



# First Reformed Church of Nyack

Nyack's Hometown Church  
Celebrating 175 years of  
service

February 2014

## Pastoral Reflections

As I write these words, I'm looking out the window and watching the snow come down.

It's a peaceful and beautiful scene. Nature leading us into a visual prayer of contemplation. An emptying of the mind of the noise and the clutter of life and a filling of the heart with the presence of silence and rest. Silence and rest.

If you are like me, we don't spend enough time in silence and rest. This is especially acute for those of us who are Protestant Americans. Imbued with the American spirit of hard work, combined with the Protestant work ethic, we are certainly a productive folk, but may be at high risk of spiritual busyness, neglecting quiet reflection and contemplation. Even spiritual disciplines may pull us into "adding more stuff," "doing more things," and "attending more activities" instead of simply releasing the heaviness we put on ourselves. Silence and rest.

The Western Church has a rich tradition of contemplation. An excellent spiritual discipline which combines Scripture reading and quiet reflection is *Lectio Divina*. This ancient practice of spiritual reading threads together the mind and heart with God's Word toward an experience of God's presence. Like snow coming down on us in a quiet and all-encompassing presence of God's peace. Silence and rest.

There are several good books and websites that will explain *Lectio Divina* much better than I. Generally speaking, there are four steps/movements/rhythms:

1. *Lectio* (Read) – Read a Scripture passage.
2. *Meditatio* (Meditate) – Meditate/reflect/ponder on the Scripture passage.
3. *Oratio* (Pray) – Pray on that which wells up in your heart.
4. *Contemplatio* (Contemplate) – Be in the silent presence of God.

This almost two millennia Christian format has been a regular part of my spiritual life for as long as I can remember. There is something comforting about engaging in an ancient prayer form which has been around since the Early Church. Try it. I hope it leads you into the silence and rest that our hearts so desperately need.

Peace,

Fred





## Terri's Thoughts: Worry

By Terri Wanamaker

Worry. Fear. Uncertainty. Insomnia. Anxiety. Concern. Strength. Taking control. Peace.

Do you worry? Of course you do! We all do! Some more than others, but it is a normal thing to worry. For instance, right now, I am worrying that since I just accidentally deleted the first half of this newsletter article without saving it, I will be unable to recall what my brain has been writing for the past two days. Why am I writing about worry? Frequently I find myself writing about things that I struggle with, because if it's on paper, or in this case, my iPad, (which is how I lost my original article in the first place), it helps me to think about it, put it in perspective, and act on it.

Lately I have been reading a book called *Letting Go of Worry, God's Plan for Finding Peace and Contentment* by Dr. Linda Mintle. She states, "Our physical, emotional and spiritual health depends on dealing with worry the proper way." Makes sense, right? By becoming aware of certain physical signs, such as in-

somnia; or realizing the difference between worry (feeling out of control) versus concern (taking control and doing something about it); or what I think is the most important, believing in the goodness of God and asking Him to help, is the right way to go. I am learning that if I do not trust God and take my concerns to Him, I tend to stay stuck in worry mode and therefore will not let go of my worries.

In Deuteronomy 31:8, it says:

*The Lord himself goes before you  
And will be with you;  
He will never leave you nor forsake you.  
Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.*

I still have the whole rest of the book to read. This is only what I've taken from the first chapter. But it is a start and makes a lot of sense to me so far. Remember, take it to God, and determine that if it is something you can't control, pray about it! Whatever the situation, we have to learn not to doubt God.

## A Few Notes from Our Music Director



It has now been almost twenty(!) years that the available Rensinks have been making the journey from Orange County, New York to the church on a regular basis. In winters like this one, the trips can be appropriately vexing (don't we all know!). As we (Jean and I) were making the trip recently, after brushing the snow off the truck, shoveling the snow from that long uphill driveway, and warming up said truck, we noted that the "schlep" gets more challenging as we (Jean) age. THEN we get to that beloved, beautiful, old building. We usually arrive earlier than most and do what needs doing while it comes to life and starts to buzz with activity and conversation. Often I'm one of the first folks out into the empty sanctuary, where I turn on the lights, open the organ, open the piano, put up

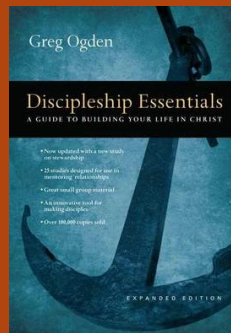
the numbers etc. As I experience this each week, my thoughts often turn to the thousands of people that have been nurtured, healed and inspired in those pews. The "schlep" is already turning into one of the most rewarding parts of my life. Then all my friends start arriving, many to sing or participate in some way with the music program. Suddenly, it's all worth it!

This last month, we welcomed Grace Su, a student from Nyack College, whom I will be mentoring. We also welcomed new interest in the choir from Doug and Jerry, and bathed in the beautiful trumpet sound of James Ross. Well, time to go out and shovel some more.....

Best, Jim



## WINTER 2014 SMALL GROUPS



### ~ SUNDAY MORNING OPEN GROUP ~

Begins Sunday, January 26<sup>th</sup> at 9am  
Meets in church lounge

Alan Cann, Group Leader

845.641.6788    abc351@verizon.net

### ~ WEDNESDAY MORNING WOMEN'S GROUP ~

Begins Wednesday, January 29<sup>th</sup> at 10am  
Meets at David's Bagels (2 Lake Road East,  
Valley Cottage, NY)

Cindy Graham, Group Leader

845.729.7211    cmg313@verizon.net

## GIVING



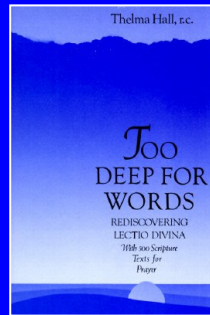
Support First Reformed Church through service, prayer, and/or giving. The church website is now set up for members and friends to make online donations through PayPal. [www.nyackreformed.org/giving](http://www.nyackreformed.org/giving)



## ~BOOK OF THE MONTH~

***Too Deep For Words: Rediscovering Lectio Divina***

**Thelmas Hall**



“The clarity and simplicity of this little book make it one of the best explanations of contemplative spirituality and its place in the overall Christian life that I've seen. If you are looking for a book to introduce contemplative spirituality in general, or *lectio divina* in particular, to people unfamiliar with it, this is an excellent choice.” B&N Reviewer

For more information:

<http://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/too-deep-for-words-thelma-hall/1114958788?ean=9780809129591>

## ~ WEBSITE OF THE MONTH ~



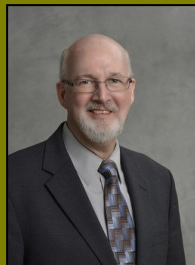
<http://www.valyermo.com/ld-art.html>

This website is actually an article which provides a helpful and simple introduction to the process, rhythm, and practice of *Lectio Divina*.



## ~ ORDINATION TO THE OFFICE OF ELDER ~

Sunday, February 9<sup>th</sup> ~ 10:30am ~ Coffee Hour to follow



Craig "Skip" Russell

## ~ MEN'S BREAKFAST ~

Saturday, February 15<sup>th</sup> ~ 9:00am

Hogan's Diner (41 Route 59, Nyack, NY 10960)



For more information, contact Alan Cann  
845.641.6788    abc351@verizon.net

## ~ HEALING SERVICE ~


Sunday, February 16<sup>th</sup> ~ 10:30am



Every third Sunday of the month, we incorporate a healing service component into worship for those who desire prayer, laying of hands, and anointing with oil.



## THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM



### HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

*Composed in Heidelberg, Germany this simple, yet rich confessional document is used to teach about the Christian faith. Deeply informed by the Holy Scriptures, it is regarded as one of the most influential catechisms to come out of the Reformation. [www.heidelberg-catechism.com](http://www.heidelberg-catechism.com)*

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#### **27. Q. What do you understand by the providence of God?**

A. God's providence is his almighty and ever present power, whereby, as with his hand, he still upholds heaven and earth and all creatures, and so governs them that leaf and blade, rain and drought, fruitful and barren years, food and drink, health and sickness, riches and poverty, indeed, all things, come to us not by chance but by his fatherly hand.

Jer 23:23, 24; Acts 17:24-28.

Heb 1:3.

Jer 5:24; Acts 14:15-17; Jn 9:3; Prov 22:2.

Prov 16:33.

Mt 10:29.

#### **28. Q. What does it benefit us to know that God has created all things and still upholds them by his providence?**

A. We can be patient in adversity, thankful in prosperity, and with a view to the future we can have a firm confidence in our faithful God and Father that no creature shall separate us from his love; for all creatures are so completely in his hand that without his will they cannot so much as move.

Job 1:21, 22; Ps 39:10; Jas 1:3.

Deut 8:10; 1 Thess 5:18.

Ps 55:22; Rom 5:3-5; 8:38, 39.

Job 1:12; 2:6; Prov 21:1; Acts 17:24-28.



## Nyack's Hometown Church

### First Reformed Church of Nyack

**Church Location**

18 South Broadway,  
Nyack, NY 10960

**Mailing Address**

Box 565, Nyack, NY 10960

845 358 5518

frchurch@optonline.net

www.nyackreformed.org

www.facebook.com/groups/frcnyac

**Pastor/Preaching Elder**

Dr. Fernando Arzola Jr.

fred@nyackreformed.org

Manse 845 480 5680

**Office Manager/Newsletter Editor**

Sarah Kotecha

**Music Director**

James Rensink

**Children's Sunday School Coordinator**

Bonnie Williams

**CONSISTORY****Elders**

Bruce Biavati

Alan Cann

Chuck Travers (Vice President)

**Deacons**

Katherine Rife (Clerk)

Skip Russell

Paul Wanamaker

*Affiliated with  
The Reformed Church in America*



### Calendar of Upcoming Events: Don't Miss Out!

**Wednesday, February 5, 10am:** The Wednesday morning women's small group meets at David's Bagels in Valley Cottage.

**Sunday, February 9, 9am:** The Sunday morning small group meets in the lounge.

**Sunday, February 9, 10:30am:** Ordination Sunday.

**Wednesday, February 12, 10am:** The Wednesday morning women's small group meets at David's Bagels in Valley Cottage.

**Saturday, February 15, 9am:** Men's breakfast at Hogan's Diner, 41 Route 59, Nyack, NY.

**Sunday, February 16, 9am:** The Sunday morning small group meets in the lounge.

**Sunday, February 16, 10:30am:** We incorporate a healing service component into our worship for any who desire prayer, laying of hands, and anointing with oil.

**Wednesday, February 19, 10am:** The Wednesday morning women's small group meets at David's Bagels in Valley Cottage.

### February Birthdays

**February 12:** Joseph Alessi, Jr.

**February 19:** Francesca Jennings

