



First Reformed Church of Nyack

Nyack's Hometown Church
Celebrating 176 years of
service

March/April 2015

Pastoral Reflections

Adjusting our Perspectives

In today's reading, we are introduced to Apollos. He assisted Paul, especially with the churches of Ephesus and Corinth. Apollos is an interesting character in several regards. He is helpful in our understanding of the Scriptures and ourselves.

First, in Acts 18:24, we read that he was "a native of Alexandria." Alexandria, as we know, is in Egypt. We often don't make the connection, but Egypt, of course, is in Africa. So Apollos was an African man. An African man who was Jewish and later converted to Christianity.

Many of the New Testament characters and Early Church Christians were African. And it's important to realize, I think, that the roots of our church are Middle Eastern and African – 1,500 years before the Protestant Reformation.

So while it is essential that we try to glean out these spiritual/ethical principles in a way that is contemporarily relevant and meaningful to each of us, let us also enjoy knowing that much of the rich food from which we spiritually eat has Middle Eastern and African spices.

Of course, as people of the West, we often view or make assumptions from our 21st Western perspective. And I think it's important for us, as thinking Christians trying to be intellectually honest, to accept that much of the religious historical foundation is richly global and diverse and urban. And in this case, one the original church planters was an African convert from the urban context.

This speaks to the rich diversity of our faith tradition. It also helps us to begin to adjust our perspectives from how we examine the Scriptures and our faith tradition.

Second, in Acts 18:24-25, Apollos is described as an educated, well-spoken person with a passion for the faith. But it's interesting to note that in verse 26, we also read, "...when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained the Way of God to him more accurately."

Pastoral reflections continued on page 2





Pastoral Reflections continued...

So here is a couple – a man and woman – who were not ordained, but lay people, who corrected Apollos. Even though he knew about the life and teachings of Jesus, and even though he was confident in his views, his perspective needed to change a bit. And there is no mention of Apollos being offended or disagreeable. He was given a gift, and Apollos received it as a gift.

Constructive criticism is never easy. But he seemed to show an openness for in verse 27 we read, “the believers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him.” This can be a lesson for all of us. To be open to the possibility of adjusting our perspectives – to challenging our assumptions – to be open to change – toward deeper insights.

This is easier said than done, of course, because it requires us to come out of our comfort zones and to be more vulnerable. And this is scary. But how else can we evolve and grow in our faith and in our lives? There is no other way.

This pastoral reflection was taken from a sermon based on Acts 19:1-7 delivered by Fred Arzola on January 11, 2015.

A Note from Our Music Director



As we progress through Lent, we enter a time when our music becomes more introspective and reflective. It is a time when we reenter thoughts of renewal and sacrifice. The music of the services (both hymns and anthems) mirror this time of introspection, but all with an eye to the triumph that is Easter. While Christmas is the royal Birth, Easter is the time of rebirth through sacrifice.

The Ash Wednesday service is, perhaps, the most intimate service of our year. This year it will be followed with many special musical components. The choir will be contributing new Lent and Easter pieces. We will have special music, most notably from Sheryl Staples, concertmaster of the New York Philharmonic, on Sunday, March 15th. We also look forward to participation from some of our own professional musicians.

One of my personal favorites out of all of our ser-

vices is the Sunrise Service. This year the service is at Nyack Beach (the “Hook”) at 7am. While one can never predict the weather conditions, often their challenge is part of the fun. And we always seem to draw old friends from the community that don't regularly frequent our church.

Another of the best parts of the whole Easter experience is witnessing the rebirth of Christ, conjoined to the rebirth of Spring and the world around us.

Best, Jim Rensink



Terri's Thoughts—Be An Angel!

By Terri Wanamaker

Do you believe God has purposely put people in your path of daily life? Do you believe we are put in the paths of others as well? I do.

Lately I have been asking myself that question.

Once again it becomes pretty obvious to me that this is another one of those things in my spiritual journey that I wonder what took me so long to figure out. From time to time, as something begins to make sense, I get the light bulb going off in my head, followed by the inevitable 'duh' moment as I figure out yet another little piece in the endless puzzle of my own spiritual path.

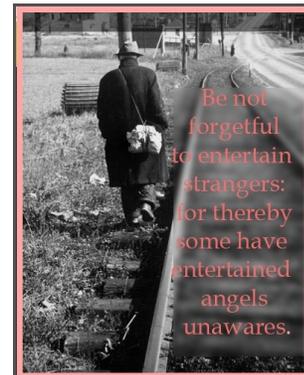
I truly believe now that God puts people in our paths every day, for many reasons, both obvious and not so obvious. Think about how someone has come into your life or you have come into theirs, whether for a brief time, or for a very long time: For encouragement. For inspiration. For motivation. For sympathy. For empathy. For love. For friendship. For helping. For support. For strength. For fun. For companionship. For learning.

Think back to times when you have felt alone, or misunderstood, or puzzled with a problem, felt lost, lonely, or uninspired; or anxious. (Don't worry, I am not going there again! I am learning, remember, to give all my worries to God. It really does help!)

Now, think about all the people you interact with during your day, and their interactions with you. Think about all your interactions with your kids, spouse, parents, friends, strangers, co-workers, the grumpy person behind the counter at the gas station, or the little old man who needs help to bring his garbage can to the back of his house... Be an Angel! Give it back! If someone is an angel for you, be an angel for them. If someone has been put in your path to help you, then you have no doubt been put in someone else's path to do the same.

Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to forget to show hospitality angels without knowing it.

Hebrews 13:2 NIV



GIVING

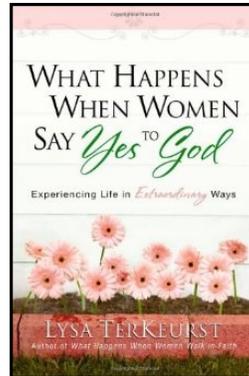


Support First Reformed Church through service, prayer, and/or giving. The church website is now set up for members and friends to make online donations through PayPal: www.nyackreformed.org/giving



~ WEDNESDAY MORNING WOMEN'S GROUP 10AM ~

Meets at David's Bagels (2 Lake Road East, Valley Cottage, NY)



Cindy Graham, Group Leader

845.729.7211 cmg313@verizon.net

This month we began our second book in the Wednesday Women's Bible study group. I am truly enjoying this entire spiritual experience. Personally, I have learned so much and grown in my faith. I eagerly look forward to learning how to "listen to God" and becoming a more focused Christian.

Prayer has been a major focal point each week and I now truly feel the power of prayer. It inspires me daily and strengthens my belief in God.

Thank you to Pastor Fred for laying the groundwork. Also I am so grateful for my "partners" in this journey: they are so vital to the dynamic of this group study!

Cindy Graham, Group Leader

Men's Fellowship Meets for Breakfast

Our Men's Fellowship group met for breakfast on Valentine's Day. There were nine in attendance and a very wonderful time was had by all. We would love to have more in attendance and are working toward that end. Our next get together is scheduled for March 14 at Hogan's Diner, 9am.



Best to all,

Elder Al Cann



Building & Grounds Update—Paul Wanamaker



For those of you who might not have seen a copy of the church's 2014 annual report, here are some of the highlights mentioned by the Building and Grounds Committee:

- ◆ The Lovatt Chapel was restored along with the Communion table and a new exterior sign. The project was lead by Jerry McIntosh with assistance from Skip Russell.
- ◆ The Burd St. steps to the classroom building were repaired.
- ◆ The Carpets in the sanctuary and the lounge were cleaned.
- ◆ Tiles were replaced in the ladies bathroom and classroom building.
- ◆ The sanctuary and all the brass was cleaned and polished in November for the Interfaith service.
- ◆ Emergency plumbing repairs were made at the Manse.
- ◆ Our two guest congregations are now using the downstairs space in the classroom building in lieu of the lounge.
- ◆ New knobs were placed on the cabinets and drawers in the kitchen.
- ◆ Many routine maintenance tasks were performed for Soup Angels, NYS Mental Health

Clinic, as well as on our sanctuary, manse, and grounds.

Plans for the 2015 include:

- ◆ Examination of our structures to determine required repairs.
- ◆ Painting of the sanctuary walls.
- ◆ Painting of the exterior trim.
- ◆ Upgrading of fire alarm system.
- ◆ Upgrade lighting in the sanctuary.
- ◆ Clean-up of the basement.
- ◆ Possible upgrades to the kitchen and bathrooms.

We continue to look for ways to reduce our expenses, especially our utility and maintenance costs. Soup Angels has helped us to defray the cost of A/C in the Pitkin Room.

We thank everyone who has helped to keep our beautiful buildings maintained. Thank you.

Respectfully,

Paul Wanamaker & Skip Russell, for the Building and Grounds Committee.

Easter Lilies to honor and remember our loved ones

Every Easter season we have fragrant Easter lilies decorating our sanctuary in memory or honor of our loved ones. If you would like to place a memorial request, you may do so until Monday, March 30th. The suggested donation is \$20 per plant. You can call the church office (845-358-5518) or email your request to firstnyackchurch@gmail.com and mail in your donation. Please be sure to include who the flowers are in memory or honor of as well as your name.





SUNDAY SCHOOL

By Bonnie Williams, Sunday School Coordinator

The Sunday School began the year by viewing “Joseph, King of Dream” for several Sundays. Along with the video they used their Bibles and were quizzed on the story. Roberto Chia served as projectionist and ably managed the technology.



The young people celebrated Purim by munching on Hamantaschen (shaped like Haman’s hat) and hearing the story of Esther while booing whenever Haman’s name was mentioned in the story.

During Lent the students will memorize key Bible verses and view “The Prince of Egypt.”

On **March 15th** the entire church will celebrate at the **St. Patrick’s Day Breakfast** featuring Al Cann’s famous green pancakes and kielbasa. Don’t miss this happy tradition!



Jesus washes the disciples’ hands during *Journey to Jerusalem* last year.

As Easter approaches we will again participate in *Journey to Jerusalem*. The students will don head scarves and pretend to be disciples as they follow in Jesus footsteps during the days before Easter.

On **Easter, April 5th**, young people will attend church with their families and **hunt for Easter Eggs** (containing Bible verses and candy) on the lawn after the service.

Because of the street fair the week after Easter, **the Egg Bopping and Bagels luncheon will be held on April 19th**, two weeks after Easter. Save your hard boiled Easter Eggs for the big competition! There will be a trophy for adults and for kids.

YOUNG PEOPLE 6th-12th Grades PIZZA AND MOVIE NIGHT MARCH 6, 5-8PM



LET US KNOW YOU ARE COMING BY MARCH 4TH
BRING A FRIEND!

Email: bonniew34@optonline.net or call the church office: 845-358-5518



~ MEN'S BREAKFAST ~

Saturday, March 14th ~ 9:00am

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



For more information, contact Alan Cann

845.641.6788 abc351@verizon.net

ST. PATRICK'S DAY BREAKFAST

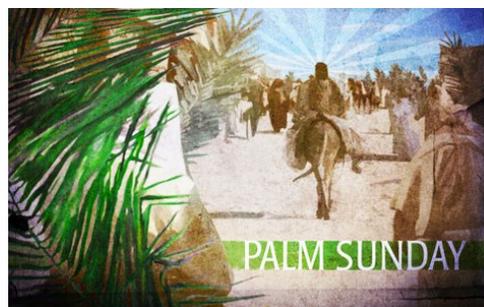
Sunday, March 15 ~ 9:30am



Green pancakes and kielbasa await you for this festive annual gathering.

PALM SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE

Sunday, March 29 ~ 10:30am





MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE

Thursday, April 2 ~ 7pm



EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE

Sunday, April 5 ~ 7am



Nyack Beach State Park
698 North Broadway, Nyack

Easter Sunday Worship Service

Sunday, April 5 ~ 10:30am



GUEST PREACHER



Sunday, March 15—Elder Norman Haight



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.
Nyackpastor@gmail.com
Manse 845 480 5680

Office Manager/Newsletter Editor
Sarah Kotecha

Music Director
James Rensink

Children's Sunday School Coordinator
Bonnie Williams

CONSISTORY Elders

Skip Russell
Chuck Travers (Vice President)

Deacons

Arlene Keiser
Katherine Rife (Clerk)
Paul Wanamaker

*Affiliated with
The Reformed Church in America*



Calendar of Upcoming Events: Don't Miss Out!

Sunday, March 1, 10:30am: Consistory Installation service.

Wednesday, March 4, 9:30am: Women's Wednesday morning small group meets at David's Bagels in Valley Cottage.

Sunday, March 15, 9:30am: Annual St. Patrick's Day breakfast.

Sunday, March 27, 10:30am: Palm Sunday worship service.

Thursday, April 2, 7pm: Maundy Thursday service.

Sunday, April 5, 7am: Easter Sunrise service at the Nyack Beach State Park.

Sunday, April 5, 10:30am: Easter Sunday worship service with annual Easter egg hunt following the worship service.

Sunday, April 12: Nyack Street Fair.

Sunday, April 19, 10:30am: Annual Egg Bopping and Bagels luncheon following the worship service.

March Anniversaries

March 3:

Al & Carol Cann celebrate 53 years

March 22:

Jim & Jean Rensink celebrate 40 years

March 25:

Skip & Carol Russell celebrate 44 years

March 28:

Brian & Margie Jennings celebrate 7 years



March Birthdays

March 10: Charlie Jennings

March 11: Caleigh Travers
Bonnie Williams

March 13: Cindy Graham

March 25: Carol Cann

