

The Messenger

First Reformed Church of Scotia
224 North Ballston Avenue
Scotia, NY 12302

The Rev. Craig J. Hoffman

The Rev. Jan L. Hoffman

Volume 65, Number 8

August 2014

**From
Craig's
Desk**

WISE OR CLEVER?

It's a rainy day and I'm reading through magazine articles, newspaper clippings, and excerpts from books that I've gathered over the years thinking that one day they might become grist for preaching – or subjects of Pastor's Letters, like this one. Back in 2009 I set aside an article by someone named Shmuley Boteach with the following aphorism: "The difference between one who is wise and one who is merely clever is that someone who is clever can get out of a situation into which someone who is wise would never have gotten into in the first place."

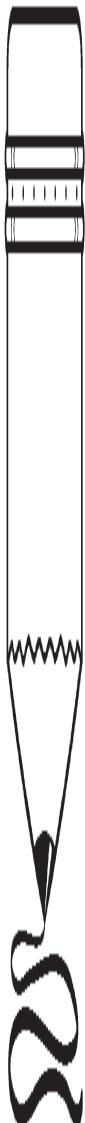
So the question for a rainy day becomes: Are we wise, or are we clever? There seems little doubt we're clever. Siri is the name of the intelligent personal digital assistant available to people who use Apple smartphones. My five clergy friends with whom I've regularly gathered these past years all have them. (Jan and I might each get one this fall. Stay tuned.) Once when we were together and wanted a Mexican restaurant, someone pulled out their smartphone, turned it on, and spoke into it, "Siri, find a Mexican restaurant." After a few thoughtful moments, out came several choices, complete with reviews and directions on how to get there. My parents died 15 years ago. They never would have believed such things possible; it would have seemed to them a miracle.

At the restaurant over nachos and salsa we asked, "Siri, is there a God?" To which Siri replied, "I don't have religion; I have silicon." Clever, indeed!

We belong to the most educated and prosperous culture of all time, and we have accomplished amazing things, clever things, wonderful things. "On the other hand," reflected Boteach, "things that once seemed so simple and intuitive are utterly beyond us. We don't know how to stay married. Inspiring our kids to make positive moral choices feels like a challenge. With all our money (compared to generations before us) we don't even know how to be happy." Those were Boteach's examples. It's not hard to come up with our own. As Harry Emerson Fosdick's hymn, "God of Grace and God of Glory" puts it:

Cure Thy children's warring madness, bend our pride to Thy control.
Shame our wanton, selfish gladness, rich in things and poor in soul.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, lest me miss Thy Kingdom's goal.

In last Sunday's Old Testament lesson we read about the young King Solomon who asked God for wisdom (1 Kings 3). I think Solomon had a pretty good idea. How about you?



Thank You Notes From The Congregation



Since we published the last issue of *The Messenger* we received the following thank-you notes and letters. They are posted on the tack strip outside of Pastor Craig's office. Read and enjoy them there for yourselves.

- From Carole Tygert: I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your cards and prayers during my recent surgery. Also I would like to send a special thank you to those who prepared meals for me when I could not cook, and to my special person who took me to the doctor when I could not drive. The Sharing & Caring group has been great not only for my recent surgery but for the support they have provided for us during the past several months since Clif suffered his strokes. I am slowly getting back on my feet and hope to be back in church soon. We are part of a loving, caring, God inspired church. We are richly blessed. Thank you, and God bless all of you.
- From Eileen Quick at the Scotia Food Pantry: Thank you so much for the very generous food donations during the month of June. The families and volunteers of Scotia Food Pantry appreciate all that you do.
- From MaryLou Erdman: Thank you for the lovely flowers David Schalekamp kindly delivered to me on Sunday, June 22.
- From Susan Tomlinson at the Nicole Prince Home: Thank you for your generous donation to the Nicole Prince Home. The Joan Nicole Prince Home provides 24-hour bedside care for two patients at a time and is staffed primarily by volunteers. Since opening in 2006, the Home has provided care for 122 terminally ill patients along with their family members and friends. We truly appreciate your continued support.
- From Barbara Harland: Thank you very much for the lovely arrangement of flowers that were delivered to my home recently by David Schalekamp. It is so very special to be a member of our church family.
- From Terry Griesche: Thank you so much for the Get Well cards, messages and prayers you have sent me. They have been a great comfort during this very trying time in my life. I am sorry I haven't acknowledged your thoughtfulness before this. Please continue to pray for me and my family as we go through some changes. I will now be living at Kingsway Manor and Paul will move to an apartment next to his brother, Richard, in Glenville. I hope to be able to attend church service again soon. God bless, and many thanks.
- From Paul Munson: Thank you for helping me go to Camp Fowler. I had a great experience and made great memories. I liked the canoeing most. Thank you again. Love, Paul.
- From Olivia Munson: Thank you very much for giving me a scholarship to Camp Fowler. I really enjoyed it and had a great experience. I learned how to sail a sailboat all by myself! Thank you again, Olivia.

Special "Shout Outs"

We always have a lots of "shout outs" because so many people do so very much. This month we give a shout out to:

- We want to thank the group of folks that came together last Thursday and made quick work of moving the toys from the green shed to Brink Hall. Those folks include: Tracy Swearingen, Amy Swearingen, Jordan Swearingen, Nathan Jullien, Bill Shave and Kristen Shave.

Milestones In The Lives Of The Congregation

Here are some milestones in the lives of people in our congregation since the last issue of *The Messenger*.

Congratulations to:

- Congratulations to Brian and Emily Ahl, who were married on June 28.
- Congratulations to David and Lorraine Gonyea on their marriage on July 20.
- Congratulations to Gregory and Lisette Garrison who were married on July 26.
- Congratulations to Andrew and Renee Oaks who were married on August 2.

New Address:

- Matt and Erin Parker have moved to their new home at: 3042 Williamsburg Dr, Schenectady, NY 12303.

We extend our sympathy to:

- Justan Foster and his family on the death of Justan's father, Charles.
- Family and friends of Barbara Harland. Her funeral will be held Monday, August 4.
- Family and friends of Hil Bekkering, who passed away on Wednesday, July 30.

Labyrinth Link



Update on Project

We are so thankful for our congregation as we move forward with our labyrinth project! Special thanks goes out to our Labyrinth Committee for choosing color and design. We have chosen a 6 circuit medieval design in liberty blue. Lots of hard work has gone into executing this project and it has paid off! Many hands have helped, especially Pam Walsh, Steve Balser and Sheila Dort for designing and drawing our labyrinth, and Pam Walsh, Kristin Bodden, Bob Baldwin, Linda Schaefer and Brittany Schaefer for painting.

Blessings

Every labyrinth is marked with a blessing before it is painted. Our labyrinth at First Reformed is sealed with two special blessings. The center carries the Psalm 16:6 “The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places.” Surrounding our border is Jan Richardson’s labyrinth walking blessing: “That each step may be a shedding. That you will let yourself become lost. That when it looks like you’re going backwards you may be making progress. That progress is not the goal anyway, but presence to the feel of the path on your skin, to the way it reshapes you in each place it makes contact, to the way you cannot see it until the moment you have stepped out.”

Labyrinth Benefits

John Rhodes of the Labyrinth Society describes the “labyrinth effect” as the benefit of the walk; to use the meditative qualities to increase relaxation, clarity, peace, centeredness, openness, quiet and reflectiveness. Whether we are using this tool for Sunday School, prayer groups, outreach or personal healing, it is at our fingertips as we complete this project. Everyone experiences the labyrinth differently in different time and different ways. Having the opportunities for so much healing, peacefulness, prayer and closeness with God is an exciting addition to our caring community at First Reformed Church of Scotia.

August Mission Of The Month The Mission of the Month for August will be used for Camp Fowler Ministries. Camp Fowler is located on 245 acres off Route 8 outside of Speculator in the Adirondacks.

This summer Camp Fowler is offering a Christian camping experience to 850 campers and 150 adult volunteers. Of those campers, at least 22 are from our church, as are at least 6 of the volunteers! Campers have finished third grade and attend through high school. In addition to that, Camp Fowler staffed week-long Day Camps for about 300 more youth at 6 Albany Synod churches. But Camp Fowler isn't just about summer camp. There are retreats held all year long in several facilities. We regularly use Fowler for an annual Epiphany women's retreat and an annual men's retreat. Fowler is a year-round ministry to many groups and individuals. See more information at: www.campfowler.org/retreats.



Camp Fowler does not receive direct financial support from Albany Synod. Instead, Fowler needs to raise at least \$150,000 annually from churches, organizations and individuals who share its vision for ministry. Our offerings help provide that support – support all the more necessary because Fowler has tried to keep its user and camper fees as flat as possible.

We are proud of Hannah Busman, Joya Clark and Tim Monaghan who serve on staff this summer, of nurse Donna Ahnert, and Director Kent Busman, and our two SWiM's (Students Working in Ministry) Ethan Schalekamp and Ethan Szemansco. Camp Fowler is an important part of the life of this congregation. We contribute and receive incredible benefits from this partnership. Won't you consider the importance of this ministry and give generously to our August offerings?

Designate your Mission of the Month offering by using the specially marked envelope in your box of offering envelopes. Need a box? Call Kristen in our church office, 370-4751.

July Attendance

We report our monthly worship attendance to encourage you to faithfully gather on the Lord's Day, and invite others to join you.

	<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>
July week #1	128	103
July week #2	154	133
July week #3	126	115
July week #4	112	133
July Average	130	121
YTD Average	217	211

Family Finance

Each month we report our giving. Here's how we gave in June and July.

<u>GIVING</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>% Change</u>
July	\$21,498	\$19,985	\$1,513	8%
Total for the Year	\$174,358	\$173,636	\$722	0%

August Communion

We will celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper by intinction at both our 8:00 and 10:00 worship services on Sunday, August 3. A special Communion Thanksgiving Offering will be received that day for Camp Fowler Ministries. Designate your Communion Thanksgiving offering either by using the specially marked envelope in your box of offering envelopes or one of the special envelopes you will find that day in the pews.

Stephen Ministry Moments



Stephen Minister Al Carter writes our August Stephen Ministry Moment. Al also wrote our July Stephen Ministry Moment, "Listening – Part 1."

Listening – Part II

In everyday life, listening surrounds us – when we hear the buds on the bushes softly rustling in spring, when we hear the roar of an ocean or when we hear the patter of rain on a roof. Listening takes place in our spiritual life when we listen to the words of Jesus in our life and prayers. The Bible illustrates examples of Jesus listening and caring. For example, Jesus was fully listening to the Canaanite woman when she gave her testimony of faith in Matthew 15:21-28.

A Stephen Minister is someone who walks alongside listening, praying and supporting a care receiver in time of need. This is an interactive, spiritual and committed relationship of sincere, dedicated and confidential benefit to the care receiver. Both parties feel the gift of this relationship.

Won't you consider walking alongside someone who needs to share their story? Please consider the call of Stephen Ministry.

Al Carter
Stephen Minister

Stephen Ministry is a ministry of one-on-one Christian caregiving in which a trained Stephen Minister confidentially comes alongside a person going through a life crisis or hard time in order to listen and be present for as long as necessary. For more information contact Stephen Ministry Leader Cheryl MacNeil at (518) 382-8279.

Rotation Sunday School Teachers

Calling all Leaders! We need YOU! Our Rotation Sunday School schedule is ready to roll and we need a variety of teachers to help our youth learn God's way!

Throughout the year we will focus on "Big Ideas" including The Church, Books of the Bible, Jesus in Bethlehem, Baptism, Parables, Jesus' Miracles, Jesus in Jerusalem and Communion. The Rotation model focuses on one theme over 4-5 weeks using diverse workshops to learn the concepts and experience the material. Our children will benefit from interacting with our congregation and learning from many different perspectives. We would love to see how you can engage our kids in new and exciting ways as they develop spiritually. You don't have to be an expert, you don't have to know all the Bible stories, you don't have to be a teacher. Can you cook? Are you a builder? Are you good at science, art, history? Do you have a special hobby or skill to share? Are you a good storyteller or gardener? There are countless ways we can bring these themes down to Earth for our kids to experience them - won't you consider being a part of that? All we need is a 2 Sunday commitment for you to share your light!

Check out the bulletin board next to the nursery for information on the Rotation themes this year and information on how to volunteer. We also need helpers, nursery volunteers, Children & Worship Greeters, and fresh programming ideas are always welcome!!

Search For Youth Leader

The search for a new Youth Leader is almost over. The search team, chaired by Paul Rooney, is made up of Chris Bodden, Wendy Carpenter, Dave Schalekamp, Mike Torelli, and Jan Hoffman. The committee has recommended a candidate to the Consistory. Upon Consistory approval, the candidate will be hired in September and introduced in next month's Messenger. Thank you for your prayers and support of the search team.

August Worship Leaders

Pastors Craig and Jan Hoffman will be away on continuing education and vacation at the Chautauqua Institution three Sundays in August: the 10th, 17th and 24th. Our worship council has arranged for the following worship leaders those Sundays.

- August 10 We welcome our own Heather Kramer to lead worship on the second Sunday in August. Last year, upon our consistory's recommendation, Heather was received as an enrolled Candidate for Ministry under the care of Schenectady Classis. She is now a distance-learning student at the RCA's Western Theological Seminary in Holland, MI. Heather takes her required class in preaching this fall. Leading worship for us helps her fulfill class requirements, and it gives us a tangible way of supporting her in her training. Welcome Heather on August 10.
- August 14 We welcome Elder Karl Griffith. Karl has lead worship for us several times in the past.
- August 21 We welcome again Candidate for Ministry Heather Kramer. Read about her in the second paragraph above.

Summer Lunch Program Thanks

Thank you to the many volunteers who helped make and serve lunches to forty or more youngsters each weekday in Collins Park for the two weeks, July 15-19 and 22-26. The program continues through August 15 with other Scotia churches participating. Coordinating our congregation's participation in the program this summer were Ann Armstrong, Martha Eberle, Dorothy Horstkotte and Linda Lewis. Thank you, ladies, for taking time to be trained by SICM staff and for recruiting our volunteers. We are also grateful for Union College's leadership in providing food and a program coordinator for the Scotia program. This is an important way we are present in the community.

Sunday School Program

Summer Sunday School will be held again on August 17. Our theme this month is Teambuilding. Students will explore their gifts and learn how they are important in our world. We will be exploring leadership and enjoy teambuilding games in Room 1. Kristin Bodden and Claudia Garrison will lead. All students age 4 – high school are welcome to join!

VBS will be offered by Trinity Presbyterian and will take place Monday August 18 through Thursday August 21. There may be spots still available, contact Kristin Bodden if you are interested. Cost is \$15.

Regular Sunday School begins again on Sunday, September 7 after our summer recess. We offer classes for all our children. Children three or younger begin in our Nursery, where Coordinator Diana Ackner leads them in Littlest Lambs, sharing a Bible story and prayer. Children ages 4 years old through 2nd Grade go to the Worship Center with Joanna Clark and begin Children and Worship. We will continue a rotation series of classes for our learners in Grades 3 through 8. The theme of this first rotation is The Church, where students will learn about our church and worship practices. Sunny and Bob Baldwin will be leading our High School group as they use a Sparkhouse *ReForm* curriculum using big questions to spark conversation and learning.

Supporting Maya



Fourteen years ago, Maya Wright was born to Tim and Kathy Wright; she is granddaughter to Gordon and Ann Wright. Maya was at Albany Med in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) for her first weeks with a faulty heart condition. Maya would be baptized here and begin her earliest days with this congregation. She subsequently moved with her family to Saratoga county, where they became members of the Methodist Church. As she grew older, Maya needed further surgery and checkups at Boston Children's Hospital.

Maya has coordinated eleven charity events, including an annual online fundraiser for the Children's Hospital, www.100hearts.webstarts.com. The Missions Council of our congregation wants you to know about Maya's 100 Hearts fundraising efforts. We have made a \$50 donation to Maya and told her we would publicize her event. Maya raised \$2,100 last year and would like to significantly increase that amount. She puts together ten baskets and sells raffle tickets for the baskets. Go to the website or speak to her grandparents for more information on how you can participate.

Be sure to read about Maya's goals for 100 Hearts. We are grateful for her and other creative, grateful young people who move through serious situations and give thanks to God for healing and blessing.

Food Pantry Needs For August

Every week our bulletin lists the food most needed for the Scotia Food Pantry. Below are the items for August. Please place your donations in the container in the narthex or in the one outside Brink Hall. What a great offering we would give if **everyone** brought the weekly item!

There is **always** a need for bags and for monetary donations. Donations are used to purchase milk certificates and other items available at the Regional Food Bank for just 16 cents a pound. Make out your check to the First Reformed Church of Scotia and put "Food Pantry" on the memo line. Here are this August's food askings:

- August 3: Spaghetti Sauce
- August 10: Toilet Paper
- August 17: Pasta
- August 24: Paper Towels
- August 31: Shampoo

August 2014 Calendar

Room Code

ML – Memorial Lounge
BH – Brink Hall
LH – Lakehill Room
OF – Church Office
BR – Bell Room
S – Sanctuary
RM 1 – Room 1
RM 8 – Room 8
RM 9 – Room 9
RM 12 -- Room 12
K -- Kitchen

**Sunday, August 3
(Communion)**
8:00 Worship –on the plaza
10:00 Worship –S
11:15 Coffee hour -- on the plaza

Monday, August 4
7:15 Admin Council - ML

Sunday, August 10
8:00 Worship –on the plaza
10:00 Worship –S
11:15 Coffee hour -- on the plaza

Saturday, August 16
8:30 Buildings and Grounds
“Handyman/Handywoman Day”

Sunday, August 17
8:00 Worship –on the plaza
10:00 Worship –S
10:30 Sunday School -- Team Building Theme
11:15 Coffee hour -- on the plaza

Wednesday, August 20
1:30 Sharing and Caring -- ML

Sunday, August 24
8:00 Worship –on the plaza
10:00 Worship –S
11:15 Coffee hour -- on the plaza

Wednesday, August 27
6:30 Consistory -- ML

Sunday, August 31
8:00 Worship –outside on the plaza
10:00 Worship –S
11:15 Coffee Hour --on the plaza

**Dutch Fair
Committee
Members**

DUTCH FAIR . . . This year's Dutch Fair is Saturday, September 20, from 9:00 to 3:00. Justan Foster, 965-2389, and Tracy Swearingen, 944-8794, are this year's chairpeople. Call them and tell them you'd like to help out. Or call one of the following booth chairpersons. This year we give the first \$5,000 of our Dutch Fair income to a local mission. The rest we'll use to help maintain and improve our buildings and grounds.

<u>BOOTH</u>	<u>CHAIRPERSON</u>
• Book Nook	Ellen Schultz, 399-6029 We need books, but <u>NOT</u> encyclopedias, magazines or condensed books.
• Jewelry	Marge Almy, 372-0951
• Next to New Clothing	Becky Penn, 928-4007 We need clothing for Next to New, especially children's clothing. This is a real ministry to our community.
• Toy Shop	Marty Gilgore, 393-8329 Linda Naumowicz, 399-1366
• White Elephant	Jane Lansing, 372-6082 Thanks for the millions of twenty-five-cent items. Now we need to fill in with higher sales items. So please look in your closets, basement, attics ... etc.
• Cider & Donuts	James and Sarah Hoffmann, 381-4689
• Home and Garden	Fern Lee, 577-2070 We need plants, especially bittersweet and Japanese lanterns. Deliver them on Friday before the fair or Saturday morning.
• Bake Sale	We need everyone who can to bake something. We always sell out! Bring your baked goods to the church office on Friday before the fair.
• Silent Auction	Dorothy Horstkotte, 374-8105 We need items for our silent auction! Anyone who would like to donate an item or money to purchase items should contact Dorothy. Also, don't forget to ask the businesses you shop at – they may be very happy to donate an item or service.
• Giffy's BBQ	Natalie Monaghan, 399-1102 Dinners cost \$10.00 per meal. Get advance tickets from the church office, from Mail 'n' More on Route 50, or after worship
• Publicity	Mike DeMasi, 371-1667 Help us get the word out. Pick up some Dutch Fair posters from the narthex or from the church office. Post them where you can, or put them in the back side windows of your car.

Anniversaries



Kenneth III and Jennifer Willcox	3
Steve and Kathie Balser	4
Mike and Mary Jane Crowley	5
Tom and Liesl Falcon	19
Mike and Patty Marré	20
Andrew and Emily Kohout	22
Walt and Nancy Pfuntner	24
Ed and Linda Naumowicz	26
David and Erin Page	26
Ken and Kelly Sill	26
Brian and Jennifer Westervelt	27
Bill and Amanda Faulkner	28

Birthdays

Vida Durnford	1	George Squires, Jr.	17
Sarah Schermerhorn	3	John Ackner	18
Linda Willoughby	3	Ruth Beck	18
Kristen Faubion	7	Joshua Rosenberg	18
Marian Gilgore	7	Jennifer Willcox	19
Patrick Mahon	7	David Schalekamp	20
Caroline Vaccaro	7	Karen Trbovich	21
Lauren Vaccaro	7	Bill Faubion	22
Brian Schaefer	8	Amy Hoskinson	23
James Kohout	9	Karen Wentworth	23
Kevin Oaks	9	John Pierce Jr.	24
Doug Shaw	11	Margo Snyder	24
Ed Horstkotte	14	Joanna Clark	25
Fran Landry	14	Trudi Thun Ertel	25
Debbie Rosemarino	14	Cheryl Miller	25
Eric Dulmes	16	Kurt Ahnert	26
Dave Walsh	16	Allison Atchley	26
Andrew Oaks	17	Frank Skofstad	26

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August Worship Leaders
Stephen Ministry Moment
Supporting Maya
Labyrinth Update
Dutch Fair
And more!

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