

HURLEY REFORMED CHURCH

THE SPIRE

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NOVEMBER 2013



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Last month I wrote about the Near Death Experience. This month I address a related question which pertains to the NDE. After that tunnel of light which leads to heaven who would I like to meet, apart from family and all of you—if I make it? (I'm assured that you will!). My choice is writers who have inspired me over the decades. Most have died, and I hope all have preceded me to heaven, even the ones who doubted or disbelieved in Christianity. I'm all for a merciful God, and if the doubters have helped me preach and teach, I'm more than willing to put in a good word on their behalf—again, if I make it to the 'Pearly Gates' myself!

One of the joys of ministry is that one must read lots to keep the spiritual fires stoked. Much of the writing I consume may not have direct relevance to what I proclaim on Sunday morning, but it helps me grow as a believer, and as someone who needs a fair amount of book print to function the way God created me to function. I believe the writers who've claimed my allegiance are my extended family. I am eternally indebted to their thinking, and their eloquent use of words. My hope is that in heaven the wordless monologue of print on earth will be replaced by dialogue with mentors I have never known, save through their literary work. We'll gather around a table with a fine Riesling and talk and talk!

Herewith is a tiny sampling of a few favorite theologians, philosophers, and fiction writers. There are many more, but these are the ones I call to mind when I think of my movement through the faith. I close with the great Meister Eckhart, the most inno-

vative and daring preacher of his time—indeed, of any time!

John Updike (1932 - 2009): Novelist and short story writer

"If temporality is held to be invalidating, then nothing succeeds under heaven."

"A healthy male adult consumes each year one and a half times his own weight in other people's patience."

Paul Ricoeur (1913-2005): Philosopher

"Christianity is a chance transformed into destiny by a continuous choice."

Soren Kierkegaard (1813-1855): Danish Philosopher and Theologian

"The function of prayer is not to influence God, but rather to change the nature of the one who prays."

"People demand freedom of speech as a compensation for the freedom of thought which they seldom use."

"Life is not a problem to be solved, but a reality to be experienced."

"What labels me, negates me."

"The most common form of despair is not being who you are."

"Love is the expression of the one who loves, not the one who is loved. Those who think they can love only the people they prefer do not love at all. Love discovers truths about individuals that others cannot see."

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"To dare is to lose one's footing momentarily. Not to dare is to lose oneself."

"To venture causes anxiety, but not to venture is to lose one's self.... And to venture in the highest is precisely to be conscious of one's self."

Peter DeVries (1910-1993):
American editor and novelist

"My father hated radio and could not wait for television to be invented so he could hate that too."

"Nostalgia isn't what it used to be."

The murals in restaurants are on par with the food in museums."

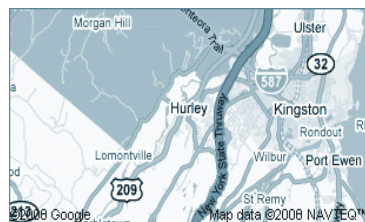
"There are times when parenthood seems nothing but feeding the mouth that bites you."

"We all learn by experience but some of us have to go to summer school."

"When I can no longer hear to think of the victims of broken homes, I begin to think of the victims of intact ones."

"It is the final proof of God's omnipotence that he need not exist in order to save us."

Frederick Buechner (1926 -):
American novelist & theologian



Local Missions Linda Dux, Chair

Money collected in the Mission envelopes for November will be used to assist the Clinton Ave Methodist church in funding their Caring Hands Soup

Kitchen . Rev. Darlene Kelly and her staff minister to the needs of God's poor by providing counseling, mental health services, help with obtaining a GED , and providing meals to individuals and families. She has always been grateful for the monetary assistance that we have provided in the past . As we are approaching the end of a year when the funds are very low , we have the opportunity to again assist Rev. Kelly in feeding God's people in " Mid-town" Kingston. Thank you for you generosity at this bountiful time of year.

"Let the preacher tell the truth. Let him make audible the silence of the news of the world with the sound turned off so that in that silence we can hear the tragic truth of the Gospel which is that the world where God is absent is a dark and echoing emptiness; and the comic truth of the Gospel which is that it is into the depths of his absence that God makes himself present in such unlikely ways and to such unlikely people as that old Sarah and Abraham, and when the time comes even Pilate and Job and Lear... and you and I laugh til the tears run down our cheeks. And finally let him preach this overwhelming of tragedy by comedy, of darkness by light, of the ordinary by the extraordinary, as the tale that is too good not to be true because to dismiss it as untrue is to dismiss along with it that catch of the breath, that beat and lifting

of the heart near to or even accompanied by tears, which I believe is the deepest intuition of truth that we have."

"The grace of God means something like: Here is your life. You might never have been, but you are because the party wouldn't be complete without you. Here is the world. Beautiful and terrible things will happen. Don't be afraid. I am with you."

Howard Hageman (1921-1992):
Reformed Church minister,
writer, and brilliant preacher

"Remember Me. It was the cry of the dying revolutionary (on the cross); it is the cry of the wasted young person in the ghetto, the ADC mother in a housing project, the old man living by himself in a furnished room, the rising young

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STICKLEY GARDENS

I love the fall season. As I spend time in the garden preparing it for winter, I am intrigued by the individualism of each flower with its amazing design and intense color. I enjoy photographing them, collecting their seeds, and anxiously await the opportunity to plant them once again.

The beauty that surrounds us is incredible and yet it pales in comparison to the eternal home that God has prepared for us.

In John 14, Jesus tells us that he goes to prepare a place for us and that, where he is, we will be also. Like the flowers, we too will live again thanks to the gift of the "Son's Love" for us. Praise God!

*"Just remember in the winter
far beneath the bitter snows,
lies the seed that with
the sun's love in the spring
becomes the rose"*

– from "The Rose" by Bette Midler

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

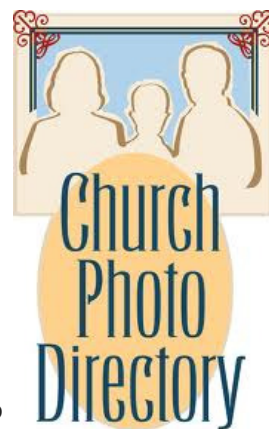
A SACRED PLACE OF
BEAUTY AND CONTEMPLATION.
(LOCATED ON THE SOUTH LAWN OF THE CHURCH)

Our part of creating the Church Directory has been completed.

After submission to Lifetouch, a proof will be sent to us. Once the proof is reviewed and approved, it will be returned to Lifetouch and our Directory will be printed and put-together.

We will keep you informed of the progress.

Again, thank you to everyone who helped and thank you to everyone who had their photo taken. We're looking forward to our new Church Photo Directory.



~Deborah Tucker, Chair



"Magnificent E's" Bible Study meets on Tuesday at 7:00pm and Wednesday at 7:30am in the Dutch Room. We are studying the ministries of Elijah and Elisha as presented in 1 and 2 Kings.



Words cannot express my gratitude for all the kindnesses visited on me at the celebration of the 40th anniversary of my ordination. Your support has been confirmation that God called me to do exactly what I've been doing. On Saturday

evening I never danced harder nor ever did I smile more. The after worship buffet on Sunday was a wonderful surprise and a joyous occasion. As most of you know I love to eat. A couple of friends with whom I served in an earlier church said to me as they were leaving after the brunch "what a terrific congregation." I agree.

Special thanks to Linda Dux and Barb Kindt for orchestrating to perfection the Saturday night soiree and Dave and Gretchen Giles, Barb and Bob Kindt, and Debbie and Glenn Decker the Sunday morning brunch.

Dr. Bob

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executive in a downtown office—'remember me'. And we live in a society which isn't built to remember, doesn't know how to remember, doesn't want to remember. But Jesus did. And he expects us to be able to do the same or give up using his name in vain. Do you remember that wonderful line in Samuel Beckett's novella, 'Dante and the Lobster', when the despondent young man cries out, 'My God, why can't people have less piety and more pity?' Why can't we stop talking about paradise, and start bringing significance to the insignificant, humanity to the dehumanized, concern to the forgotten? Or what's Good Friday all about anyway?"

Flannery O'Connor (1925-1964): Novelist and short story writer. A practicing Roman Catholic.

"She would have been a good woman" the Misfit said, "if it had been somebody there to shoot her every minute of her life."

"If the sacraments are merely symbolic, to hell with them."

"It is when the individual's faith is weak, not when it is strong that he will be afraid of an honest fictional representation of life."

John Donne (1572-1631): English cleric and poet

"[God] brought light out of darkness, not out of a lesser light; he can bring thy Summer out of Winter, though thou have no Spring; though in the ways of fortune or understanding, or conscience thou have been benighted till now; wintered and frozen, clouded and eclipsed, damped and benumbed, smothered and stupefied till now, now God comes to thee, not as in the dawning of the day, not as in the bud of the spring, but as the Sun at noon to illustrate all shadows... all occasions invite his mercies, and all times are his seasons."

"One short sleep past, we wake eternally,
And death shall be no more; death,
thou shall die."

Thomas Merton (1915-1968): Trappist Monk and author

"The Desert Fathers believed that the wilderness had been created as supremely valuable in the eyes of God precisely because it had no value to men. The wasteland was the land that could never be wasted by men because it offered them nothing. There was nothing to attract them. There was nothing to exploit... The desert was created simply to be itself, not to be transformed by men into something else. So too the mountain and the sea. The desert is therefore the logical dwelling place for the man who seeks nothing but himself—that is to say, a creature solitary and poor

and dependent upon no one but God, with no great project standing between himself and his Creator."

"No one who seeks liberation and light in solitude, no one who seeks spiritual freedom, can afford to yield passively to all the appeals of a society of salesmen, advertisers, and consumers."

Meister Eckhart (1260?-1328): Dominican theologian and daring preacher.

"I pray to God to rid me of God."

"It is a certain and necessary truth that God must needs seek us, as though His Godhead were at stake—which it is! And God can no more do without us than we without Him, for even if we were able to turn from God, God still could not turn from us... God is of such nature that God must give. One who would deprive God of this would deprive God of God's own being, of God's very life."

"The eye with which I see God is the same eye with which God sees me: my eye and God's eye are one eye, one seeing, one knowing and one love."

"Whoever has understood this sermon, good luck to him. If no one had been here I should have had to preach it to this collecting-box!"

"For I tell you by the truth that is

(Continued on page 6)



Boy Scout Troop 20 is collecting non-perishable food on a regular basis. A box is located in Schade-wald Hall. Please - no glass or expired food! The Scouts will deliver the food to three area food banks & shelters. If you have any questions please see a boy scout or David Emrich.



Happy Birthday

John Henning	10, '99
Chloe Dumas	14, '98
William Schaffrick	14, '97
Drew Milne	17, '05
Julianna Schaffrick	17, '00
Iris Cordero	3
Natalie Woodard	8
Peg Baldinger	13

Anne Glass	15	Art Harder	30
Bill Merrill	16		
Daniela Sumerano	16	Todd & Julie Jordan	9
Jay Burgess	17	Leslie & Darryl Shambo	10
Joe Burns	19	Shirley & Ron Burns	13
James Gregory	22	May & Peter Kowalenko	19
Kathy Musialkiewicz	23	Mary & Ken Odell	23
Allan Dumas	28	Sandie & Jim Gregory	30
Juanita Bilyou	29		
Matthew Croswell	30		

Congregational

Meeting

Sunday, November 17

Immediately after worship

**H u r l e y R e f o r m e d C h u r c h****ELECTION DAY****Turkey Dinner****date: Tuesday - Nov. 5th****seatings: Open Seating 4:30pm – 6:30pm****tickets: \$14.00 adults / \$7.00 children under 12****reservations: please call 331-4121** take outs: same times/same costcatered by the
Bowery Dugout

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eternal, so long as you have a will to fulfill God's will, and a longing for God and eternity, then you are not poor (in spirit); for a truly poor man is one who has a will and longing for nothing."

"Whenever we want what God can give us rather than living without desire, we treat God as if God were a cow. Once we have the milk, we discard the animal."

"Let us live without a 'why'."

The **Youth Group** has met the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month. We have had a small group since 7 of our members are KHS Tiger Marching Band members. Now that their season is over we are expecting a larger attendance. On Nov. 3, we will be riding the rail trail on our bikes after church. The group will continue to collect for Thanksgiving baskets. We will also be caroling in Hurley again this holiday season. We welcome new members at anytime. Our meetings are the first and third Sunday of the month 7-8:30 in Schadewald Hall. Feel free to contact Christine Henning for further information at 339-0509.



Women's Guild

With the holidays approaching the Guild is busy with their annual activities... Pecan Sales, Bake Sale during the Annual Election Day Dinner, Thanksgiving Altar arrangement, Operation Christmas Child, Poinsettia Sales, and the Cookie Walk. Don't miss out on these wonderful upcoming activities. Keep reading for more information on them.

The Guild has purchased new shades for the Dutch Room. This will help darken the room for day time presentations and help with the glare of the sun. Thank you to Barbara Kindt and Sandie Gregory for chairing this project.

Also purchased by the Guild is a new ladder for the church. The old ladder has served the church well and has been retired. This new one will make it easier and safer to change the higher light bulbs. Plus,

the Guild has donated \$1,500 to the church for the purchase of new flooring for church office. We are blessed to be able to help the church out in our small ways.

Pecans... Get your Pecans!! That's right, the annual Pecan Sale is taking place now. The cost is \$9 for a one pound bag. If you haven't already received a call to place your order please see or call Jean Dussol to place your order. Thank you for your support.

A very important outreach of the Guild is our Funeral Luncheon ministry. We are there for our church family in time of need by providing a reception after a funeral. We have a wonderful group of ladies ready to make their delicious cole slaw or jello salad or whatever they make when that call is received. Not every church provides this service for families nor do other churches make "homemade" dishes. In 2012 we provided 5 luncheons and to date in 2013 we have done 3. Thank you ladies for always answering the call.

- 11/3 Sponsor Coffee Hour
- 11/5 Election Day Dinner
Bake Sale
- 11/10 Operation Christmas Child
Bring Shoebox to Worship
- 12/15 Cookie Walk

We welcome & invite all women of the church to be a part of the Women's Guild. You don't have to be a member of the church to be a part of the Women's Guild. We meet right after church in the Dutch Room. So, come & see what we are all about!

~Sandy Emrich, President



YOUTH MINISTRY SERVICE PROJECT

**THANKSGIVING
BASKETS**

The Youth Group is once again collecting food for Thanksgiving Baskets. Please bring your donations to Schadewald Hall. If you would prefer to donate cash rather than food it will be used to purchase perishable items.

admin@hurleyreformedchurch.org, Hurley Reformed Church, US Holidays

Nov 2013 (Eastern Time)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27 Daylight Saving 10am - Worship 11am - Prayer Chain 12pm - Youth Group	28 1pm - Basket Class 5pm - Dog Training 7pm - Little League 7:30pm - 1st Capitol 7:30pm - Al-Anon @	29 Election Day 9:30am - Badminton 4pm - Hurley Puriers 4:30pm - PC 101 @ 7pm - Bible Study @ 7pm - Boy Scouts	30 7:30am - Bible 5:30pm - Dog 6pm - Cub Scout 6pm - Den 1 Bears @ 6:30pm - Girl Scout 7pm - Boy Scouts 7:45pm - Bagpiper	31 9:30am - Badminton 1:30pm - Hurley 3pm - Quilting @ 4:45pm - Dog 7:30pm - Choir	1 9am - Brandon	2 10am - Genealogy @ 12pm - HVICA @ Hall
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 10am - Worship 1pm - Private @ Hall	11 Veterans Day 11am - VFW @ 1pm - Basket Class 5pm - Dog Training 7pm - Consistory @ 7pm - Hudson Valley 7:30pm - Al-Anon @	12 8:30am - Hillside 9:30am - Badminton 4pm - Hurley Puriers 7pm - Bible Study @ 7pm - Boy Scouts	13 7:30am - Bible 5:30pm - Dog 6pm - Cub Scout 6pm - Den 1 Bears @ 7:45pm - Bagpiper	14 9:30am - Badminton 12:30pm - Little 3pm - Quilting @ 4:45pm - Dog 6:30pm - Order of 7pm - Order of the 7:30pm - Choir	15 7pm - Woodworkers	16 12:30pm - Square
17 10am - Worship @ 11am - Congregatio 1:30pm - Heritage 7pm - Youth Group	18 10am - Genealogy @ 5pm - Dog Training 6pm - Foundation 7:30pm - Al-Anon @	19 9:30am - Badminton 4pm - Hurley Puriers 7pm - Bible Study @ 7pm - Boy Scouts	20 7:30am - Bible 5:30pm - Dog 6pm - Cub Scout 6pm - Den 1 Bears @ 7pm - Hurley Lions 7:45pm - Bagpiper	21 9am - HNS @ Room 6 9:30am - Badminton 3pm - Quilting @ 4pm - Hurley 7:30pm - Choir	22 12pm - Safeco	23
24 10am - Worship @ 11am - Stone House	25 10:30am - Genealog 5pm - Dog Training 7:30pm - Al-Anon @	26 9:30am - Badminton 4pm - Hurley Puriers 7pm - Bible Study @ 7pm - Boy Scouts	27 7:30am - Bible 5:30pm - Dog 6pm - Cub Scout 6pm - Den 1 Bears @ 7:45pm - Bagpiper	28 Thanksgiving 9:30am - Badminton 4:45pm - Dog 7:30pm - Choir	29	30

November

HURLEY REFORMED
CHURCH

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

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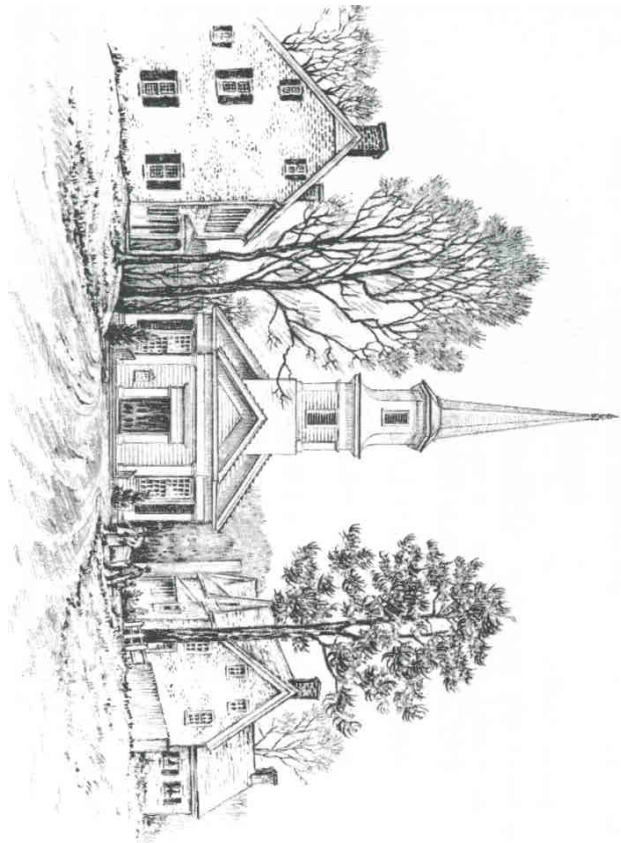
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