#### HURLEY REFORMED CHURCH

# THE SPIRE

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 9

NOVEMBER 2011

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Recently I had opportunity to attend a Jets-Dolphins football game at Met-Life stadium near Rutherford, New Jersey. The last time I spectated in the Meadowlands was an Army-Navy game in 1993. Times have changed since then, particularly in terms of sensory overload; essentially I found myself enveloped in a high tech rumpus room. I had a seat in the nosebleed section of the stadium, one level below the last deck. I wanted to ask if they sold oxygen canisters as well as beer and pretzels. The football players looked like ants from this height. I had no idea the Jets had cheerleaders who waved their pink pom-poms in honor of Cancer Awareness, nor did I realize they perform synchronized dance kicks, like the Rockettes at the Radio City Music Hall, whenever football action lulled. Television commercials drastically abbreviate the cheerleading component of the football spectacle, and the greater reality that frenetic, non-stop activity exists on and off the football turf. From my empyrean perch, I viewed formations, sweeps, passes and touchdowns relative to the whole playing field. It was interesting to see the bigger picture, one which the largest television screen can't capture. It was somewhat surrealistic, too, when I sat well above both high spiraling football kicks, and the concussive noise of helmeted combatants hurtling themselves at one another. Without the auditory crunch of armored scrums, the game seemed a degree gentler than it really is.

The real difference between the 1993 Army-Navy contest, and the spectacle I witnessed a couple of Mondays ago, was the sight and sound phantasmagoria off the playing field. The stadium was wired

to simulate a battle zone. After every touchdown--all scored by the Jets-fireworks arced above the stadium, and exploded like mortars, casting sprays of light onto folks like me in the upper reaches. Simultaneously huge screens urged us to shout louder and

Do we have the resolve to turn off a television or radio, and listen to our thoughts, and the subtle vocal imprint of the Spirit working in and through us?

louder, while blasting war hoop music in the background; the cameras would then scan the crowd focusing on the most rabid Jets fans, beer in their facepainted hands, their overripe bellies exposed, exhorting the crowd to increase their decibel output until we became a single ear-drum cracking amalgam. The stentorian blasts of Hitler's massive Nuremburg rallies couldn't hold a candle noise-wise to what I experienced that Monday evening. Bisecting the upper and lower bleachers like a belt, are timed lights, strobe like in effect, which streamed hypnotically as the noise increased. Suddenly our vision as well as our ears was transfixed, overloaded. And then an announcer, over a high tech loudspeaker,

(Continued on page 2)

eSpire: In order to save money and reduce our impact on the environment, you may now receive The Spire by Email. Please request electronic distribution by sending your request to TheSpire@HurleyReformedChurch.org. (Note that it is ".org", NOT ".com"). If you no longer wish to receive the Spire please let us know at the same email address and we will remove you from our mailing list.

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 9 PAGE 2

(Continued from page 1)

also added his two cents to the auditory bedlam.

At times I felt there was more excitement off than on the field. I had a wonderful time, but was grateful to return to the relative quiet of Hurley New York. My brief stay at Met-Life stadium also produced some thoughts about our



society and our faith.

First, I realize how addicted we are to auditory pandemonium. The Psalmist's words, "For God alone my soul waits in silence" (62:1), seems oxymoronic if not heretical in a world where noise assails us at every turn. I'm not trying to be a grump or hypocritical. I love my head-banging rock and roll as much as anyone. And there was something earth shakingly wonderful about the full throated bellow and thrum generated 'en masse' by Jets' fans. Nevertheless I think the good life requires balance which may be impossible in our day and age. Several years ago I attended a conference in Cincinnati, Ohio. I took a walking break between sessions down Main Street during 5:00 o'clock rush hour, and didn't hear the blare of a single horn in gridlocked traffic. Living in Manhattan at that time, I felt for a

moment, that I was traipsing around Mars instead of a Midwest-ern city. For faith to grow we must cultivate quiet time. Do we have the resolve to turn off a television or radio, and listen to our thoughts, and the subtle vocal imprint of the Spirit working in and through us?

Second, I realize anew that our religious fervor pales in comparison to the devotees of Monday night football. It was interesting to observe the manic gestures, and dances performed by the Met-Life 'priests' as they urged their team to victory. I was reminded of the prophet Elijah's contest with the priests of Baal who danced wildly, implored their god loudly, and cut themselves mercilessly with knives and swords in order to 'awake' their pagan deity (1 Kings 18:25-29). As cameras for the big screen scanned the crowd, I viewed the other side of spirituality as men and women bowed in prayer; eyes closed, and fingering a Jets banner as if it were the Rosary. Fans were fervent and dedicated, and one sensed they weren't petitioning the Lord for world peace or an end to hunger! Nevertheless I wish such passionate devotion would transpose itself into many of our churches. "Be aglow in the Spirit," Paul writes to the church in Rome (12:11), and my prayer is that we can muster such enthusiasm in our corporate life of worship.

Finally, sitting in the nosebleed section of the stadium reminds me how easy it is to become a spectator in a world desperate for participants—not on a football field, but in

areas of human need. Recently several members of the Hurley Church spent a day power washing dinner plates caked with mud from Hurricane Irene which devastated the small village of Prattsville. We joined with a team from the Woodstock Reformed Church, and performed a variety of clean-up and restorative activities, centered around the beleaguered Reformed Church there. Our Senior Elder, Doug Constant, spoke about the pyramid sized mount of debris which had been gathered outside the village, and the ongoing work it would require to bring Prattsville back to an architectural semblance of its former self. Last week I attended a conference in which pastors told of their small congregations who were making a difference in the lives of rural migrant farm workers, as well as the poor and indigent in cities like Poughkeepsie. Jesus calls us into life's fray. The power of the Christian faith is that need is confronted wherever and whenever we find it. Christianity is not a spectator sport. Jesus calls us to: give food to the hungry, and drink to the thirsty; clothe the naked and com-

fort those who are sick and in prison (Matthew 25:35-44). And he ends this striking passage by stat-



ing, "In as much as you've done it unto the least of these my brothers and sisters, you have done it unto me" (Matthew 25:45).

(Continued on page 5)

Volume 3, Issue 9 PAGE 3

#### S Y G C K L E Α R D E N S

"I spread out my branches like a terebinth, my branches so bright and so graceful" Sirach 24:16

As autumn overtakes us, the trees become multicolored bursts of light as if in adoration of the one who created all things. It is Heaven's canvas that's always on display, with scenery that changes every day. Sitting in the Garden allows one to see God's handiwork everywhere and to feel the peacefulness and the love of God. It is a place touched by the best of earth and peace from above.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE COLUMBARIUM, PLEASE CONTACT ANY OF THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS. LISA LONGTO (331-1438) CHAIRPERSON • JIM PIRRO (383-0079) TREASURER • ESTHER STICKLEY (331-2919) JERRY FINK (246-6567) SECRETARY • DIANA CLINE (338-7276) CONSISTORY LIAISON

A SACRED PLACE OF BEAUTY AND CONTEMPLATION. (LOCATED ON THE SOUTH LAWN OF THE CHURCH)

## **BIRTHDAYS ANNIVERSARIES**

November				
Chloe Dumas	14, '98			
William Schaffrick	14, '97			
Drew Milne	17, '05			
Julianna Schaffrick	17, '00			
Ernan Tejada	2			
Iris Cordero	3			
Natalie Woodard	8			
John Henning	10			
Gladys Byrne	11			
Joyce Fink	12			
Peg Baldinger	13			
Bunny Heins	13			
<b>E</b> ive				

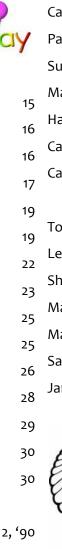




December

**Coty Burgess** 

Micaela Ryan



5, '96





VOLUME 3, ISSUE 9 PAGE 4

Hurley Reformed Church

# ELECTION DAY 💺

# Turkey Dinner

date: Tuesday - Nov. 8th

seatings: 4:30pm 5:30pm & 6:30pm

tickets: \$12.00 adults / \$5.00 children under 12





I have just completed the first two stages of my treatment for breast cancer and want to thank the many people who made this difficult time easier.

I have truly been overwhelmed with the kind thoughts, cards, prayers, food, offers of help, telephone calls and so much more that have come my way. We have a wonderful church community, for which I am most grateful and consider it to be one of my many blessings.

Again, thank you all so much!

Gretchen Giles

# Weekly Bible Study

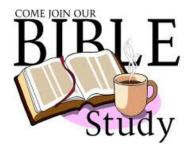
Tuesday Evening @ 7:00pm

Or

Wednesday Morning @ 7:30am

Where: Dutch Room

"Nehemiah"



### November Mission

"What you have done for the least of these you have done for me." Matthew 25:40

Please use your Mission envelope this month to support the Salvation Army's Red Kettle Campaign. The Salvation Army provides food



and gifts to families and children in need for Christmas. Your contribution will help brighten Christmas for many in the area.

Linda Dux, Mission Committee Chair

# Congregational Meeting

Sunday, Nov.16, immediately after worship in Schadewald Hall. Members and friends of the Hurley Church are invited and encouraged to

join us as we summarize the events of the last year, vote on the upcoming budget and elect two new Consistory members. Refreshments will be served.



VOLUME 3, ISSUE 9 PAGE 5

(Continued from page 2)

I end with a favorite quote from Teddy Roosevelt which is diametrically opposed to our spectator mentality:

> "It is not the critic who counts: not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly, who errs and comes up short again and again, because there is no effort without error or shortcoming, but who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, who spends himself for a worthy cause; who, at the best, knows, in the end, the triumph of high achievement, and who, at the worst, if he fails, at least he fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who knew neither victory nor defeat."

Theodore Roosevelt "Citizenship in a Republic," Speech at the Sorbonne, Paris April 23, 1910

In Christ's service,

Doc Bob



With 2011 quickly (too quickly) drawing to a close, the Finance Committee has begun planning for



We are supporting **6 families** in need in our area by providing complete baskets containing all the makings of a traditional Thanksgiving Dinner.

*We ask you to support our efforts by donating any of the following:* 

- Canned Beans
- · Canned Corn, Peas, Veggies
- Stuffing Cubes
- Canned Cranberry Sauce
- · Canned Gravy
- Jiffy Corn Bread
- Chicken Broth Black Olives
- Pickles
- Marshmallows
- Juicy Juice
- Crackers
- Coffee
- Tea
- Anything else you want!

#### If you wish to donate a turkey... please contact Lisa Longto 331-1438 or llongto@earthlink.net

Youth Group will purchase these items: White Potatoes, Yams, Celery, Carrots, Onions, Dinner Rolls, Pumpkin Pies, Cookies, Ready Whip, Butter, Oranges, Apples, and Turkeys if we don't get donations.

#### All donations due 11/13/11

Please place all items in the Marked Boxes in the gym. We thank you very, very much!

2012. The proposed budget will be presented at the Congregational Meeting on November 13<sup>th</sup>. We did want to take this opportunity to remind you that about 70% of our operating income comes from the collection plate offerings each week. Most of collection plate total is from the Offering Envelopes many of you routinely use, while the rest is from the generous giving of our members and guests. The envelopes for 2012 will be avail-

able at the Congregational Meeting time financially. We certainly recin November or can be picked up later. If you haven't used the envelopes in the past, but would like to

receive a set for 2012, just let us know or stop by the office. The envelopes are a great way to keep you r offering up-to-date, and are very helpful in planning the budget. Also, we would certainly appreciate it if you would consider returning your 2012 pledge card after you decide on your offering for 2012, as this also helps in planning the budget.

As we all know, it is a difficult ognize that fact, as the church faces these difficulties also. We

(Continued on page 8)

Volume 3, Issue 9 PAGE 6

# Youth Group

Welcome Fall! With the changing season comes new & exciting things & boy do we have them.

We held our first meeting and made a lot of plans, such as:

Our first sleepover over - Thank you to Christine Henning, Shannon Butler & Katie Emrich for all you did to make this sleepover a success. We played a few great games such as Amazing Race/Survivor Relay Challenge Extravaganza & Human Battleship. In the Amazing Race/ Survivor Relay there were 3 Immunity Idols hidden and clues scattered about to assist people in find- The Giving Tree will be back. It will ing them. The people who found the 3 Idols had a final battle and the winner named King/Queen for the night and "served" by the rest of us. The winner of the game was Katie Phillips---congrats!!

On November 19 we will bake Thanksgiving breads to be sold on November 20 right after church. We only make a limited amount of Thanksgiving breads so be sure to see Kathy, Kellen, or Tessa Hauck to place your bread orders. The



proceeds from this sale will go toward the purchase of our six Thanksgiving baskets

for area needy families. Due to the recent flooding and other devastation in the area we have increased

the Thanksgiving baskets from 4 to drinks prior to the caroling. Don't 6. This will enable us to help even more families in our community.



We are in need of anything & everything that you find on your Thanksgiving table. Please bring your food donations to the church by 11/13, the last collection day for the baskets. Thank you for your support.

go up on 11/19 & end on 12/10. Be on the look out for the tree on the landing. Take your tag to help area families and make their holidays a little brighter. Just like last year the Giving Tree items could be anything from a blanket to clothing to hats/mittens and gloves. Plus the ages could be 1 to 100, but all of that information will be on the tag that you remove from the tree.

Caroling---Yes, we will be caroling in the area on Friday, December 2 from 6:30pm to 8:30pm. If you would like us to come to your home and sing a few carols please see Sandy Emrich to be added to our list. We only have time to visit a few homes. You don't want to miss out on this wonderful start to the holiday season. We will meet at the church at 5:30pm for a pizza &

forget to wear your Santa hats & bring jingle bells.

The holidays haven't even started and we have so much planned already. If you are in grade 5-12 & would like to take part in any or all of the above activities we would love to have you. See you at our next meeting.

We wish you & your family a wonderful Thanksgiving!

Sandy & Katie Emrich & Lisa Longto YG Co-Leaders



#### **Upcoming Activities**

11/6/11 Youth group meeting right after church

11/13/11 Last collection day for the Thanksgiving Baskets

11/19/11 9am Bake Thanksgiving breads; assemble Thanksgiving Baskets; erect Giving Tree

11/20/11 Thanksgiving Bread Sale right after church

12/2/11 Christmas Caroling

12/9/11 Get-together & Wrap Giving Tree Gifts



October 3, 2011

To my brothers and sisters at Hurley Reformed,

Thank you for the opportunity to serve the Lord together at the Ladies' Tea and in your worship service on Sunday. It was a joy ministering to you in song!

Thanks to you all for your warm welcome and kindness to Melodie and me. The generous honorarium is greatly appreciated.

May the Lord bless you as you continue to serve Him.

> In Christ and for His glory, Ricky Herb

## Greetings from the Prayer **Shawl Ministry**

Friends of the Hurley reformed Church have been busy knitting. Natalie Woodard and Ellen Richards have knitted booties for the infants who were recently baptized. Beautiful prayer



shawls, knitted by friends and members of our congregation, have been gratefully received. We will have a display of some of the shawls at Coffee Hour on November 13th. We encourage any one interested in knitting a prayer shawl to see Lee Gable or Linda Dido.



# "Give thanks to the Lord, for his love endures forever."

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 9 PAGE 8



February 10 - 12, 2012

Buena Vista Palace in Orlando Florida

(GSC will be there and continue to meet on the 12th and 13th)

The Conversations event does not have an "agenda" behind it or one that is mapped out already. It is modeled after the Congregational Discovery workshop on a larger level. There are 40 people from across the denomination that are planning this so it is not staff driven. There will be more information coming out at the end of the next week which shares the outline of:

- Friday arrive in Florida Worship and Introductions on Friday evening
- Saturday 4 seventy-five minute conversations in small groups covering personal, congregational stories from discovery workshop and then denomination stories and finally what key themes does your group see God leading us. Ephraim Smith from Sanctuary will be with us on Saturday evening. The Moderators of each small group will work through the night to bring us ...
- Sunday -- report from all the groups and share what we heard and believe God is doing and

showing us. Then we will conclude with worship.

What happens after that will be this report to Classes and Regional Synods and then to General Synod and from these groups we will follow where God is leading.

There is a great deal: 3 days before and 3 days after that you could stay at the Buena Vista Palace for \$159/night -- It would be great to have 900 plus stories to listen to and discern God's working in our midst now and in the future.

All Congregations, Classes and Regional Synods are encouraged to do the "Congregational Discovery Workshop" which is an enriching experience. It is designed in a way that God opens the door to speak to congregations (and other assemblies) perhaps in a new way. If you are unable to go to the Conversations event, I want to encourage you to do the Congregational Discovery Workshop. You can find this online at the RCA web site.

Doug Constant Vice President of Consistory

(Continued from page 5)

would ask that you give prayerful consideration to your giving, and see if it would be possible to increase your pledge for 2012. The table below provides a list of suggested amounts for increasing your giving by a step to the right. For example, if you currently give \$10 each week, would it be possible to move to the next box over and give \$11 each week? "Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7). Thank you for your generous support.

Jim Mayfield, Chair

Present	Suggested	Present	Suggested
Weekly	Weekly	Weekly	Weekly
Giving	Giving	Giving	Giving
\$1.00	\$1.10	\$10.00	\$11.00
\$2.00	\$2.20	\$15.00	\$16.50
\$3.00	\$3.30	\$20.00	\$22.00
\$4.00	\$4.40	\$25.00	\$27.50
\$5.00	\$5.50	\$30.00	\$33.00
\$6.00	\$6.60	\$40.00	\$44.00
\$7.00	\$7.70	\$50.00	\$55.00
\$8.00	\$8.80	\$75.00	\$82.50
\$9.00	\$9.90	\$100.00	\$110.00

#### HURLEY REFORMED CHURCH

PO Box 328 11 Main Street Hurley NY 12443

Phone: 845-331-4121 Fax: 845-331-4153 E-mail: admin@HurleyReformedChurch.org

The Rev. Dr. Robert L. Gram, LCSW Pastor

WE'RE ON THE WEB:

www.HurleyReformedChurch.org

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
HURLEY NY 12443
PERMIT #44301

# HURLEY REFORMED CHURCH Hurley New York 12443 The Rev. Dr. Robert L. Gram, LCSW Pastor THE SPIRE NOVEMBER 2011