively for God's answers to prayer, and receive them as reminders of his presence.
- Turn anxiety into prayer. As you frame concerns as prayers and entrust them to God, you "sacrifice" the tendency to wallow in worry.



MARCH

- 18 Karl & Rena Copper



**GOD
knows your
NAME!**

The waiting game

Life involves lots of waiting. We wait in groups, in lines, in cars. We wait for packages, for the bus, for the sun to rise. We wait in doctors' offices, at the post office, at the DMV. Waiting implies we're at someone else's mercy, but it's also usually linked to hope. Perhaps that's why Paul Tillich called waiting a metaphor for faith. Why would one wait if there weren't the firm belief that the object of one's wait will eventually materialize?

Waiting can be enervating, which is why Isaiah 40:31 is so promising: "They who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." Yet waiting is tough if you have nothing to do while waiting. That's why Jesus, when talking about waiting, also talked about working — work for the night is coming. Sometimes it's less tiring to work than it is to wait.

There's a lot of waiting during Lent. You're waiting for a payoff. You're waiting for the Resurrection. You're waiting for spiritual growth. And then you realize this isn't waiting at all. It's life. It's joy. It's opportunity. It's blessing.

—Timothy Merrill