

From the Pastor's Desk...

Dear Friends,

Today I picked Hendrik up from his last day of kindergarten. As he came out the staff were out hitting boomwhackers and cheering as students left school, and then as the buses left. There's something exciting about summer, and I feel it, even as someone whose schedule doesn't revolve around the academic calendar.

Summer is a time when things slow down a little bit, we can shift gears even a little bit. Some of us go to camp, others of us take vacations to places exotic and ordinary. Many of our summer activities take us away from our church family in the summer. But even when we are not together, I want to encourage you to still spend some time to nurture the spiritual life.

Just like our physical health requires tending in order for it to stay healthy, so also our spiritual life requires attention and tending in order for it to remain healthy. And just like it takes intention and dedication to maintain our physical health, so also it takes intention and dedication to maintain our spiritual life.

So, wherever your life takes you this summer, I want to encourage you to tend to your spiritual life. And doing so doesn't have to be prohibitively complicated. It's important to find ways to do this which is workable for your life. So here are some ideas.

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Summer Worship Schedule

July services remain at 10:30 a.m.
August services move to 9:30 a.m.
except for August 20, which is the 10:00
a.m. Ecumenical Worship Service in
Orsini Park with Helderberg Reformed
Church and St. John's Lutheran Church.
We will resume our normal 10:30 a.m.
worship hour on Sunday, September 3.

Please join us Sunday, August 20, at 10:00
a.m. for our summer community worship
service in Orsini Park. Everyone is invited
to bring a lawn chair or blanket. Invite a
neighbor or friend to join in this special
worship opportunity. In case of rain, the
service will move to St. John's Lutheran
Church on Maple Ave.

Prayer

One of the most significant things is to give attention to prayer. A lot of times we think that we don't know how to do it right, but here's the thing: as long as the intention is to connect with God, you're doing it right. St. Theophan the Recluse gave a very simple definition of prayer: "To pray is to stand spiritually before God." This is both simple and profound. So I want to invite you to stand before God, just a few minutes, each day. A few minutes at the beginning of the day, and a few minutes at the end, and this way being with God can bookend your day. Perhaps with words, perhaps with silence, perhaps with both. But the main point is to spend some intentional time with God.

Bible Reading

I know this one can be intimidating, especially for those of us for whom the Bible seems difficult to understand and foreign. But this doesn't have to be complicated, it doesn't have to be a lot. Don't start at Genesis 1:1 and resolve to read it through. Most people get lost somewhere in Leviticus and never make it out. If you want a challenge, by all means, do that. But you can take off smaller bites. Take a shorter book, the Gospel according to Mark, perhaps, and do small sections at a time. Take what you can from it, if something seems confusing put it in the back of your mind; you'd be surprised how things like this can suddenly make sense after it's been in the mental slow cooker for a bit.

Generosity

One of the traditional spiritual gifts is to be generous, and this is not only with money or material goods. Can we be generous with our time? Can we be generous with our time or our attention? Can we see the other as someone given to us by God? Generosity, broadly defined, is one central way that we can show forth the extravagant love of God. So might there be some opportunities for you to embody generosity—broadly defined— as a response to the grace of God?

There are all sorts of other things you can do, but these are just some ideas to get you started. So whether you are at home, or at camp, or across the country, these are all ways that you can tend to your spiritual life, and more.

While this is the only issue of the ARC Lite for the summer, there will be a separate mailing coming mid-summer. There was a suggestion to share the article on the multiple parish widely and in full. The denomination has taken note of what we have been doing and this is an opportunity to share with others how we are thinking forward and acting proactively.

And so wherever your summer takes you, I hope it is enjoyable, fruitful, safe, and life-giving. And please tend to your spiritual life, as well.

With deep and abiding love,
Pastor Matthew



Old Sturbridge Village Trip



The Congregational Life Committee is sponsoring a bus trip to Old Sturbridge Village in Massachusetts on July 6. The cost will be \$55 per adult which includes bus fare and museum admission. We will board the bus promptly at 7:00 a.m. Make checks payable to Altamont Reformed Church with Sturbridge on the memo line. Send your check to ARC at PO Box 671, Altamont, NY, 12009 by Friday, June 30. A sign-up sheet is in fellowship hall. Please include your name, contact info and emergency contact. Guests are welcome.

Altamont Reformed Community Dinners Return Monday, October 2

Our Community Dinner returns Monday, October 3. Don't miss a chance to enjoy good food and fellowship. We serve 5:00-6:30 p.m. Invite a friend.



An Opportunity to Serve Volunteer for our Community Dinners

Do you enjoy greeting people? Do you like to bake cupcakes? Do you enjoy cooking and serving food, washing dishes and pots and pans, or setting up tables and table settings? These are just some of the tasks that need to be done each month for our dinners. Volunteering for a dinner isn't just work, it is lots of fun. Our first fall dinner will be Monday, October 3. There will be sign-up sheets for specific tasks in Fellowship Hall early in September.



Lemonade on the Lawn Sunday, July 23



This annual summer fellowship time is sponsored by the Benevolence Committee. This year's special offering will support an RCA Global Mission program partner, RECONCILE, working for peace and reconciliation as well as assisting refugees in South Sudan. Plan now to stay after worship that Sunday to learn more about this program, enjoy Sudanese cookies and American lemonade, and support this important program. Checks may be made out to ARC Benevolence with "Sudan" on the memo line.

Parking Lot Plans

Paving will occur on Monday, August 7 and the parking lot will remain closed to traffic through Tuesday, August 8. Our church building will be closed both Monday and Tuesday.



From the Missions...



Pastor Brad Kautz got to meet Kitt Jackson at General Synod. They had breakfast together one day. He reports that the highlight of their summer came early, when a group from a church in Denver came to Dulce to lead VBS for children from the Jicarilla Apache Reformed Church and the community. The same volunteers have come six or seven years in a row, giving them the opportunity to build relationships with the children and youth as well as to begin to understand some of the issues affecting life on the reservation.

Josh Perkins asks for prayers as he leads several different training weekends at churches this month. The workshops have been a great opportunity to cast vision and equip people for ministry. Alison has been leading a Bible study for several neighborhood women. She says it has been a blessing but also a challenge, so asks for our prayers for the group. Finally, their son Gabe and a friend have started a Bible study at school and were pleased to have eleven 6th graders come last month.

Camp Fowler begins their summer program season with a need for volunteer cabin counselors for some of the sessions. Visit the Fowler website to see which weeks still have needs; you can fill out paperwork while you are there: <http://www.campfowler.org>. Please pray for a safe and meaningful summer for all of the campers, volunteers, and staff. The annual Golf Classic will take place on July 10, Family Camp August 13-17, and a "Listening Hearts Retreat" Sept.18-22. Details and registration forms available on the web site.

July Birthdays

Amanda Conover	July 2
Ralph Lasselle	July 1
Clara Lasselle	July 9
Matthew vanMaastricht	July 9
Jared Lasselle	July 10
Lois Wood	July 14
Mike Riek	July 17
Ann Rodwell-Lawton	July 20
Eric Tooker	July 20
Paige Tooker	July 20
Jonathan Lasselle	July 21
Marie Lucik	July 22
Betty Ketcham	July 23
Diane Stedman	July 27
Barbara Sargent	July 29
Anthony Viola	July 30

August Birthdays

Christine Capuano	August 1
Andrea Dean	August 11
Mark Moore	August 18
Mark Jackson	August 18
Anna McKee	August 20
Bobby Ruggles	August 26

Welcome New Members

Tom Boink	Gardner Gurney
Jan Chisholm	Tracy Mayer
Kim Gurney	Rick Seppa

Please give your birthdays, anniversaries, and other important events to Theresa at Lasselle@aol.com for inclusion in the ARC Lite

More From the Missions...

The Capital Area Council of Churches has awarded four \$4,000 Martin Luther King, Jr. Scholarships to college bound high school graduates. The Council held its first summer picnic at Henry Hudson Park on June 18. Many people from different churches enjoyed the food and fellowship. The Council is planning on holding a Dementia-Friendly church service sometime this summer to help educate congregations on how to minister to people with dementia. Visit them at <http://www.capareacc.org> to learn more.

The Institute for Cultural Affairs has issued their 2022 report. Their Global Fund focused on African Climate Change, enabling 10 different countries to complete climate change demonstration projects showing local people how to address climate change. According to Elizabeth Wathuti, an African Climate Activist, "This is about humanity's future. This is about making sure that the world right now is livable." ARC supports this climate change initiative through our Benevolence budget.

Cornerstone Protestant Campus Ministry is pleased to announce that Minister Laurie DeJong Zuverink will be serving as the Interim Campus Minister. She is a current Ph. D. student in the School of Social Welfare, a member of Journey United Church of Christ, and passionate about the intersection of social work and religion. She has already met with the student leaders and will be ready to welcome new students during the freshman orientation weeks this summer.

The Community Loan Fund has welcomed two new staff members: Elionor Issac as Bookkeeper and Ruth Kassel as Director of Operations for the Community Investment Trust. More information about upcoming trainings and programs can be found at <http://www.mycommunityloanfund.org>.

Schenectady Community Ministries held their Annual Meeting on June 25th. The Assembly heard reports from SiCM programs (Urban Farms and the Food Pantry), elected new officers and Steering Committee members, and affirmed a list of Core Values (breaking barriers, lightening burdens, fostering dignity, and listening, responding, and adjusting). The Keynote speaker was Robert Carreau, Executive Director of the Schenectady Foundation. Shae Fitzgerald from Congregation Gates of Heaven will serve a second term as President, as will Vice-President Don Wheeler from Trinity Presbyterian Church. Anne Nelson (Nemeton of the Mother Grove) returns as Secretary, and Diana Bennett (First Reformed) as Treasurer. Their popular Summer Lunch program began the week of June 26.



Church Pot Luck Picnic

Let's start the fall at ARC with a time of fellowship and fun. On Saturday, September 17, we'll meet at Bozenkill Park from 1:00-3:00. Sign up at church and bring a dish to pass. Invite a friend. Watch the September ARC Lite and August weekly bulletins for more information.

News from General Synod

Angie Stewart and Kitt Jackson were the 2 Elder Delegates from Schenectady Classis to the 216th General Synod meeting of the Reformed Church in America, held at Central College in Pella, Iowa, June 8-13. Over 200 people gathered daily for inspiring worship (led by the different racial/ethnic councils each day), reports from various commissions (e.g. Christian Action, Christian Unity, Theology, Worship) and institutions (colleges & seminaries), discussion and voting on various recommendations that came from the commissions, consideration of a draft proposal for restructuring, and celebrating 50 years of ordained women as Elders, Deacons, and Ministers of Word and Sacrament. Many of the sessions were recorded, the workbook containing the reports is on-line, and there are recaps of each day's business and photos on the RCA website. <http://www.rca.org/generalsynod>.

It was good to sit at table with people from various parts of the continent, including mission partners and ecumenical guests, to walk through the beautiful campus, and have a chance to visit the Pella Historical Village and learn about its Dutch heritage. Although there is much anxiety about the proposed restructuring, as well as grief over the many congregations who have left the denomination, no big decisions will be made for at least a year. Meanwhile, local congregations like ours will continue to be Christ's presence in their own communities and context. We welcome the Rev. Judy Nelson, a chaplain who lives in Holland, MI, as our new President, and the Rev. Joshua Scheid, a pastor serving in Massapequa, NY, as the new Vice-President. Please keep them in your prayers as they lead us through this time of transition.

Consistory Considerations

- Lemonade on the Lawn will be July 23
- The parking lot is scheduled to be paved on August 7
- The Board of Deacons is seeking to respond to a tragedy in our community.
- ARC will be a community sponsor for ACT's Fall Fest this year.
- A fuller consistory considerations will be posted on the bulletin board in the library at church.

CROP Hunger Walk Results

As of June 19, the total raised in the 2023 John U. Miller Memorial CROP Hunger Walk had reached \$101,134. Thanks to all who walked, volunteered, or contributed. 25% of the funds raised will return to the local region to support food pantries and soup kitchens, including the ones in Altamont, Guilderland, New Scotland, and the Hilltowns Resource Center. The remainder is used by Church World Service and its partners for global hunger relief and development projects, including improving access to clean water.

Women's Retreat

Registration is open for this year's retreat, which will take place at ARC on Saturday, Sept. 23, from 9am-3pm. Led by long-time ARC members Ellen Howie and Kitt Jackson, the retreat will be built around the theme "For the Beauty of the Earth: Eyes to See and Ears to Hear". Using the words of a familiar hymn, ("For the Beauty of the Earth"), Scripture, story, and song, we will consider the wonders of creation and our place in it, as well as our call to care for this fragile globe on which we live.

Cost is \$10, which includes morning refreshments, a catered lunch (with vegetarian option) from the Main Street Cafe, and materials. Please register by signing the sheet at the back of the church and giving (or sending) cash or a check for \$10 (made out to Kitt) to Kitt Jackson, 10 Rita Ct., Delmar NY 12054 by August 21. You can also put a note and your check in Kitt's mailbox at church. Due to space limitations, we can only accommodate 20 people, but there will be a wait list in case of cancellations.

If you have questions, call Ellen (518)861-8294 or Kitt (518) 439-9771.



Property Committee update

Can you help with several hours of outdoor painting this summer? There are a few areas that need a fresh coat of paint, and we can assign you a small project that you can work on at a time that is convenient for you. Please contact Greg Goutos at (518) 495-0148, or by email at ggoutos@nycap.rr.com.

Thank you everyone for donating such wonderful flowers for our flower garden in honor of children on Children's day. A special thanks to Kim and Gardner Gurney, who not only donated many Daylilies, but put down decorative stone along the base of the handicap access ramp.

As we seek to encourage our ongoing spiritual growth and formation, Pastor Matthew is wondering if a midweek opportunity might be helpful, especially for those for whom weekends can be difficult. You are invited to fill out the following survey. Please know that this survey is not a commitment, but please be as accurate as possible about your own interest in participation. Please respond by July 21. Thank you!

<https://forms.gle/NvQjMovDfhsQgHwC59>



JULY

Sunday, July 2 10:30 a.m. Worship Service Guest Worship Leader
 Thursday, July 6 7:00 a.m. Departure from ARC Parking Lot to Old Sturbridge Village
 Sun. July 9 10:30 a.m. Worship Service with Communion Guest Worship Leader
 Sun. July 16 10:30 a.m. Worship Service; 11:30 a.m. Special Coffee Hour
 Wed. July 19 7:00 p.m. Consistory meeting
 Sun. July 23 10:30 a.m. Worship Service; 11:30 a.m. Lemonade on the Lawn
 Mon.-Thurs. July 24-27 5:30-8:00 p.m. VBS at Hamilton Union Presbyterian Church
 Sun. July 30 10:30 a.m. Worship Service

AUGUST

Sun. Aug. 6 9:30 a.m. Worship Service Guest Worship Leader
 Mon. Aug. 7 ARC Parking Lot Paving - lot closed to traffic 8/7 and 8/8.
 Our church building will be closed Monday, August 7 and Tuesday, August 8.
 Tues. Aug. 8 Congregational Life Committee meeting at the home of Judi Dineen
 Sun. Aug. 13 9:30 a.m. Worship Service Guest Worship Leader
 Sun. Aug. 20 10:00 a.m. Community Worship Service at Orsini Park
 Sun. Aug. 27 9:30 a.m. Worship Service Guest Worship Leader

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To be placed on the mailing list, please contact the church office
 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 August 25

Altamont Reformed Church

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