

HURLEY REFORMED CHURCH

THE SPIRE

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Recently I've become a bird watcher. This may be the result of a recessive gene sprung, or, perhaps, an unexpected personal interest which God, in his wisdom and perhaps humor, has implanted. Or both. If Easter and the empty tomb are indicative, God often surprises by gifting us with delights, or even passions we barely understand. Bird watching is my case in point. I've always listened to birds: their warbles, and caws connote Spring and Christ's resurrection to me. The most plaintive sound I've ever heard, a cry of the collective human heart, was a loon's solitary voice on a still, star dappled night in the Adirondacks. Nevertheless I had no interest in observing the objects of so much God-given music.

I began watching birds few years ago, however, attracted by the stately dignity of the Great Blue Heron, which nested in and around a camp where I vacationed

on Saranac Lake. Visiting a minister buddy on the Island of St. Thomas, a couple of years ago, I shared space with a small owl which decided to nest in the eaves of the parsonage porch, and regarded me as a fellow nester. At dusk, my owl would return from its life on the wing, and snuggle into its straw home. We gazed at one another-- it unblinkingly-- both content, I believe, to experience the tropical breeze as a twosome.

In the past three months, my interest in bird watching has grown because of a bald eagle pair who call the Ashokan Reservoir home. They occupy a deep, nearly oblong branchy nest high on a tree in the middle of a land jut three hundred yards West of the causeway. I have seen one or the other take flight from their home, amazed at its wingspan. I have heard its muffled batting behind me as one passed at eye level, and less than 10 yards away. I witnessed its fierce eyes, and resolute nature. And I have found myself praying that the pair's never ending forage, and nest vigilance against

We gazed at one another -- it unblinkingly -- both content, I believe, to experience the tropical breeze as a twosome.

predators will result in an eaglet or two. Closer to home, a single bird occupies my thoughts and backyard. I think it is either a homing pigeon or mourning dove. It has a blue band around one leg, and faint iridescent green mottling on the neck. It delights in pecking away at edibles on the ground. It is a stately peck, to be honest, and far more pleasing than the sloppy form of a hungry robin. I will often see my guest, standing alone on the top of the parsonage roof. I call to it, and believe that it is aware of my presence. My prayer is that someday it will respond to the minister's voice.

(Continued on page 2)

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Birds are important in Scripture. Noah sends a raven from the ark and then a dove. The latter returns indicating the flood has not subsided. After the dove leaves second time it returns, alights on the ark, or perhaps in Noah's hand, carrying a plucked olive leaf which signals the watery recession and fertile land. One wonders whether the dove was the captain's pet? A third time the bird is sent, and the author of Genesis writes: "And it did not return to him any-more" (Genesis 8:12). Was Noah sad at the loss of his devoted friend? Was the dove? After Jesus' baptism, God's spirit descends upon him like a dove, indicating the gentleness of divine approval. Jesus himself uses the bird as an apt metaphor of how we are called to live in the world: "...so be wise as serpents, and innocent as doves" (Matthew 10:16).

The eagle also figures in Scripture. After the children of Israel's liberation from Egypt, God tells them, through God's spokesman, Moses: "I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you to myself" (Exodus 19:4). One of my favorite Scriptural passages employs the bird as a metaphor for the power we receive from God: "...but those who wait for the Lord will renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint" (Isaiah 40:31). The power of the eagle as part of God's providential plan is also found in Psalm

103:4-5. God is described as one who, "crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, who satisfies you with good as long as you live, so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's." When I read these passages, I'm thankful that Benjamin Franklin's wish to have the turkey as our national bird was denied!



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Scripture also takes an interest in birds which are less noble than the eagle or dove. The ostrich, for example, plays a crucial role in Job's restoration. Job wants to know why bad things happen to good people. He has lost his family, his livelihood, and his health, and is understandably angry at God. Instead of an answer, however, God takes Job on a nature tour where he sees birds and animals who are under God's providential care, although they are considered lesser beings in Job's world. In truly seeing the value of an ostrich, considered by the ancient world to be a creature of little value, Job begins to see his own worth, and the need to find himself as part--and not the center--of all sentient reality.

As I think of 'my' eagles at the Ashokan, and the unknown bird in

my backyard, I am reminded of Jesus' words about our value to him: "Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten in God's sight. But even the hairs on your head are all counted. Do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows" (Luke 12:6-7). We are of more value than sparrows. But indeed they are of value too. Our lives would be impoverished if we did not praise God for birdsong and the avian miracle of flight. We would be deeply impoverished if we didn't sing glory for sparrows, eagles, doves, and ostriches.

The Monday after Easter Sunday I went to the Ashokan Reservoir and joined a clutch of eagle lovers, who spend much time photographing and cataloging the comings and goings of the regal pair. A pall had settled over them because of the ominous departure of both eagles from the nest. It appears that home guardianship for their eggs or infants was no longer needed. Life failed to fructify or perhaps it ended unexpectedly after birth in a predator's jaw. Either way we huddled in grief. My prayer is a paraphrase of Jesus' beatitude on the Mount when he proclaimed that those who mourn will be comforted (Matthew 5:4). I pray that in God's loving dispensation our avian pair will sense their Creator's concern and heartache for their loss.

In Christ's service,

Doc Bob

“From the Heart” Prayer Shawl Ministry

Shawls have come to symbolize hope, peace, and comfort. Because of this, we have started a prayer shawl ministry named “From the Heart” at the Hurley Reformed Church. Volunteer knitters from the congregation have been busy knitting and crocheting shawls for those in need of comfort, and knitting booties for infant baptisms.

On behalf of the prayer shawl ministry, we would like to express our thanks to all those who have so generously given of their time and talent. Several of our shawls have already been delivered and have been gratefully received. We appreciate the selfless generosity of all who have contributed and continue to contribute to this cause.

Please contact the church office if you know someone in need of this

ministry. If you have any questions, contact Lee Gable or Linda Dido.



Birthdays

		Robin Brennan	14
		Wesley Drake	14
		Barbara Hornbeck	14
Cole Jordan	May 1, '96	May Kowalenko	15
Mikayla Mellin	2, '96	Kathleen Mayfield	15
Victoria LaFiandra	5, '99	Les Frost	16
Jonathan Helsley	5, '05	Ruth Harkin	16
Kathleen Hutton	15, '05	Dave Baker	22
Taylor Robey	21, '99	Linda Shook	26
Ricki Maggione	27, '94	Brian Donnelly	28
Mackenzie Schoonmaker	28, '99	Mark Cranfield	29
		Jerry Wyncoop	30
Terry Conlin	2		
Kristen Helm	2	Gordon Kent	June 1
Lori Baker	3	Su Wonderly	2
Faye McLane Jansen	4	Rebecca Masters	8
Gil Hoppenstedt	4	David Giles	8
Kathy Burns	4	Dennis Croswell	9
Elizabeth Wilson	7		
Isabel Mizel	8		
Dolores McGoldrick	8		
Jayne Ulrich	10		
Marilyn Cox	11		
Charles Jansen	11		



Anniversaries

Jim & Sheila Craven	May 5
Glenn & Debbie Decker	6
Kathy & Bob Pfeiffer	6
Elaine & David Szekeres	8
Christa & Terry Conlin	9
Gay & Chuck Gravina	9
Marilyn & John More	9
Alice & Frank Presti	10
Roy & Sharon Simmons	10
Janet & Jake Croswell	13
Joe & Kathy Burns	15
Jean & Kevin Quenzer	17
Wayne & Karen Waligurski	20
Christine & Bill Henning	22
Donna & Peter Harder	30
Rich & Angie Rockwell	June 4
Richard & Barbara Baker	7

Youth Group

The Youth Group retreat took place April 1st through the 3rd in Montrose, PA and was a great success. All 21 kids and 9 adults who attended had a wonderful time. We were able to bond between rock climbing, paint ball, and playing games in the recreation room. We worked in teams in both rock climbing and paintball. During the rock climbing we encouraged each other to get to the top especially the people who didn't want to initially. Even the adults got the chance to climb. In paintball we bonded in two teams battling it out in the elements. On Friday night Katie Emrich lead us in our chapel time which got the weekend started. We sang songs that we learned from Warwick plus learned a few new ones. We had delicious food for the three days and managed to come home refreshed and without major injury.

The annual Youth Group Easter dawn service & breakfast was a success. Many thanks to all the families who attended our service and/or breakfast. We would especially like to thank the Maggiore and Hauck families for chairing the breakfast. And a HUGE thank you to Russ Glass & the Rafferty's for cooking breakfast! It was a wonderful start to the day. Thank you for your support!!

On 6/18 we will be going to Six Flags New England. The cost of this trip is ONLY \$41 per person which includes a coach bus, admission to the park & a buffet luncheon. Please invite your family & friends to come. Contact Sandy Emrich at 845-687-4006 as soon as possible to reserve your spot as we only have a few left - money is needed by 5/22/11. This is a rain or shine trip. We will be leaving the church at 7:45am & we will return to the church around 7pm.

We will be holding our annual car wash on June 4th from 10:30am to 2 at Stage One Auto on Rt 9W in Lake Katrine. This year we have decided to give the money that is raised to the SPCA. Hot dogs, pop corn & drinks will be available for purchase while your vehicle is being washed. Mark your calendars & come out & support this great organization.

For the months of May and June we will be collecting ice tea and lemonade for the coffee hour. With the summer heat (if it ever warms up) coming a cool drink after church will be a great!!! So, please bring your donation in the box in Schadewald Hall.

Upcoming Activities

6/4 Car Wash @ Stage One Auto

6/18 Six Flags New England

Missions:

"He who oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God."
Proverbs 14:31

Our May Mission offerings will be sent to Church World Service designated for JAPAN RELIEF. By contributing in the Mission envelope in the pew or in your envelope box you will help the many thousands who have lost their homes, and are displaced. Many are in need of medical attention as well as clean water and food, following the recent massive earthquake.



Linda Dux
Mission Committee Chair

Do you love the theatre?

Ever wish you could be a part of it? Well now you can! Putting on plays has for centuries been an historic tradition in the church – it's time we at the Hurley Reformed Church get 'into the act!' Answer the call and enjoy the "art of performance" by signing up to support and/or take part (on stage or off) in forming a 'Players' Club' here at HRC. Contact David Reed to sign up as an indication of your support and/or interest in actively 'taking a part.' All are welcome – no 'role' is too small. Actors, painters, stagehands and, especially audiences will be needed. The curtain is about to raise and the lights are about to go up! Don't miss the "First Act!"



From the Finance Committee:

This month we will take a quick look at how we are doing with the 2011 budget. For the first quarter of 2011, our income was down as compared to 2010, and the expenses were higher. In fact, for the first quarter we were running a deficit of almost \$12,000. Like so many of us dealing with the increasing costs of heating our homes, especially with the harsh winter we just endured, the church's fuel oil bill for 2011 is more than double the expense from 2010 and accounts for almost $\frac{2}{3}$ of our current deficit. With the onset of spring, we should see a significant easing in the fuel oil bills.

	2011 Budget	Actual (Jan-Mar 2011)	Actual (Jan-Mar 2010)	% Change
Total Income	\$239,331	\$49,276.72	\$55,045.33	-10.5%
Total Expense	\$239,331	\$61,065.21	\$53,189.16	14.8%
YTD Net		-\$11,788.49	\$1,856.17	



As might be expected in these tough financial times, income from the collection plates is lagging a bit behind 2010 and is about \$2,500 below the projected income for the first quarter. While the Hurley Reformed Church congregation is very generous, we do count on the collection plate to provide the bulk of our operating income. The Pledge Envelopes are a great way to make your regular donations. The majority of people who have made a pledge for 2011 have used their envelopes to keep their pledges current. There are some members who requested Pledge Envelopes for 2011, but never picked them up, and the envelopes can still be retrieved from the Church Office. Also, if you didn't request Pledge Envelopes, but would like to start using them, there are envelopes available that could be used for the remainder for the year. We thank you for all the generous support you provide, both financial and otherwise, that keeps the Hurley Reformed Church such a wonderful place for worship and fellowship. I'll close with the gentle reminder we receive each week from Dr. Gram, when he reminds us that Jesus said, "It is better to give than to receive." If you have any questions about the church finances, please don't hesitate to ask.

Baby lover wanted

Wanted: someone who loves babies and toddlers to start to take over the nursery. I will be around much of the summer, but by August I will provide fill-in when I can.

When my daughter was 1, the nursery was covered on a rotating basis. I realized that babies of that age need consistency- a familiar face. So as soon as Elizabeth moved to the "big kids' class", I started doing nursery on a weekly

basis. I can't express the years of joy it has given me-seeing babies and toddlers start to walk, talk and then become "big kids". People thank me for helping, but I thank them for giving me the chance to play with them and get to know them. My first "babies" are now in their first year of college!

Unfortunately, as they have aged, so have I. Would I keep doing nursery forever if I could- you bet! I really hope there is someone out there who would like to take over

and provide some consistency to the next few years of babies. I'll always be happy to lend a hand as my mother did for me until her late 70's! So if you love babies and would love a weekly "baby fix", see me or call me.

If no-one comes forward, parents will have to set up a rotation schedule starting in August.

Rebecca Masters

338-3556 (rebamast@gmail.com)



Art Share Review And Thank You

On behalf of myself and the 12 members of **Creativity for Christ**, I would like to thank everyone who was able to attend the **Palm Sunday Art Share/Coffee hour** and had any part in contributing to the success of our very first fundraiser. We were very pleased to be able to share our work just in time to festively celebrate the season and hope to have the arts continue to be an integrated form of worship on or near the high holy days.

If you happened to miss our event, we had a number of items all hand made/produced by our 12 members, as well as the Sunday school classes of Ellen Richards, Linda Bognar and Kathleen Mayfield. Representing our praises to our Maker in many different mediums were drawings in pencil and pastel, paintings, sculpture, photos, and inspired food items.

The pastel drawings from the Sun-

day school classes were based on John 8:12: *"Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, 'I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.'"* Thank you teachers and children, for your time, and wonderful artworks!

We would like to thank Russ and Anne Glass for the contribution of yeasted bread dough and all the guidance needed for our cross shaped bread loaves, served with fancy jelly. Thank you to all members who shaped and baked the bread fresh for our event. We also served tasty, colorful fruit pizzas topped with a variety of berries and pineapple in inspired cross and heart shapes. If anyone noticed, we had simultaneously on display, photos of these "works of food art" for the benefit of those who, instead of the "big picture", could only view the last tasty morsels.

As well, on display were over 100 Bible scripture inspired greeting cards to choose from (reproduced from sculpture, paintings and drawings made in the group), jewelry boxes, neck charms, pins, refrigerator magnets, framed photos and art work. Pat Baker had some heirloom art pieces created by artists in her family that were also on display. One of the popular items were golden hand painted Easter eggs filled with gourmet jelly beans and a slip of Bible

scripture, much like a fortune cookie. We sold almost five dozen.

I am hoping those who attended enjoyed the fruit of our labor. There were many steps taken to be able to share the work done in the past couple of months. From seed to finish – conceptualizing, obtaining art supply donations, group prayer support and encouragement to take the leap of faith to initiate a work of art are some. Next the work is transformed into a saleable item and displayed in context that is approachable and relevant to our Christian family.

Thank you to all the of the group members who devoted hours of their time. Our biggest thank you for assistance and encouragement goes out to our Rev. Dr. Gram and Debbie Decker who helped and believed in us through all those steps.

Blessings to all!

~ Dahlia

P.S. Seek us out for Mother's day and other occasions.

Happy Mother's Day

Congratulations 2011 Class Participants!

The Significant Woman



Back Row: Carol Wase, Frieda Constant, Karen Schiff, Karin Lamb, Maureen Keehn,
Linda Dux, Nancy Sweeney

Middle Row: Trudy Bauser, ShirleyAnn Moxham, Midge Stott, Carla Paton

Front Row: Amy Alley, Lisa Pasquale, Betsy Rama

This year's Significant Woman program wrapped up with a potluck Celebration Dinner held on April 25th. Our group's fifteen participants, including co-facilitators Carla Paton and Maureen Keehn, have been meeting weekly since January. Together we have shared, listened and encouraged one another, as we discovered six biblical life principles called PEARLS. This group has been such an enriching experience for all of us. Are you wondering what the PEARLS are all about? Well, that is best answered by the participants themselves. Congratulations ladies!

"The PEARLS have helped me to live intentionally- to really think out and pray about what it is I am to do- ultimately bringing me into a closer relationship with God."

"I more clearly learned that my strengths and gifts are God-given and meant to be shared and used for His glory."

"God has touched my life by revealing through the application of PEARLS, that I can use my uniqueness to make a significant contribution to others, according to His plan."

"The PEARLS have changed the entire focus for my life, my outlook for the future and the search for purpose and direction."

"I now have a mission statement to guide me. I have learned to trust that God has plan for my life and I will pass on what I've learned to others."

"With PEARLS, my focus is back and my faith and motivation are stronger."

"PEARLS reminded me that I am loved by God, that I need to listen for His guidance, and that He loves others too. Out of gratitude and on that basis, I need to love others and help them where I can."

"For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." (Eph 2:10)

Hurley Reformed Church

May 2011

May 2011							June 2011						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28

Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday		Sabbath	
										More Items...	More Items...
10:00am Baptism (Half) 1:00pm Bible Class (Half) 5:00pm Dog Training (Half) 7:00pm First Capital Convention 7:00pm US Power Squadron (Room 5) More Items...	10:00am HHS (Boys)(Half) 4:00pm PC 101 (Dutch Boy) 7:00pm Troop 20 (Half) 7:00pm Bible Study (Dutchmen)	7:00pm Bible Study (Dutchmen) 9:00am Quilting (Dutch Seams) 4:30pm Newspaper Guild (Dutch) 5:30pm Dog Training (Half) 7:00pm Creativity for Darts (Room 5) More Items...	12:00pm Hurley Sisters (Half) 4:45pm Dog Training (Half) 7:00pm Women's Share Group (Room 12) 7:00pm OS SU (Room 6) 7:00pm Choir (Dutchmen)			6:30pm English Dancers (Half) More Items...	7			More Items...	More Items...
10:00am Baptism (Half) 11:00am VHM (Dutch Boy) 1:00pm Bible Class (Half) 5:00pm Dog Training (Half) 7:00pm Hudson Valley Contestants & More Items...	9:00am HHS (Dutch Boy) 10:00am HHS (Boys)(Half) 7:00pm Troop 20 (Half) 7:00pm Bible Study (Dutchmen)	7:00pm Bible Study (Dutchmen) 9:00am Quilting (Dutch Seams) 5:30pm Dog Training (Half) 7:00pm Creativity for Darts (Room 5) 7:00pm Men's Group (Room 5)	11:00am Little Gardens (Dutch Boys) 6:30pm HHS Men's LTC (Room 6) 7:00pm HHS Men's/BMW Council 7:00pm Women's Share Group 7:00pm Choir (Dutchmen)			Yard Sale (Parking Lot)(Half) 10:00am Cemetery (Boys 12) 10:00am Worship More Items...	14			10:00am Cemetery (Boys 12) 10:00am Worship More Items...	15
10:00am Baptism (Half) 10:00am Cemetery (Boys 12) 5:00pm Dog Training (Half) 7:00pm US Power Squadron (Room 7) 7:00pm Book 26 (Half) 7:00pm Men's (Room 12)	10:00am HHS (Boys)(Half) 7:00pm Troop 20 (Half) 7:00pm Bible Study (Dutchmen)	7:00pm Bible Study (Dutchmen) 9:00am Quilting (Dutch Seams) 5:30pm Dog Training (Half) 7:00pm Creativity for Darts (Room 5) 7:00pm Men's Group (Room 5) More Items...	4:45pm Dog Training (Half) 7:00pm Women's Share Group (Room 12) 7:00pm Woodworkers (Half) 7:00pm Choir (Dutchmen)			10:00am Worship 11:00am Stone House Day (Dutch)	21			10:00am Worship 11:00am Stone House Day (Dutch)	22
10:00am Baptism (Half) 10:00am Cemetery (Boys 12) 6:00pm Dog Training (Half) 6:00pm Foundation Youth Health 7:00pm US Power Squadron (Room 7) 7:00pm Men's (Room 12)	10:00am HHS (Boys)(Half) 7:00pm Troop 20 (Half) 7:00pm Bible Study (Dutchmen)	7:00pm Bible Study (Dutchmen) 9:00am Quilting (Dutch Seams) 5:30pm Dog Training (Half) 7:00pm Creativity for Darts (Room 5) 7:00pm Men's Group (Room 5)	4:45pm Dog Training (Half) 7:00pm Women's Share Group (Room 12) 7:00pm Choir (Dutchmen)			10:00am Worship	25			10:00am Worship	26
10:00am Baptism (Half) 7:00pm US Power Squadron (Room 5) 7:00pm Men's (Room 12)	10:00am HHS (Boys)(Half) 7:00pm Troop 20 (Half) 7:00pm Bible Study (Dutchmen)						3				

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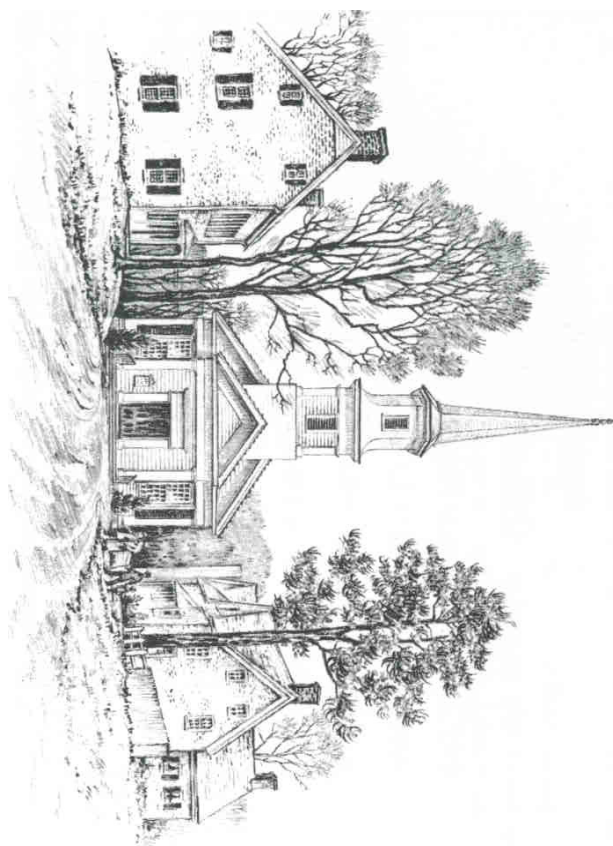
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THE SPIRE

MAY 2011