

# THE SPIRE

VOLUME 5, ISSUE 6

JUNE 2013



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Recently I toured Sicily on a bike with 19 other cyclists. It was one of the best vacations I've ever taken. The tour company supplies bicycles, and helmets. All I needed was cycling gear, and an appetite to travel 30 miles a day under my own steam. The company provided a van in case someone's bike malfunctioned which, thankfully, never happened. The bikes were in tip top shape, and our two guides made sure that tires were properly inflated on a daily basis. Amazingly no one sustained a flat. The van also helped stragglers who decided to do less than the usual 30 mile stretch.

I never thought I'd be cycling my way through Kingston, let alone Sicily—by the way the former is more dangerous than the latter—



but God had new passion up His sleeve, I'm sure, when I arrived at the parsonage doorstep on a wintry day in December, 2008. For several reasons I needed a hobby other than mountaineering, and so, I believe, it was rather providential, and sporting of our Lord to provide your pastor with a rail trail in which I need merely roll out of bed to reach the macadam! The parsonage library doubles as bike storage because I now own 2 mountain and two road bikes. It's harder to access books, but I don't care since, at times, I enjoy riding more than reading! Again this activity was not in the cards when I started my pastorate here. I do believe that God cares about our recreational needs as well as other aspects of our lives which we may falsely deem as more important. And I also believe that God opens new vistas of opportunity in which to experience joy throughout our lives.

My adventure began in the capital city of Palermo which had little to offer except foul smells because a garbage strike was in its second week, and refuse mounded like mini-pyramids at major street corners. Our bus took us in a southeasterly direction where we began our biking

journey. The first stop of significance was the Villa del Casale, the home of a high ranking member of the Roman Empire. It was built in the late third or early 4<sup>th</sup> century of the Christian era. This 3500 square meter villa has beautifully preserved floor and wall mosaics. Its most famous tableau features scantily clad Roman women throwing 'basketballs' back and forth. It is commonly described as the first appearance of the bikini in the ancient world.

The mosaics also feature a variety of: bears, elephants, bulls and the big cats, all of which fed the Roman lust for gladiatorial spectacle, and which were slaughtered in the coliseums of Roman Empire cities. For me the most heartbreaking scenes were of Romans placing mirrors near mother Bengal tigers in India. The mother would think that her reflection was her cubs; thus it was easy for the soldiers to steal her brood, and cart them off to the west for sport. To their enduring credit, early Christians would not participate in the gladiatorial games and chose martyrdom over lifting up sword or spear against animals as well as humans.

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The second major highlight for me was the town of Ragusa Ibla, a UNESCO World Site known for its baroque palaces and churches. We arrived in the evening, as the sun set, and were bathed in strategically placed lights in town squares and cobble stone streets; its amber hue melding with the uniformly tan color of stone, imparting a surrealistic feel. I sensed that life always pulsed there in the evening.

We wended our way toward the southern coast of Sicily, passing swaths of farmland enclosed by walls composed of pocked and bleached cannonball sized stones, betraying their ancient age. We traveled elevated back country roads for the most part, and thus had expansive views of the lush Sicilian Spring. Life was in bloom and, at times, riding a bike through groves of orange and lemon trees produced an olfactory high which surpassed any beauty caught by the eye. Scripture states that we are called to "taste and see that the Lord is good" (Psalm 34:8). I would add that it is possible to sniff our way to divine communion, given the Eden-like fragrances of lilac and fruit trees in bloom on a sunblanketed Mediterranean island.

We stayed in lovely hotels throughout. One day, after a particularly hilly itinerary, we arrived at our pension where, at check-in, we were served fresh orange juice and, what every rider needs, potato chips. After sweating for 36 miles, that simple salty sliver may have had the reviving power of manna for the starving, Pharaoh-free Israelites in the desert of Sinai. Of course potato chips did not define the gastronomic treats we experienced throughout our journey. Perhaps Sicily produces the best olive oil. Want a great entrée? Bathe rigatoni in Extra Virgin from the Modica region, and garnish with

## Our Mission Project

Do you remember all the fun you had at summer camp - swimming, arts & crafts, games, new friends?



By contributing in your June Mission envelope you will be providing money for snacks and lunches for the children who attend the Rural/Migrant Ministry day and overnight camps and programs in the Hudson Valley this summer. You will be giving a child of those who "labor daily to ensure that our tables are abundantly filled" a fun-filled summer.

~Linda Dux, Missions Chair

fresh mint leaves. Nothing is better, or more simple. Never order expensive wine in a restaurant since a carafe of its house equals far more high priced bottles in the States. And the gelato. I must return to Sicily simply for the ice cream! Groves of pistachios and almond trees are conscripted to make the best pistachio and almond ice cream ever. I met a retired Texas couple who directed me to their favorite gelato place at our last stop, the Piazza del Duomo, the great square surrounded by Baroque cathedrals in the ancient part of the city of Syracuse. Every year they spend three months here and gain 30 pounds because of their daily trips to this particular ice cream stand.

The Piazza del Duomo was my favorite stop. The square is large, and rectangular. The paving stones have been worn smooth from daily foot traffic over the centuries. All the ancient buildings are lit in the evening. Green restaurant umbrellas bloom around the periphery. On my last night, I sat on a step of the Great Cathedral and observed dwin-

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## STICKLEY GARDENS

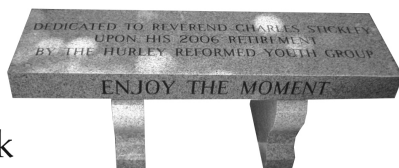
Nature is alive and well at Stickley Gardens. The beautiful purple and white flowers add



color to the area as the birds,

squirrels and chipmunks scurry around

the patio and drink



from the fountain. Come sit with me and enjoy the moment.

*All are welcome...*

FOR MORE INFORMATION –  
CONTACT ANY OF THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

LISA LONGTO (331-1438) CHAIRPERSON  
JIM PIRRO (383-0079) TREASURER  
ESTHER STICKLEY (331-2919)  
SANDIE GREGORY (338-7626)  
DIANA CLINE (338-7276) CONSISTORY LIAISON  
REV STICKLEY, SECRETARY

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



### Help Wanted!

Looking for a person to check the clothing shed once a week. Time commitment is 30 minutes. See Linda Dux for more information.



**Each week** we meet in Schadewald Hall following the worship experience to continue our Christian fellowship. We have been blessed to enjoy a varied array of goodies provided by our members. As we

move into the summer months our sponsorship of coffee hour dwindles. Please consider taking a Sunday to provide refreshments. Why not get a couple of friends to do it with you? See Terry Gaffken for more information or call the office. Sign up sheet is above the coffee pot.

**L**ast day of Sunday School will be June 9. Perfect attendance awards will be presented and the teachers will be recognized. After worship we will celebrate with an Ice Cream Sundae Social Coffee Hour.



Our carillon plays hymns for five minutes at Noon, Mon-Sat and at 6:00 PM every day. Do you have favorite hymns you'd like added to the playlist? Please email your nominations to Dan Stott at [danstott@email.com](mailto:danstott@email.com). If they are available for our carillon, we'll add them to the playlist. Thank you.



**Prayer Chain:** There are no meetings in July and August. This does not mean we will be on vacation from doing the Lord's work! Contact any of us at any time. Don't know who we are? Deb Zuill, Shirley Ruth, Pat Baker, Joyce Pinckney, Diane Cline, Sonnie Howe, Sandy Gregory, Helen Sgroi, Roberta Falatyn, Esther Stickley, Audrey Frost and Rev. Gram. We pray traveling mercies for those going away! Be safe! Have fun! We pray that all will have a wonderful summer! God Bless! Deb Zuill

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*Except for an accordion player  
whose instrument oozed plaintive  
love songs, and the faint tinkle of  
waiters clearing dinner tables, I was  
alone, and at peace.*

dling human traffic as it drained toward the outskirts, and waiting hotel rooms. Except for an accordion player whose instrument oozed plaintive love songs, and the faint tinkle of waiters clearing dinner tables, I was alone, and at peace. Where do we discover holy places? It may be at the kitchen sink, or in the back yard. Or maybe the location is a bit more exotic so that we will recall again and again those special moments when the One, who gifts us with an appreciation of beauty and wonder, is rediscovered in the tang of lemon gelato, the dying strain of an accordion, and the deliberate, footfall of silence which greets us in the open spaces of our lives.

In Christ's service,

The Women's Guild is working on a new church directory. Please contact the church office, 331-4121 or [admin@hurleyreformedchurch.org](mailto:admin@hurleyreformedchurch.org), to update your information. Cell phone numbers and email addresses are especially lacking or out of date in our data base. This edition will not contain photos but will have all the necessary information to stay in touch with your church family. We will be calling those we do not hear from.



Graduates will be recognized next Sunday, June 9. If someone in your family is graduating from high school or college we would like to congratulate them. Call or email the church office to have the information included in the bulletin.

## Handicapped Accessibility Project Update

### Construction Summer Schedule: Lift/Bathroom Updates

**NOISE, DUST AND... ACTION!** The long awaited construction will be in full swing June 17<sup>th</sup>.

The stairs will be taken out to make room for the lift installation. Column supports will be erected to hold the weight of the remaining stairs and lift. Electrical wiring will be run from the janitor's closet and the glass walls will create the lift tower. The lift will be delivered in mid-July and set in place. With final work on the lift and testing completed, operational status is expected to commence in early September.



During the same time period, the unisex bathroom for use by the disabled will occur. Granny's stash of goodies has been permanently relocated for this project. A doorway will be cut in the hallway for ease of access. During the

restroom construction there will be a period of time when the boy's room will not be available while the floor is jack hammered to connect the sewage line. Looks like a portable toilet will be needed for Stone House Day.

There will be a rail put in place for safe access to the pulpit. Donations are still needed. If you have not sent in a donation, please consider doing so.

Dave Giles, Coordinator



**SUMMER BIRTHDAYS****June**

Joseph Orlando	5, '07
Makenzie Rell	8, '11
Kyla Burns	18, '01
Allan Dumas, IV	19, '00
Luke Helm	19, '11
Brandt Kurtz	21, '03
Shawn Hinsdale	24, '03
Elizabeth Salzmman	25, '96
Ella Rowdycz	27, '11
Dakota Butler	27, '96
Gordon Kent	1
Su Wonderly	2
Rebecca Masters	8
Bobbi Checksfield	8
David Giles	8
Dennis Croswell	9
Mimi Croswell	11
Bob Alden	13
Mary Lyke (102 years old!!!)	13
Sarah Longto	14
Annemarie Kurtz	15
Emily Horvers	20
Marilyn Lowe	21
George Nekos	21
Patti Gilpatric	23
William Mergl	23
Aaron Ulrich	24
Bev Chrisey	24
Aileen Helsley	25
Steven Kurtz	26
James Gregory	28
Marvin Schildhorn	29
Robert Sills	30

**July**

Teagan Helsley	6, '08
Claire Orlando	10, '10
Alyssa Kurtz	14, '01
Brayden Horvers	24, '98
Daniel Nekos	25, '04
Bonnie Dumas	3
Rachel Cline	4
Bill Beesmer	4
Nancy Salzmman	5
Kenneth Odell	5
Kacey Gardner	6

Debbie Tucker
Nicholas Rockwell
Roger Vogt
Bryan Hill
Barbara Mayfield
Lori Decker
Sandra Emrich
Win Morrison
Dan Stott
Pat Manley
Katherine Emrich
Midge Stott
Matthew Horvers
Caitlin Cox
Spencer Herzog

**August**

Reid Jordan
Aubrey Horvers
Mia Sullivan
Roberta Falatyn
Jim Pirro
Donna Harder
Florence Kurtz
Frank Pinckney
Rev. Charles Stickley
Kathleen Jansen
Roslie Gilpatric
David Emrich
Jim Macarille
Alison Cline
Jennifer Checksfield Mann
Charles Emrich
Jennifer Macarille
Barbara Kindt
Gary Longto
Helen Richter
Dick Baker

ANNIVERSARIES

Barbara & Dick Baker	6/7
Drew & Su Wonderly	6/12
Eric & Jo Sullivan	6/12
Wally & Linda Cook	6/14
Tom & Judy Horvers	6/16
Barbara & Bob Kindt	6/17
Bobbi & Don Checksfield	6/21
Frieda & Doug Constant	6/23

6	Terry & John Gaffken	6/26
13	Steve & Phyllis Bliss	6/27
14	Christie & Jim Prentice	6/28
15	Steve & Valerie Nekos	6/29
16	Todd & Katrina Rubino	6/30
16		
19	Joyce & Frank Pinckney	7/6
20	Roger & Mary Lou Vogt	7/11
24	Gerard & Dolores Wyncoop	7/22
24	Rebecca & Allan Masters	7/27
25		
27	Bryan & Leigh Hill	8/1
28	Barry & Marcy Rell	8/2
28	Sheila & Terry Read	8/6
28	David & Gretchen Giles	8/6
	Hal & Kathy Hauck	8/6
	Annemarie & Fred Kurtz	8/15
3, '99	Kathy & Ted Musialkiewicz	8/16
16, '96	Leanne & Frank Warren	8/16
24, '11	Jim & Roslie Gilpatric	8/19
1	Melinda & Larry Herzog	8/22
2	Jeffrey & Alyson Rafferty	8/24
10	David & Sandra Emrich	8/29
10	Cindy & Dino Sumerano	8/30
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May 21, 2013

Dear Friends of the Hurley Re-formed Church,

It was such a joy and a privilege to serve as your seminary intern this year. Thank you so much for your incredible support especially through my cancer treatment. You will always have a special place in my heart.

Thank you so much for the portable communion set. The walnut case is so beautiful. I will surely use it in God's service.

My prayers and love are with you as you continue your ministry. May God continue to richly bless your fellowship in Christ.

Love and Prayers,

Linda Miles



HURLEY REFORMED  
CHURCH

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

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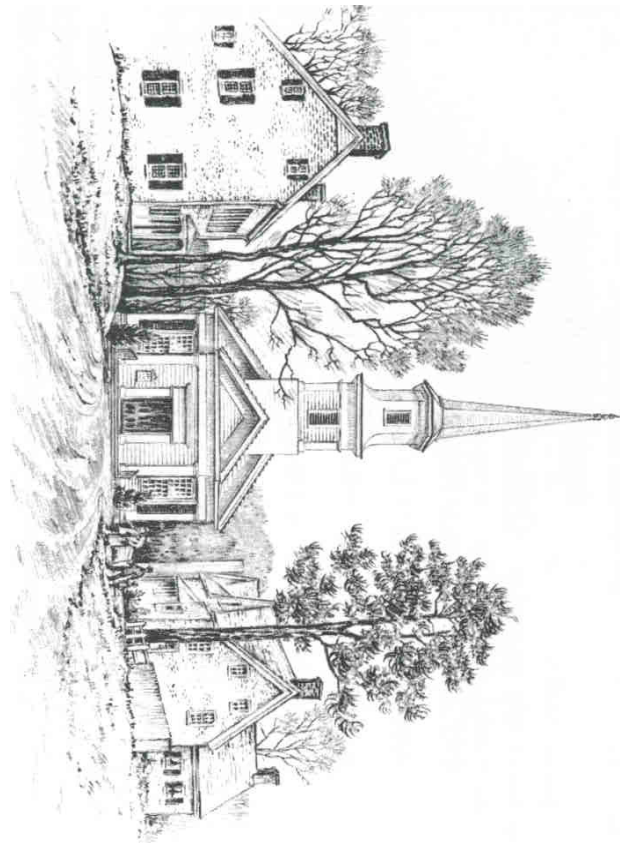
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HURLEY NY 12443

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**Summer Events:**

- 6/9 Last Day of Sunday School  
Recognition of Graduates  
Ice Cream Sundae Coffee Hr.  
6/10 Consistory  
6/16 Father's Day  
Last Day of Choir  
7/13 STONE HOUSE DAY  
8/17 Corn Festival  
8/20 September Spire Deadline



HURLEY REFORMED CHURCH

Hurley New York 12443

The Rev. Dr. Robert L. Gram, LCSW

Pastor

THE SPIRE  
JUNE 2013