



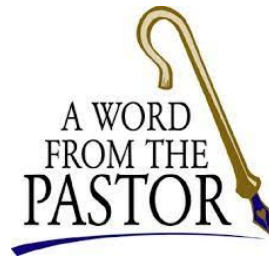
Dear Friends,

Hendrik and I walk to school in the morning rain or shine (even in a downpour he still wants to walk). As spring has sprung the walk has been more challenging. Because I have one thing on my mind: get Hendrik to school. However, he has other things on his mind, namely, noticing everything. The first thing that he does is look at the tulips at our front walk. He touches every single bud, and wonders what color they will be when they open. When there is a tulip that has opened that wasn't before, he is overjoyed with excitement, and smells all of them. When I can get him to move, he stops, to take notice of the wild violet that he was concerned that he almost stepped on. And he held the bloom in his hands.

And when I can get him to move, he goes about ten more paces, and then he notices another flower, or a bud, or something else interesting or beautiful.

And the other day I realized something. The problem is not that he stops to notice everything, the problem, rather, is that I don't. I mean, we do have to get to school on time, but the destination itself isn't the only thing, in fact, it might not even be the main thing. The journey is also something meaningful.

How often do I pass so much and not actually notice? Because when you stop and look at the wild violets which so many people consider to be weeds to be eradicated, or when you stop and smell the tulips, one can see that there is so much beauty which surrounds us. In our frenetic and breakneck pace of doing all the things, there's so much that we don't truly see.

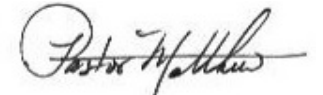


It makes me think of Moses and the burning bush. This bush was not right in front of him, it was off to the side, the periphery. He had to notice, he had to decide to turn aside from where he was going and seek to look at, to see this sight. And the story of the world was never the same after that. I'm not expecting that noticing a flower to lead to a mass liberation from oppression, but I wonder if taking a moment to notice these things around us might be a means of grace, something almost sacramental.

I want to encourage you to try to be intentional about slowing, just a bit, even once a day. Take notice of flowers, or the leaves growing. Watch the bunny hop across the yard, or take in the bird singing from the trees. After all, who knows what we might see if we turn aside to look at the amazing sights all around us.



With deep and abiding love,


Pastor Matthew

On May 7, our congregation will celebrate the baptism of Benjamin Richard, five month old son of Stephanie and Ryan Brewer. Please join us for Worship followed by a special coffee hour.



Baby Food and Juice Offering

On Sunday, May 14 (Mother's Day), the ARC congregation will once again share in an offering of baby food and juice during the 10:30 worship service. This offering will be forwarded to the Altamont Food Pantry and Guilderland food Pantry for families who are in financial need.



We're planning a trip...

ARC is sponsoring a bus trip to Old Sturbridge Village in Massachusetts in July. Watch for a sign-up sheet in fellowship hall this month!



In church, we have the chance to plant a seed of something very special in the hearts, minds, and spirits of children. This year in honor of children's day please consider bringing annuals for our flower garden dedicated to all those children we love near and far. Flowers will be receive on May 23. **Thank you!**



Community Dinner

Our next "First Monday Spaghetti Dinner" for the community will be on **May 1**. Food will be served from 5 to 6:30 and includes spaghetti with sauce (meatballs and sausage), bread, salad and dessert.

We cannot do this without the wonderful 30-35 volunteers. Please consider helping out by signing up on the sheets in Fellowship Hall or by calling (518) 861-8711. **Thank you!**



Thank You

Many thanks to everyone who placed flowers on our chancel for Easter. They were beautiful and the congregation was truly gifted by their presence.



Join us for the Altamont Memorial Day Parade on Sunday, May 23 at 2:00pm

As in the past, ARC has a float in the parade with a First Monday of the Month Community Dinner theme. Our first fall dinner will be Monday, October 2!!!!!! Our Congregational Life Committee invites anyone from our ARC church community to ride on the float. Please meet in our ARC parking lot at **1:00 p.m.** to hop on the float, which will be driven to the fairgrounds. If you are not on the float, please watch the parade and cheer our ARC float.



It's not too late to join the ARC team for the May 7 Albany CROP Hunger Walk. So far we have two members and have raised almost \$500. Overall, there are 80 walkers registered and over \$13,000 posted on-line. Visit <http://www.crophungerwalk.org/albanyny> to join the team or make a donation. Walkers can register online and either walk in Albany on May 7 or any where and any time during the month of May. Checks may be made out to CWS/CROP and given to one of our walkers, Kitt Jackson or Chris Tucker. 25% of the funds raised come back to our area to support food pantries, including Altamont, Guilderland, and New Scotland. The remainder is used by Church World Service and its partners for global hunger relief and development programs, including assistance to Ukrainian refugees and improving access to clean water..



Happy Mother's Day



✿ Pastor Brad and Robin Kautz write the following from the Jicarilla Apache Reformed Church in Dulce, NM: "During our almost 10 years here, Pastor Brad has conducted funeral services for at least ten children of living members of our congregation. He is burying another this morning. Please pray for all bereaved parents and grandparents....and for Pastor Brad. We are blessed to be present in the face of such despair,

bringing the hope of Jesus. Thank you for your prayers and support."

✿ Josh and Alison Perkins send the following prayer requests from their post in the Middle East: "Please pray for ----new friendships to flourish and develop into deeper relationships.

- ✿ A friend we have been meeting with who is interested in Jesus
- ✿ Alison and the kids as they enter the last busy stretch of school
- ✿ Three workshops coming up: a) local world view and the Gospel; b) engaging in new friendships; and c) Biblical answers to hard questions from seekers. "

✿ Schenectady Community Ministries held their Spring Assembly on April 30 at their Community Hub in Hamilton Hill. Delegates heard updates on the various community outreach programs SiCM is involved in, including the Phil Grigsby Food Pantry, Schenectady Urban Farms, the CROP Hunger Walk, and other social justice issues.

✿ The Regional Synod of Albany will hold their annual meeting May 7-8 at the Lynnwood Reformed Church. All are welcome to attend the special celebration from 5-7:30pm the afternoon of May 7, whether or not you are a delegate. Dinner, entertainment, and fellowship--all free, but RSVP is required. Visit the Synod web site at <http://www.albanysynod.org> to reserve your spot.

✿ Camp Fowler (near Speculator, NY) is in need of volunteer cabin counselors, especially females, for several of their in-camp weeks. Visit <http://www.campfowler.org> for more information and to volunteer. It's a great way to share your faith with young people and spend time in a beautiful place.

✿ The Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York is grateful for the more than 18,000 volunteers who, over the past year, helped alleviate hunger, lessen food waste, and nourish hungry neighbors. Volunteers are currently needed at the farm on Ketcham Rd. for various tasks in the greenhouse.

Need a Mother's Day gift for someone who has everything? Make a donation to the Food Bank in her honor and she will receive a special e-card you can choose when you make your online gift. To volunteer or make a donation, visit <http://www.regionalfoodbank.net>.

✿ The Institute of Cultural Affairs, headquartered in Chicago, partnered with local residents to celebrate Earth Day. Special activities included learning about responding to climate challenges and working towards a carbon-free Uptown Chicago.

✿ New Brunswick Theological Seminary is holding their Inaugural Biennial Gala on May 18. This event will honor alumni and church and community leaders who exemplify the Seminary's mission to

"train and equip leaders who think critically, act justly, and lead faithfully". This year's honorees are the Rev. Dr. Michael Sanders, senior pastor of Faith Baptist Church in Summit, NJ, and "The Women of the RCA" for 5 decades of ordination as elders, deacons, and ministers of Word and Sacrament. Commencement will be a few days later, on May 20. Visit <http://www.nbts.edu> for more information.

✿ Cornerstone Protestant Campus Ministry at UAlbany is winding down their program year, since final exams and graduation come up in early May. A special Alumni Reunion was held on April 29 to say farewell and thanks to Campus Minister Sandy Damhof and her husband Curt. After 20 years of ministry with college students, Sandy is retiring and moving to Minnesota. Several members of the Benevolence Committee got to meet Pastor Becca Ehrlich when they brought "Food and Faith" to the Cornerstone students on April 25. We look forward to continuing to be a partner congregation during the coming year.

✿ Congratulations to all those graduating from Hope College on May 7!



Katelyn Mascolo	May 1	Jim Haas.	May 16
Corrina Goutos	May 2	Marianne Baratier.	May 17
Beth Burlingame	May 3	Gretchen Smith.	May 17
Stephanie Brewer.	May 3	Claudette Riek	May 19
Karie Luidens	May 7	Kim Riek.	May 21
Kathryn Sargent	May 7	Nicole Viola.	May 23
Alexandra Stevens	May 8	Nick Audi	May 25
Jared Capuano.	May 11	Angie Stewart	May 25
Nancy McNiven	May 11	Geri Briggs.	May 27
Steven McNiven	May 13	Bob Luidens	May 28
Patti Percoski.	May 14	Julian Mayer	May 30

Saving for Paving



In case you haven't noticed lately, our parking lot is nearing the end of its lifespan. We've been able to patch it over the years, but it is deteriorating to a point that it can no longer be reasonably patched and is becoming a safety hazard. So, we are going to redo the parking lot! That's good news! The less good news is that the bids have been coming in somewhere north of \$80,000

Between the Capital Improvements Fund that we started for seed money for things like this, an incredibly generous pledge from the congregation, and earnings from some of our investments, we are able to pay for a large majority of that number! There will still be a comparably small gap to close, the exact numbers are yet to be determined, but we think that this is something that is attainable for us.

Stay tuned for details!

Property Committee



Please mark your calendar to join us for our Annual Spring Clean-up Day, to be held on **Saturday, April 29, from 9am until noon**. Bring a pair of gloves and a rake, and we will provide coffee and bagels. The event will be held rain or shine, as we can always find some indoor projects to do should the weather be inclement.

In March, three paving contractors came to ARC to submit bids for the upcoming repaving of the entire parking pot and driveway. The Property Committee will review the estimates in April and will then make a recommendation to Consistory for their approval. The project is expected to be completed in either July or August, and funds have already been allocated for the majority of the cost.

We would like to acknowledge the generosity of Jason Brennan of Altamont, who recently repainted the upstairs restroom at no cost to the church. The room needed to be updated with a fresh look, and it came out great. We would also like to thank Judi Dineen for facilitating this project. We offer our appreciation to Bill Johnson for installing new covers on the outdoor light fixtures on the back of the building that illuminate the parking lot.

Consistory Considerations



Committee Reports:

Summer Worship Times: Matthew recommended that for this year, ARC keep the July services at 10:30 and move August to 9:30, when he is on vacation and we will have pulpit supply leading worship. Consistory approved this recommendation.

Sabbatical: Matthew is looking at summer 2025 for a potential three month sabbatical. Because the sabbatical plans have been shared with the congregation, it was noted that the details of this should be transparent to the congregation, including the fact that a sabbatical means that the pastor is completely removed from the life and context of the church. It was agreed that when the details of Matthew's sabbatical are established closer to 2025, Consistory will review and approve, and share all information with the congregation.

Benevolence: The Church World Service Blanket Campaign raised \$2,005. A Food and Faith taco dinner is planned at UAlbany Cornerstone Ministry on April 25.

Congregational Life Committee: Many ideas for church activities have been received from the survey that has been posted in the church and Fellowship Hall. Work is underway for the Memorial Day parade. There will be a baby food drive during May 12-15.

Finance: This committee has started to make some revisions to the policy and procedures manual. They are currently reviewing insurance coverage (for fraud, etc.). The policy calls for the Finance Committee to meet with Consistory once a year and include the trust fund administrator Allan McVean. It is anticipated this will take place in September. It was noted that ARC has not been audited in almost twenty years, so action will be taken to rectify that.

Property: A meeting will be held on 4/24 to review the quotes collected by Greg Goutos. All are in the \$80,000 range. They will choose one and submit to Consistory for approval. The church treasurer has indicated that with the capital improvements fund, a generous pledge from a donor in the congregation, and earnings from our Trust Fund, a large majority of the parking lot cost can be covered. A small gap will need to be raised, but we think that it is doable. More details to come. Property will look into getting an air conditioner for Nancy's office before the weather gets too hot. A church clean-up day is scheduled for 4/29 in the morning.

Altamont Reformed Church

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To contribute articles for the ARC Lite, send to the editor c/o ARC

or email the editor, Theresa Lasselle, at lasselle@aol.com

ARC's website: <http://altamontreformed.org/>

The due date for the next edition of the ARC Lite is May 26

ALTAMONT REFORMED
CHURCH
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Worship: The healing/wholeness liturgy received positive responses and we will consider making this a regular part of the service once a month.

Book Study: Attendance has grown to 24-26 people each week. Matthew wants to discuss Sunday School for kids, starting in September 2023. It would likely be before the church service.

Safe Sanctuary: This policy will be reviewed soon to ensure ARC is ready and in compliance when Sunday School starts in September.

Board of Elders: Bill Johnson is the alternate delegate to Classis. Matthew's performance review is being completed. Seven people will be joining the church.

Deacons' Report: There have been no requests for assistance even after publicizing the purpose of the Deacon's Fund. We will leave the money in the fund in the event of a crisis.

HRC Partnership: This is going smoothly. HRC will also be welcoming 5 people into their membership. Matthew will initiate a joint Consistory meeting in the fall to evaluate the partnership and discuss the possibilities for joint summer services next year.

The Regional Synod meets May 8 at Lynnwood Reformed. At that time, Matthew's term as President will conclude.