

THE SPIRE

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 1 JANUARY 2012

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I write as the new year approaches. The turning of the calendar is often personified as an old man in a white robe, with matching beard, cradling an infant. The baby wears little more than a ribbon emblazoned with the new year. Father time is about to pass the mantle to the tiny representative of the imminent future. This stock cartoon reminds me of Scripture. Baby Jesus is brought to the Temple to be dedicated on the 8th day of his birth. There to greet him is Simeon, Father Time in a sense, who “takes Jesus in his arms, and praises God” that he is around long enough to witness the birth of Israel’s Savior. The implication is that Simeon is quite elderly because he praises God that he can now depart this world in peace, having seen the miraculous child. The old departs, and the new begins. On hand also in the Temple is Anna, of whom we are told is in her late 80’s or early 90’s. She, too, praises God that she has not died before seeing God’s future implemented in this special child. Although Scripture is silent, many theologians throughout the Christian ages have speculated about the age of Jesus’ earthly father, Joseph. He departs the biblical scene after we see him with Mary when Jesus is 12 in the Temple. It is thought that he, too, was quite elderly when he

took Mary as his wife. In fact a Gospel, the Protoevangelium of James, which was written decades after the canonical four, states explicitly that Mary and Joseph was truly a May-December romance, and that Jesus’ earthly father died long before our Lord’s public ministry. Whether this is the case or not, children in Scripture often get their start at the feet of ‘senior citizens’. The Father of Judaism, Abraham, and Mother Sarah, were 100, and 99 years respectively when the child of promise, Isaac, was born. The birth narrative recapitulates the history of Israel in this regard.

Sadly our society would have us believe that youth reigns, and the elderly have little to offer in terms of wisdom. Sadly some senior citizens buy into this secular ethos. Since I have been your pastor, I have met more energetic and wise octogenarians, and nonagenarians than ever before. I’m beginning to wonder whether there is some elixir in the Hurley water supply which accounts for the rash of mental, emotional and spiritual enthusiasm I witness in our older population. Perhaps not. Perhaps the potion is the workings of the Holy Spirit, and a strong and vital faith which keeps us truly alive when other people have zoned out on the joys of living to an ad-

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vanced age. Let me offer some suggestions, if not new year resolutions of how to start your 2012 journey.

First, acknowledge the debt you owe to some older person. Perhaps it’s a grandparent, or great grandparent who took the time to teach you a skill the world has long forgotten. Perhaps it’s a retired teacher or mentor who encouraged you, at an early age, to live up to the potential God has implanted in you. I believe we are who we are because of the time and effort someone put into our development. Maybe a card or a phone call is long overdue. One of the joys of my life was visiting my former piano teacher in a nursing home before she died, and to express to her how much her patience and encouragement meant to me, although I traded the keyboard for a guitar in my high

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school years--'Aunt' Dorothy never held that against me!

Second, take the time to remember someone who has helped you understand, and deal with the problems and challenges of living. It's helpful to know that someone has gone through the vicissitudes you now face, and not only survived, but thrived. Throughout my life I have been taught by elderly friends to understand that my challenges are not unique, and that a generous and loving God will see me through situations which, at the moment, may have seemed impossible. 'Book learning', as it is referred, is important. But life experience, borne from decades of fruitful living, is invaluable to those who are young.

Third, commit yourself to living a life of unbridled joy in 2012, for the sake of future others, perhaps those yet to be born. We have much to offer as we age, and the Christian faith demands that we share faith insight and revelation with those who are younger in the faith. "Wisdom makes one's face shine," states the author of Ecclesiastes (8:1). I think the verse moves in two directions. When we dispense wisdom our face reflects the glory of God. And the visages of those who listen to the wisdom of years reflect a borrowed gleam. Paul states that we are called to "shine like stars" in a world which needs Christian wisdom now more than ever (Philippians 23:15). May we give and receive as we move toward following God's will in the new year.

In Christ's service,
Doc Bob

Wine and Cheese Party

to Celebrate the New Year

Sunday

January 15, 2012

3:00 pm - 7:00 pm

at the Parsonage

Given by the Ladies Outreach Ministry
and Dr. Bob Gram

Wine, Cheese, hors d'oeuvres

All men and women of the church
are invited to come and enjoy
a good time of fellowship!

Bring a friend!



Open Dates for Coffee Fellowship

If you can provide refreshments for our Sunday Coffee Hour please sign up on the calendar on the bulletin board next to the Kitchen door. For more information, contact Terry Gaffken at 331-4096.

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. 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.

S T I C K L E Y G A R D E N S

Winter has just begun. Yet we are already looking forward to spring.
The ground is frozen at Stickley Gardens, and the flowers and shrubs are at rest.
The black granite of the Columbarium stands out against a blanket of snow,
while the sun reflects off the niches. It is a place of beauty and peace.

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

January Birthdays

Keelan Tucker	10, '94
Melissa McGraw	11, '95
Blake Soshensky	18, '08
Ryan Helm	28, '09
Hatherly Tucker	29, '96
Samantha Bostic	30, '94

Andrew Maxwell	1
Nicole Provenzano	4
Thomas Horvers	5
Russ Lewis	7
Carla Paton	8
Joe Ulrich	9
Cheryl Lafiandra	10
Marcy Rell	10
Dolores Wyncoop	12
MaryLou Christiana	12
Clarence Jansen	13
Doug Constant	15

Glenn Decker	17	Kelly Maggiore	24
Wally Cook	17	Kelly Dux More	25
Tim Cook	17	Sheila Jansen	25
Linda Dux	18	Morgan Burgess	26
Lee Gable	18	Tom Harkin	27
Wendy Helsley	19	Doreen Lyke	28
Brandon Paton	20	Mitchell Kurtz	30



February Birthdays

Kayley Jansen	3, '96
Douglas Woodard	6, '92
Morgan Schaffrick	7, '96
Chris Decker	2
Dean Baker	2
Drew Wonderly	3
Robert Kindt, Sr.	4
Molly Nicholas	8

Shannon Tucker	21
Michael Christiana	21
Alex Milne	22
Cathy Winnie	23
Alma Strickland	24
Doris Alden	24

ANNIVERSARIES

January

Rev & Esther Stickley	2
George & Renee Nekos	4
Ruth & Tom Harkin	6

Woman to Woman

Mentoring

Two are better than one, if one falls down her friend can help her up.



A cord of three strands cannot be broken.
(Ecc 4:9,10,12b)

Attention all Women!

Have you ever wanted to have someone to talk with who shares your Christian belief, and who also cares about you enough to keep your conversations private? If so, the Woman to Woman Mentoring program is for you. To start, we have a coffee hour at Karen Schiff's house to introduce you to the details of the program. You will fill-out a profile card so you can be matched with a woman who, we pray, will meet your needs and hers. A group of women will pray over the cards so they can be led by the spirit to match the cards with mentors and mentees. There will be one more meeting to introduce the mentors and mentees at which

time you can setup a plan to have a meeting every week, as is convenient with both parties. We are requesting a six month commitment to the meetings. After 3 months we meet for a pot luck meal to see how you are doing. We have had good participation in the past. Please give the Woman to Woman Mentoring program some thought and prayer so that you will know if this is a program for you. You can pick up a profile card during coffee hour, or call Karen Schiff @ [339-4908](tel:339-4908). We will be starting a new group in February. You never know where the spirit will lead you.

RECYCLING

We are collecting CLEAN empty cans and bottles in Schadevald Hall for recycling. The money will now benefit The Mental Health Association in Ulster County, Inc. (MHA).

The MHA is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1959 by a group of physicians and concerned individuals to develop a coordinated citizens' movement to promote mental health and to work toward improved care and treatment for

persons with mental illnesses The mission of the MHA is to engage all people in optimal mental health by providing innovative programs and services that heal, prevent, educate and advocate.

Terry Gaffken

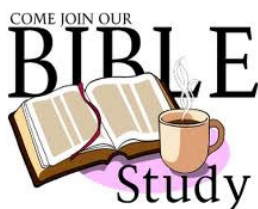
Weekly Bible Study

Tuesday Evening @
7:00pm

Or

Wednesday Morning @
7:30am

"Ecclesiastes"



Where: Dutch Room

Missions

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

Our mission for 2012 will again focus on the overwhelming problem of hunger in our communities. Our end of the year benevolence (10% of our income) will be divided among three deserving community feeding programs - Queens Galley Feeding Program; Caring Hands Soup Kitchen at the Clinton Avenue Methodist Church and People's Place Food Bank. (See next month's Spire for the monetary support we gave.)


















We will continue our monthly mission envelope support of various agencies and in January will contribute our monthly offering to Family's Food Bank. Please use the Mission envelope in your box of envelopes or the one in the pew.

Thank you,
Linda Dux, Mission Committee Chair

Hurley Reformed Church, US Holidays

Jan 2012 (Eastern Time)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
New Year's Day  10am - Worship @	11am - Private @ 5pm - Dog Training 7pm - Little League 7:30pm - 1st Capitol 7:30pm - Al-Anon @	9am - Quilters @ 4:30pm - PC 101 @ 6:30pm - US Power 7pm - Bible Study @ 7pm - Boy Scouts	 7:30am - Bible 9am - Quilting @ 5:30pm - Dog 6:30pm - Girl Scout 7pm - Boy Scouts  7pm - Men's	1:30pm - Hurley 4:30pm - Dog 6:30pm - Boy Scout 7:30pm - Choir @	7pm - BS Venture	9am - Women's
 10am - Worship @ 11am - All Church 11am - Stone House 11am - Youth Group 11:30am - Parent	11am - VFW @ 5pm - Dog Training 7pm - Consistory @ 7pm - Hudson Valley 7:30pm - Al-Anon @	8:30am - Hillside 9am - Quilters @ 6:30pm - Tiger 6:30pm - US Power 7pm - Bible Study @ 7pm - Boy Scouts	 7:30am - Bible 9am - Quilting @ 5:30pm - Dog  7pm - Men's	4:30pm - Dog 6:30pm - Half Moon 7pm - Half Moon 7:30pm - Choir @		10am - Genealogy @ 10am - OA Winter
 10am - Worship @ 11am - Prayer Chain 5pm - Wedding @	Martin Luther King, 10am - Genealogy @ 5pm - Dog Training 7pm - Cub Scout 7:30pm - Al-Anon @	9am - Quilters @ 6:30pm - Tiger 6:30pm - US Power 7pm - Bible Study @ 7pm - Boy Scouts	 7:30am - Bible 9am - Quilting @ 5:30pm - Dog 7pm - Hurley Lions  7pm - Men's	4:30pm - Dog 7pm - NE 7:30pm - Choir @		
11:30am - Science for Ministry @ Princeton Theological Seminary  10am - Worship -	10:30am - Genealog 5pm - Dog Training 6pm - Foundation 7:30pm - Al-Anon @	9am - Quilters @ 6:30pm - Tiger 6:30pm - US Power 7pm - Bible Study @ 7pm - Boy Scouts	 7:30am - Bible 9am - Quilting @ 5:30pm - Dog  7pm - Men's	4:30pm - Dog 7pm - Hurley 7:30pm - Choir @		5pm - Wedding @
10am - Baptism @  10am - Worship @	12:30pm - Baskets 5pm - Dog Training 7:30pm - Al-Anon @	9am - Quilters @ 6:30pm - Tiger 6:30pm - US Power 7pm - Bible Study @ 7pm - Boy Scouts	 7:30am - Bible 9am - Quilting @ 5:30pm - Dog 6:30pm - Girl Scout 7pm - Boy Scouts  7pm - Men's	Groundhog Day 1:30pm - Hurley 4:30pm - Dog 7:30pm - Choir @		9am - Youth Group

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

WE'RE ON THE WEB:

WWW.HURLEYREFORMEDCHURCH.ORG

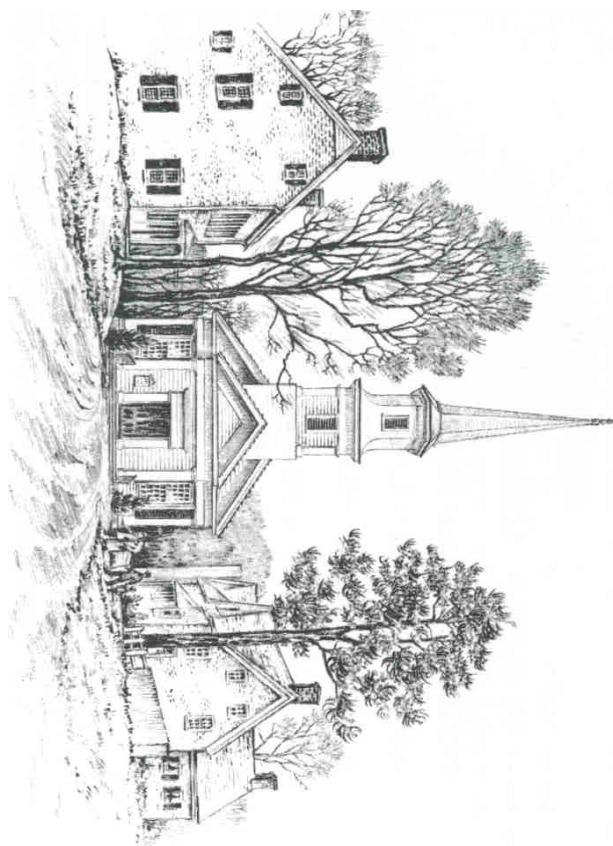
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