



New Beginnings

The First Reformed
Church of Nyack

Annual Report &
January 2013 Newsletter

2012 Annual Report of the First Reformed Church of Nyack

Annual Meeting:
Sunday, February 3, 2013

Inside this issue:

<i>Interim Pastor's Report</i>	2
<i>Nominations Report</i>	3
<i>Treasurer's Report</i>	4
<i>Buildings Committee Report</i>	5
<i>Music Director's Report</i>	6
<i>Sunday School Director's Report</i>	7
<i>Confirmation Class Report</i>	8
<i>Christmas Pageant</i>	9
<i>Pastoral Search Committee Report</i>	10
<i>Website Report</i>	11
<i>Upcoming Events</i>	12-13

*Thoughts at the End of a Journey*

Well, it had to happen eventually. An “intentional” Interim Pastor feels the tug of a termination even at his or her first benediction. Over time, that tug can only get stronger. After Fred’s service and the congregational affirmation, the tug was overwhelming, as was my joy at how you and he will come together on your journeys. That was the day for which I have lived for almost two very interesting, challenging years. This is the Interim’s bittersweet moment.

Moses, looking back at the closing waters of the Red Sea, said to Aaron, “I think we’re in an age of transition!” I meet congregations just when those waters close behind them—people looking at a strange terrain after years of living in taken-for-granted scenery. Here’s a speech that I would not have dared give when we first met, but it is a speech that could have been the same, with minor variations, in every interim position that I have accepted.

“Hello, folks. Welcome to the wilderness! I’ll be your tour guide. And, yes, wilderness is what I do. You can’t get to the Promised Land without spending some time in the desert. You can’t possibly believe that you actually need this desert trek until much nearer its end. But most of you will come to understand!

“When you are ready to leave these shifting sands, you will know that it is time, and many of you will not be the same people. You will have a new sense of who you are and what you are supposed to be about. Many of you will have a deeper experience of teamwork than you ever recalled before. You’ll find new ways to work together and be surprised at the gifts you discover in yourselves and in one another.

“You will also uncover dark realities which, if not faced in the desert, might turn your Promised Land into a nightmare and your next Pastor into an ‘unintentional’ Interim.

“As your guide, I’ll sometimes be a leadership vacuum, so you can search deeper into your own well of talents. Call it “Outward Bound” for church leaders. At other times, I’ll find myself actively closer to the dynamics of a situation than clear varnish on wood. It’s called ‘nonanxious presence’ and it’s a magic I don’t fully understand. God moves through the process for which I sometimes get the credit. And I get to watch it work!”

That’s what I might have said to you almost two years ago. Now it’s time for me to say, "Good-bye." I salute those who believed that life isn’t about waiting for the storm to pass—but about learning to dance in the rain. This is why I’ll stay in the wilderness. This is where I’ve chosen to work for more than twenty years. Please get to know Fred, and, with him, join the trek across the Jordan together into God’s promise of an exciting new chapter in your life. The desert spirit-wind will soon cover the footprints of many months, but it can never erase the precious memories you have given me.

Thank you!

Love at this journey’s end,

Bill Doster, Professional Interim



Nominations Report

Nominations Report

Class of 2014

Elders

Bruce Biavati
Al Cann

Deacons

Kevin Graham
Kathie Rife

Class of 2015

Elders

Fernando Arzola
Jon Biavati *
Chuck Travers *

Deacons

Skip Russell
Paul Wanamaker

*Second two year term

Retiring:

Deacon E. J. Lee Class of 2013
Deacon Jean Rensink Class of 2013

Motions:

To elect Fernando Arzola Elder to the class of 2015;
To re-elect Jon Biavati and Chuck Travers Elders to the class of 2015; and
To elect Skip Russell and Paul Wanamaker Deacons to the class of 2015.



Treasurer's Report—Kevin Graham

2012 Actual Income: \$190,519
2012 Actual Expenses: \$199,122
Variance: (\$8,603)

2013 Budgeted Income: \$166,583
2103 Budgeted Expenses: \$172,670
Variance: (\$6,086)

First Niagara (as of 1/22/13)
Operating Checking Account: \$38,247.75
Capital Campaign Account: 13,602.00
Subtotal: \$51,849.75

Fidelity: \$29,862.09
Vanguard: 53,275.78
Subtotal: 83,137.87

TOTAL RESERVES: \$134,987.62

Respectfully Submitted,
Kevin Graham
Treasurer, FRC of Nyack



Buildings Committee

Ministry Area: Building Committee

Leadership Team: Chuck Travers, Skip Russell, and Paul Wanamaker

Highlights from the year:

In 2012 your Building Committee was kept very busy tending to the never ending issues of keeping our Church buildings in order. This also includes meeting the needs of the New York State Mental Health Clinic that occupies most of our classroom building. The following are some highlights of the work completed or started this past year—

- New locks have been installed throughout the Church for everyone's safety and for added security of the building. A new lock and panic bar was installed on the Church St. exterior door. Locks were installed on all the kitchen cabinets to secure our supplies. Locks were also installed on the basement doors, choir room and youth room.
- A/C units were installed in the youth room and Sunday School classroom. These units help to cool the Pitkin Hall as well as these individual rooms.
- New light bulbs were installed in the Sanctuary. We are working on the lighting in the Pitkin Hall and hope to install new lights soon.
- The seat cushions in the Sanctuary were replaced in December!
- We are working on having the fire alarm system upgraded in the near future.
- The stained glass window in the front of the church will be repaired in the near future.
- We are getting an estimate to repair/replace the exterior door to the Lovatt Chapel.
- We are hoping to have the kitchen and Pitkin Hall painted in the next few months.
- Continuing maintenance for the Clinic which uses our classroom building (Voorhees Hall) to provide important services for many in our community.
- Assisting Kathie and her Soup Angels as they provide meals for those in need every Monday and Wednesday at the Church (even during Sandy!).



Music Director's Report—Jim Rensink

As we finish another year of music-making and inspiration at FRC, reflecting should remind us of some wonderful highlights!

We made terrific music with our small, but dedicated, band. The choir sang at more services than not, enhancing not only our service with beautiful music well sung, but enhancing our "oneness" by sharing their smiling warmth with so many. These extraordinary people give of their time on a regular basis, providing the church, as a whole, with much more than just music! A violin, a flute, a guitar, some horns, or a harp, have added immeasurably to our worship, as well.

I personally have enjoyed singing a little more and playing solos from time to time- congregants have been too kind in their response! I mean it when I say how much it means to be able to share the music I love so much, (and grew up with) with my friends at FRC. Speaking of same, we had some truly world class soloists guesting with us again this year: Sheryl Staples, principal associate concertmaster of the NYPHIL; Krista Feeney, concertmaster of the Orchestra of St. Lukes; Barbara Allen, principal harp of the American Ballet Theater; Eric Bartlett, first cellist of the NYPHIL; and others. Not only are these folks great artists, but also great people!

The music program, seems to me, to be one of the most important and thriving programs at FRC. From the cherubs in the pageant, to the Rensink boys & friends, to Nate coming and singing "We Three Kings," to Kathie or Arlene or John or Elisse, or Jean, or Bill, or Brian, or Mike, or Bob, or Helen, or Caroline, or Carol, or Brian, or Cindy, or Al, (and of course, all the others I leave out every year!)- WOW, what a wonderful crowd! That is a HEFTY percent from a church so small.

I look forward to a new year, new friends, a new pastor (perhaps), and more music-making. What is more inspirational, spiritual, or proof of a higher existence, than music?!

All the best,

O' Jim

Sunday School/Christian Education—Bonnie Williams

MINISTRY AREA: Sunday School/Christian Education

Leader: Bonnie Williams

Description of Ministry Area Mission: We know that the greatest impact on the heart of a child happens when the family and the church partner together. Our mission is to support the family in providing happy, meaningful experiences that touch the hearts of our students, nurturing their faith and their desire to follow Jesus and equipping them to become the Christian Leaders of tomorrow.



Leadership Team: Rev. Bill Doster, Michelle Cota, Shannon and John Dedyo, Cindy and Kevin Graham, Margie and Brian Jennings, Jeff Lee, Chuck and Carolyn Travers, Terri, Paul, Erica and Jenna Wanamaker, and Machlie Bastien of First Haitian Church

Experiences in 2012 that Support Our Mission

- **Faith:** Sharing God sightings each week in Sunday School
- **Bible Study:** “Believe in God” Material January – Easter, Journey to Jerusalem , Children’s Day in June, VBS Sundays “Everything is Possible with God” in June and July, Fall VBS – Adventures with Daniel, Advent – Church Pageant . Bibles presented to all second graders in the fall. Bible “memory buddies” used to reinforce verses learned.

Women’s Bible Study – “40 Days in the Word” “Gifts of the Spirit”

- **Prayer:** Children’s Message, in Sunday School, and encouraged at home
- **Service:** Operation Christmas Child, Cereal Boxes for Community Center, Mosquito Nets for Mali
- **Performance:** Children’s Day, Fall Sunday School opening, Journey to Jerusalem, Pageant
- **Friendship & Fun:** Easter Egg Hunt (Bible verses in each egg), Egg Bopping Lunch (Christ is Risen, Risen Indeed), Children’s Day Picnic, Fall Sunday School opening Picnic
- **Confirmation:** Bill Doster leads prospective confirmands using “We Believe, Professing our Faith”

How People Can Become Involved in 2013:

- **Need for additional Sunday School leaders especially in Nursery and Junior High**
- **Need people with interest in dramatics to expand this role in Sunday School**
- **Participation in Women’s Bible Study - a short study of Ephesians coming soon**



A Confirmation Class I'll Never Forget

the cast (so far)

Elise Graham, confirmand
Carolyn Travers, advisor

Bill Doster, teacher
Betty Doster, advisor

Caileigh Travers confirmand
Cindy Graham, advisor

the plot

The class is eleven lessons into a thirty-three lesson course, with a confirmation class retreat in their future, thanks to Carol Russell volunteering to go with them to Warwick.

The class meets for ninety minutes after worship when both of the students, the Pastor, and one female advisor are available, which means that four people are struggling with a haunting theme: “What and how do I believe?”

This spring, Caileigh and Elise will each make their own profession of faith, which means they will be creating a very personal Credo, their Statements of Faith. In recent years, I've noticed that the class experience itself becomes a crucible and the matrix of affirmation that opens the door to confirmation. Eighth-grade students are, at the end, demanding more effort and honesty of themselves than we of earlier generations might ever had given at their age. The dynamic duo are making class exciting by bringing their questions, discussing their doubts, and offering keen insights, with the adults joining in the learning circle too. They have studied the Bible with new eyes, comparing and contrasting the two creation stories as well as Matthew's and Luke's nativity narratives. They've tackled ancient creeds, reformation catechisms, and contemporary reformed confessions of faith such as the 1978 Our Song of Hope and the 1986 Confession of Belhar—discussing issues that were addressed.

and now . . .

It was my deep pleasure to work with the students and advisors of the class thus far. I commend the students to Pastor Fred and the road ahead!

Pastor Bill Doster



Ministry Area: Christmas Pageant

Leaders:

Margie Jennings, Director
Bonnie Williams, Producer

Team members (alphabetical order):

Jon Biavati
Jim Cameron
Shannon & John Dedyo
Scott Eck
Kevin & Cindy Graham
Brian Jennings
Gail Miller
Jim Rensink
Skip & Carol Russell
Chuck & Carolyn Travers
Cameron Travers
Terri & Paul Wannamaker

Machlie Bastien (First Haitian Church)

Pastor Bastien
Someone from First Haitian church did most of makeup

Highlights of the year:

- We had a great collaboration between our church and the First Haitian Church. These two churches brought other children making it truly a community presentation. Altogether the 24 children involved came from 5 different churches.
- We had a special solo of "We Three Kings" by Nate Stolldorf.
- Several of our "Shepherds" called in sick 15 minutes before the pageant began. Erica Wanamaker graciously took on two roles switching between the Inn Keeper and a Shepherd.
- Mary, Joseph and the real baby were played by members of First Haitian Church.
- Silent Night was sung in both English and Creole.

How people can get involved in 2013:

- We always need more children.
- We would like to have more adults join the choir or sing solos.
- We need either a reader or a video player to keep the youngest children focused and clean in their costumes. We will continue to use crafts but we really need a focused activity as well.
- This is a news worthy community event. We need contacts with paper for an article.

Idea for the Future:

- The church really pulls together for this 70 plus year event. We have materials on which an Easter time "Journey to Jerusalem" could be dramatized. We have a minimum of 7 people with ties to the congregation who are theater professionals. We should think about expanding our use of the dramatic to tell the Good News. Maybe we could start in a small less ambitious way in the coming year.



Ministry Area: Pastoral Search Committee

Leader: Margie Jennings, MSOL

Description:

The purpose of the Pastoral Search Committee was to find the best candidate for the next pastor of the First Reformed Church.

Team members:

Skip Russell

Bonnie Williams

Barbara Demarest

Paul Wannamaker

Bruce Biavati

Highlights of the year:

The committee began meeting in May 2012 and completed our assignment in December 2012 when we submitted our recommended to the Consistory. The committee worked closely together during this past year and became a well working team. We received between 15-20 applications and narrowed down the search to two candidates. We heard both candidates preach, had lunch with them and interviewed them. We received advisement from Rev. John VandenOever, from the Piermont Reformed Church and were extremely grateful for his involvement.



Website—Brian Jennings

Ministry Area: Web Site <http://nyackreformed.org>

Leader: Brian Jennings

Description of ministry area:

This is the first full year we have had an active web site. We hope to keep church members and those interested in attending our services aware of church activities and provide accurate, up-to-date information that promotes the church.

Names of leaders, team members and/or workers:

Looking for more leaders, members, and workers - email Brian at brianclayjennings@gmail.com

Highlights of the year:

- We had over 1,000 visitors to the site in 2012 and over 4,000 page views.
- 88.3% of the visitors of our site were new to the site; while 11.7 % were returning visitors.
- The average visitor spent 14 seconds on the site.
- Anecdotally, we had at least a handful of people attend services after receiving information from our web site.

How people can get involved in 2013:

- Post photos of events to the church web site.
- Help us to implement a system for recording Sunday services. This could be an important ministry for those unable to attend due to health or distance. It also opens up opportunities for us to connect with people around the world.
- Provide input on improvements to the site.



Interfaith Symposium

The Abrahamic Faiths: Judaism, Christianity, Islam



PLEASE JOIN US IN WORSHIP, LEARNING, AND SHARING

Friday, February 8, 2013 at 7:30pm, Session 3

Temple Beth Torah, 330 N. Highland Ave. (Rte. 9W), Upper Nyack, NY

Join Rabbi Brian Beal and Rabbi Jeffrey Abraham as they lead a Learning Service, a combination of prayer and commentary, to help bring alive the meaning of each prayer and explain how the structure of a service takes us on a spiritual journey.

Refreshments will be served.

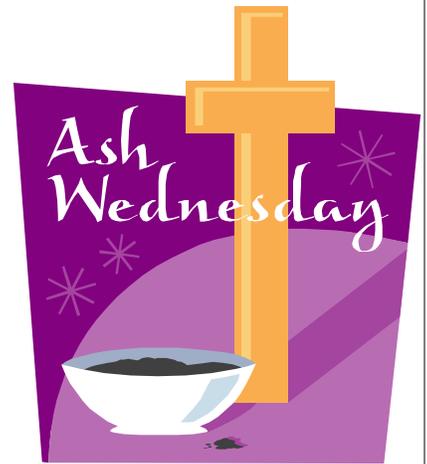
ORGANIZED BY: CONGREGATION SONS OF ISRAEL, FIRST IMMANUEL MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH, FIRST REFORMED CHURCH OF NYACK, GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH, ISLAMIC CENTER OF ROCKLAND, ST. ANN'S CATHOLIC CHURCH, TEMPLE BETH TORAH

This interfaith program was supported by the Men of Reform Judaism (MRJ) Congregational Interfaith Grant, made possible by funding from the Jewish Chautauqua Society, MRJ's interfaith education project.

**JESUS INVITES US
TO JOIN ONE ANOTHER
ON ASH WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 13,**

**at 6:30 p.m.,
For light refreshments,
and from 7:00 to 7:30 p.m.,
gathering in the lounge
to begin the season of Lent.**

**Dress is informal.
Children are welcome.**



Friends in Christ,

Every year at the time of the Christian Passover we celebrate our redemption through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Lent is a time to prepare for this celebration and to renew our life in the paschal mystery. We begin this holy season by acknowledging our need for repentance, and for the mercy and forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Pastors Arzola and Doster invite you, therefore, in the name of Christ, to observe a holy Lent, by self-examination and penitence, by prayer and fasting, by works of love, and by reading and meditating on the Word of God.