

The Messenger

Newsletter of Helderberg Reformed Church

Worshipping God since 1767! Come join us Sundays at 9:30 a.m.

435 State Route 146 Guilderland Center, NY 12085 | hrchurch.org | Find us on Facebook @HelderbergReformedChurch

In This Issue

From the Pastor's Desk	p. 1
A Poem	p. 2
Events and Notes	p. 4
Notice: Coronavirus	p. 5
February Minutes	p. 5
Easter Flowers Order Form	p. 8

Our Church

Sunday Worship

9:30 am with Lord's Supper on the 1st Sunday of the month.

Make Contact

P.O. Box 196
Guilderland, NY 12085
hrchurchoffice@gmail.com
Church Office (518) 861-8031
Parsonage (518) 861-5489

MINISTER OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

Rev. Lindsey De Kruif

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Ellen Root

ORGANIST

Agnes Armstrong

CONTACT THE MESSENGER

HRCMESSENGER@GMAIL.COM

From the Pastor's Desk

Begin and Begin and Begin Again

The saying goes "it is as easy as riding a bike." This refers to a skill that once learned is never forgotten. Yet, I can attest this is not true. By age eight, I had mastered the art of riding my bicycle without training



wheels, and was an enthusiastic bike rider until in my gangly adolescence, I lost the sense of how to manage my limbs and maintain balance on my bike, particularly on the rough dirt roads on which I lived out in the country.

I got out of practice, and then once as a young adult I was invited to go on a bike ride with a friend. They shared an extra bike they had with me, and I tried my best to climb up on to the seat and set my feet to peddling. Yet, I could not get the hang of it, and after trying to peddle a few feet, I would lose my balance and would need to put my feet to the ground, again and again. Perhaps if I had stuck with it, everything would have come back to me again, and I would have been off and on my way. Yet, I was too defeated to carry on.

Ash Wednesday invites us to stare death in the face. The ashes in their finely ground form remind us that we are dust and to dust we shall return. This is a morbid thought that could easily wear us down and keep us from keeping on in life. If we are just going to die, what is the meaning of life? Why should we keep picking up and going in this life?

Why We Oppose Pockets for Women

Alice Duer Miller

1. Because pockets are not a natural right.
2. Because the great majority of women do not want pockets. If they did they would have them.
3. Because whenever women have had pockets they have not used them.
4. Because women are required to carry enough things as it is, without the additional burden of pockets.
5. Because it would make dissension between husband and wife as to whose pockets were to be filled.
6. Because it would destroy man's chivalry toward women, if he did not have to carry all her things in his pockets.
7. Because men are men, and women are women. We must not fly in the face of nature.
8. Because pockets have been used by men to carry tobacco, pipes, whiskey, flasks, chewing gum and compromising letters. We see no reason to suppose that women would use them more wisely.

Alice Duer Miller (1874-1942) wrote several satirical poems in support of women's suffrage (the right for women to vote). In this poem, she's satirizing many arguments anti-suffragists once used against women's suffrage, by using "pockets" in place of "the right to vote." She was a 1895 graduate of Barnard College with a degree in mathematics and astronomy who became a writer to pay for her studies. She served as an advisory editor of the first issue of The New Yorker magazine. In 1915 she published a collection of her suffragist poems titled "Are Women People?" which in turn became a slogan of the suffragist movement.

The 19th Amendment, granting women the right to vote, was ratified in August 1920, about a century after the American suffragist movement began. 2020 is the centennial year of women's suffrage.



Ash Wednesday also invites us to a season of discipline. We are invited 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. The gospel of Matthew shows the way of discipline through the giving of alms, through prayer, and through fasting, promising us that in our faithful practice of these things, we store up for ourselves treasures in heaven.

Richard Foster in his book, *Celebration of Discipline*, writes

Psalm 42:7 reads "Deep calls to deep." Perhaps somewhere in the subterranean chambers of your life you have heard the call to deeper, fuller living. You have become weary of frothy experiences and shallow teaching. Every now and then you have caught glimpses, hints of something more than you have known. Inwardly you long to launch out into something deeper.

The season of Lent and the disciplines offered up in Jesus' teaching are a way in which we might launch into something deeper. It is a way in which we might know ourselves to be something more than simply dust. We may find treasures laid deep away in the furthest reaches of heaven.

Jesus warns in Matthew of not being showy of our good works, expecting that we will receive a reward. This advice is curious in the context of the whole sermon, in which Jesus also teaches of how we are to be light to the world that our good works might be seen and give glory to our Father in heaven. In struggling with whether or not our good works should go seen or unseen in the world, I have found

Continued next page

Continued from previous page

it helpful to hear the words of Dietrich Bonhoeffer on this matter. Bonhoeffer points out the obvious; our good works must be known among others in order to fulfill the call God has for us who follow Jesus to make known God's kingdom in this world. Yet, we who follow Jesus cannot get caught up in doing these good works for our own benefit. So, Bonhoeffer suggests that what Jesus means by hiddenness is that these works and these acts of faith are hidden from ourselves. These acts are to become so much a part of what we do and how we live in the world that we love others, we pray, we live disciplined lives without realizing it. Our obedience to God is just a part of the way that we live.

These words ring true with what is written to the church in Colossae;

Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory. (Colossians 3:2-4)

The dust of the earth smeared across our foreheads testifies to our death. It proclaims that we will die and that we have died in Christ. It invites us to find our lives hidden in Christ, living out in our everyday a life that testifies to Christ through our prayers and good deeds. These ways

of abundant living are to be so deeply ingrained in our way of being that we cannot differentiate our life from the life of Christ in whom we are hidden.

We are called to a store of treasures not on the earth, but in heaven. This does not come to us naturally for we are people of the earth, where moth and rust consume, and thieves break in and steal. It is not just like riding a bike. We are beginners to this hidden life and we must practice again and again and again.

Contemplative Thomas Merton says, "We do not want to be beginners. But let us be convinced of the fact that we will never be anything else but beginners, all our life!" In Lent, we begin again.

In Christ, we find the promise of new life and in submitting our self to the practices of our faith, prayer, giving, and discipline, we find ourselves drawn more deeply into the reality of spiritual life. We come to know life beyond death; we come to know Christ risen in glory. We find ourselves on the journey to the cross and the resurrection alongside our Savior, Jesus Christ. This is a journey we must begin and begin and begin again.

We begin Lent by receiving the sign of the ashes on our heads. May we begin anew in our lives with Christ this season that we may store up for ourselves treasures in heaven, and that we may come to know Christ in his resurrection.

- Pastor Lindsey



Events and Notes

Holy Week Schedule

April 5: Palm/Passion Sunday Worship at Helderberg at 9:30 AM (Procession of Palms and Reading of the Passion Narrative)

April 9: Maundy Thursday Communion Service and Potluck at Helderberg at 6:30 PM

April 10: Community Good Friday Worship at Altamont Reformed at 1:00 PM (Procession of the Cross to follow)

April 12: Easter Worship at Helderberg at 9:30 AM

Stations of the Cross for Children

You are cordially invited to attend an Ecumenical observance of the Stations of the Cross for Children. The event will be held at St John's Lutheran Church on Good Friday, April 10th from 4pm - 5pm.

This is a perfect introduction for a child of any age to the deep meaning of the Stations of the Cross. The format will consist of telling the story of Jesus' struggle in simple but direct language appropriate for children, using the fourteen Stations as inspiration.

This program is a cooperative effort of members from St. Lucy's/St. Bernadette's, the Altamont Reformed Church, the Helderberg Reformed Church and St. John's Lutheran Church.

Have pictures, news or poems to submit to The Messenger?

Send them to:

hrcmessenger@gmail.com

Submissions to The Messenger should be sent by the last Sunday of the month to appear the first Sunday of the next month. Please include photo credits.

-Ed.



Brooks BBQ Leftovers

Leftovers of chicken and rib dinners from our Friday, March 6 Brooks BBQ event will be available for purchase after the service on Sunday March 8. Come hungry!

RCW Garage Sale

The RCW will be having a garage sale on Saturday, May 2, 2020, the same day as Altamont. When you start your spring cleaning, please save any items you think might sell at the garage sale. Please put a price tag on the items before you bring them. After the sale, remember to take home any of your things that didn't sell. All proceeds go to the RCW. If you have any questions, please contact Pam Colino. Thank you.

Lenten Study

Pastor Lindsey will be running *My Neighbor is Muslim*, a 7-week study beginning February 23 following worship. See the Pastor's Report above for more info and a link to the free materials.

Easter Flowers for Sale!

See the Back Page for the order form for our annual Easter Flowers sale!

Guilderland Food Pantry

GFP is looking for a new Executive Director

JOB OPENING: Executive Director of the Guilderland Food Pantry Part time position. Responsibilities include overseeing the operations of the pantry, training all staff, fund raising and communications. If you are interested email: guildfoodpantry79@gmail.com

Special Notice from Pastor Lindsey on Coronavirus

As a precaution for the health of our worship community, I encourage those who join us in worship to refrain from handshaking and hugging. We will continue to pass the peace during worship, but I encourage you in finding a different means of exchanging a greeting: just say "Peace to you" or give a peace sign or bump elbows. Hand sanitizer is available in the narthex. Please remember to wash your hands frequently, especially after coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose.

Finally, if you are experiencing flu-like symptoms, please stay home from worship. Please help us in caring for one another and stopping the spread of COVID-19.

As the situation develops, we'll be sure to reach out when and if things change for HRC.

Our insurance company has posted the following advice:

Action Steps

Stay informed – the situation with the coronavirus is fluid and the CDC is updating its website daily with

the latest information and advice for the public. (You can also google for Albany County updates.)

Remember to take everyday preventive actions that are always recommended to prevent the spread of respiratory viruses:

Avoid close contact with sick people.

While sick, limit contact with others as much as possible. Stay home if you are sick.

Cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.

Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs.

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub with at least 60% alcohol.

The CDC and State Department have issued advisories asking people to avoid all nonessential travel to China and South Korea at this time. Travel alerts have also been issued for Japan, Italy and Iran.

Helderberg Reformed Church Regular Consistory Meeting February 18, 2020

A regular meeting of the Consistory of the Helderberg Reformed Church was called to order on Tuesday, February 18, 2020 at 7:25 p.m. by Pastor Lindsey followed by a reading from 2 Peter 1:16-21, the poem Opening of Eyes by David White and a prayer. A quorum was met with 8 members present.

Pastor Lindsey
Joan Healey
Daniel Putnam
Linda Schlutow

Sue Brooks
Linda Livingston
Kevin Root
Frank Scully
Nancy Lawton

MINUTES

A motion to approve the minutes of the January 12, 2020 meeting was made, seconded and carried.

AGENDA

Motion to accept the agenda was made, seconded and carried.

MINISTER'S REPORT

Pastor Lindsey discussed and reviewed the Sexual Harassment policy at HRC. She reported on her time at Camp Fowler in January. Pastor Lindsey is holding a 7 week study group beginning Sunday, February 23 after church called *My Neighbor is a Muslim*. The worship committee has been meeting with Pastor Lindsey to prepare for Lent and Holy week. The Ash Wednesday service will be at Altamont Reformed Church at 7:30 p.m. on February 26, 2020. The next Classis meeting is Tuesday, February 25 at Christ Community Church in Clifton Park. Pastoral care is being provided as needed.

CORRESPONDENCE

A thank- you note was received from the Altamont Community Food Pantry for our soup and monetary donations from the Souper Bowl.

ELDERS' REPORT

Meeting was opened with prayer by Pastor Lindsey. The minutes from the December 10, 2019 meeting were approved. Communion was served to 44 people on January 5, 2020 and 49 people on February 2, 2020. The next Communion will be celebrated on March 1. There were no deaths, funerals, marriages, births or baptisms. A request for the baptism of Gavin Riemenschneider on March 15 was approved. Gavin is the son of Ashley and John Riemenschneider, and grandson of Bill and Linda Schlutow. The Constitutional question was asked and answered. The meeting will close in prayer with Consistory.

DEACONS' REPORT

Meeting was opened with prayer by Kevin Root. The January treasurer's report was presented. Balance on hand as of December 31, 2019 was \$2561.26. There were no disbursements. Receipts totaled \$200.02 leaving an ending balance of \$2761.28 on January 31, 2020. Two correspondences were received. Old Business: No perks were delivered last month. A decision was made to make a donation to the Regional Synod of Albany. New Business: A donation will be made for the wild fires in Australia from the January offering. The next deacons' offering will be used for local needs. Meeting will close in prayer with Consistory.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE

1) The January monthly report was presented. Motion made to accept, seconded, and carried.

	Checkbook
Church 01/31/20	\$ 5888.86
Pre-School 01/31/20	\$ 9350.01

Regular Consistory Meeting
February 18, 2020

Schedule of Bills Summary	
Bills already paid	\$15240.26
Bills to be paid	<u>0.00</u>
Total Bills for Approval	\$ 15240.26

PROPERTY

- 1) The Property Committee report was discussed. A request for \$500 for the Parsonage front door was sent
via email to the Consistory members and approved.
- 2) Many parsonage projects were completed on Saturday, February 15; light in dining area was installed,
cabinets were installed in both bathrooms, wall mounted door stop installed in downstairs bathroom,
replaced the drain stopper in bathtub, and the asbestos insulation on some pipes was covered.
A front door was purchased but not installed due to the temperature.
- 3) At church, the shelving in the Pre School storage room was begun. It should be completed before Pre
School resumes on February 24. Work continued on the drain under the small sink in the kitchen. The
door between the hall and the Narthex is deteriorating. Options were discussed.

PRIVILEGE

A request to use the Fellowship Hall on June 20 for a baby shower was received from Rae Jean Teeter.
The request was approved.

WORSHIP

- 1) The Palms will be ordered.
- 2) Flower orders will be taken beginning March 22.

PRE SCHOOL

The Pre School committee met on January 20. Options for a new playground were discussed. An Open House is planned for the Spring. Joan Healey volunteered to be the Consistory liaison for the Pre School.

OTHER BUSINESS:

- 1) February 23 is the deadline for the March 2020 issue of The Helderberg Messenger.
- 2) The next Consistory meeting is March 17.
- 3) Brooks BBQ is scheduled for Friday March 6. We are selling chicken and rib dinners.
- 4) No date yet for another fundraiser at Recovery Grill.

ROUND TABLE OF THANKS

Thank yous were extended to: the work day crew: Allen Campbell, Les & Carol Relyea, Bill Root, Bob Pahl, John Brooks, Jean Grupe and Jackie & Bob Marr.

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m. was made, seconded and carried. The meeting closed with The Lord's Prayer, led by Pastor Lindsey.

Respectfully submitted: Ellen Root, Recording Secretary of Consistory

