

THE SPIRE

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APRIL 2014



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Human history hinges on the resurrection of our Lord. The empty tomb on that Sunday in A.D. 30-33 changed the course of human consciousness forever. We can no longer feel comfortable believing that extinction, and death are synonymous. In 1st Corinthians 15, his magnificent chapter on the resurrection, the Apostle Paul writes: "If for only this life we have hoped in Christ, we are of all men and women most to be pitied. But, in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep" (vs. 19-20). Paul reminds the Corinthian church they indeed will experience resurrection because Christ did. What a comforting thought!

In his novella, "The Death of Ivan Illyich" the Russian genius Tolstoy presents us with a character who is moving up the bureaucratic ranks, and doing well for himself and his family, until he is struck with cancer. The main character lives well without God, and without ability to look deeply within himself—until the crisis hits. Illness forces Ivan to revise his understanding of life's meaning, and his relationship to mortality. In the most powerful scene of the novella, as death approaches, he remembers what he learned in grade school about mortality:

In the depth of his heart he knew he was dying, but not only was he not accustomed to the thought, he simply did not and could not grasp it.

The syllogism he had learnt from Kiesewetter's Logic: "Caius is a man, men are mortal, therefore Caius is mortal," had always seemed to him correct as applied to Caius, but certainly not as applied to himself. That Caius—man in the abstract—was mortal, was perfectly correct, but he was not Caius, not an abstract man, but a creature quite, quite separate from all others. He had been little Vanya, with a mamma and a papa, with Mitya and Volodya, with the toys, a coachman and a nurse, afterwards with Katenka and with all the joys, griefs, and delights of childhood, boyhood, and youth. What did Caius know of the smell of that striped leather ball Vanya had been so fond of? Had Caius kissed his mother's hand like that, and did the silk of her dress rustle so for Caius? Had he rioted like that at school when the pastry was bad? Had Caius been in love like that? Could Caius preside at a session as he did? "Caius really was mortal, and it was right for him to die; but for me, little Vanya, Ivan Ilych, with all my thoughts and emotions, it's altogether a different matter. It cannot be that I ought to die. That would be too terrible."

Such was his feeling.

"If I had to die like Caius I would have known it was so. An inner voice would have told me so, but there was nothing of the sort in me and I and all my friends felt that our case was quite different from that of Caius, and now

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here it is!" he said to himself. "It can't be. It's impossible! But here it is. How is this? How is one to understand it?"

Like Ivan we cannot believe that we will die, although obviously we will. Sigmund Freud that great 19th Century unbeliever could write that one cannot view his or her death objectively or existentially. We sight personal mortality as bystanders or spectators at best because the thought of personal extinction is truly incomprehensible. Freud supports Ivan's understanding: We can only talk about our death in the abstract. Something within us rebels against mortality. In spite of his great suffering, nevertheless, at one point, Job proclaims a Gospel of hope when he states: "For I know that my Redeemer lives and that at the last he will stand upon the earth and after my skin has been thus destroyed, then in my flesh I shall see God whom I shall see on my side, and my eyes shall behold him and not another." (19:25-27). Indeed we cannot give full allegiance to extinction because the Holy Spirit resides within each of us, restless in sowing thought seeds of eternal life..

Ivan's story is also ours because, like him, we believe that we are too special to die. It's not that we're special vis a vis others,--or special in the way our society grades people in terms of success money and power-- but rather it is the aggregate weight of what makes each of us human-- feelings, sensitivities, and experiences; the unique, and elegant cognitions which point our spirits to heaven, and our minds to the joyous tasks of unearthing the mysteries of this planet and unlocking the riddles of the universe. We are each a God-given complexity, a beautiful and elegant mystery which negates materialist ideal that what awaits is a dust and ash reduc-



Local Missions

Rebecca Masters, Chair

We raised \$408.00 in February for FAMILY house, the teen shelter that is operated by Family of Woodstock. Thanks to your donations, they will be able to use this money for programs and /or the purchase of a new van. The students are taken to their school districts and school activities, so transportation is a major cost.

The mission for the month of April is our own Deacon's Fund. This is money that is used for the Church community for one-time emergency situations. Please support this cause to help our own!

tion. We are, as the Psalmist writes, "fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139:14). We will be given a spiritual body in heaven so that we might join fully and completely with the one who called us into being through Christ, amazingly, as the Apostle Paul writes, "Before the foundation of the world." Ephesians 1:4.

Some years ago I had dinner with a former parishioner who had been in my youth group and confirmation class. I had not seen her in several years, but was gratified that she asked me to perform her wedding. Her husband, Russ, is a great cook, and he pulled out all the stops when I visited. We discussed Christianity, and he asked whether I would still marry them, although he was an agnostic. I affirmed that I would, and asked him about his

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By now everyone has probably seen at least one or two robins. I wait every year for this unofficial sign of spring and a sign of hope. The hope that a long, hard winter is finally over. This year was different, however. We had a flock (yes, a flock) of 20 to 30 robins that never left us. They gathered on our front lawn (when they could find it) and in our crab apple and other fruit trees, stripping them of their fruit. I enjoyed the beautiful blossoms in the spring and they enjoyed the withered, old fruit during the dead of winter. As I watched them one day, I thought about **God's promise** to never leave us and how comforting it is to know that **He** is with us every day and that when we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, He will be there.

Rejoice in the Resurrection, knowing that through our belief in the risen **Christ**, one day, **Jesus will take our hand and lead us home.**

Happy Easter!!!
Happy Spring!!!

STICKLEY GARDENS

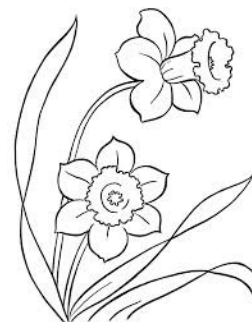
FOR MORE INFORMATION – CONTACT ANY OF THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

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

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

Women's Guild

Spring is here!! We made it through a tough winter. Now we can get down to work.



On March 9 we held our re-scheduled Cookie Walk. Thank you for your support and help to make it a great success! Thanks to all of the bakers and everyone who purchased cookies. Thanks to Natalie Woodard & Shirley Burns for chairing this event!! Also, thanks to Ryan Giebelhaus who helped me break the tables down when the walk was all over.

The annual Church Birthday Party was held during coffee hour on 3/23. Thank you to everyone that decorated a table. It was again a great time & nice to see everyone so happy. Birthday parties are a happy time & this sure was!! Thanks to Ellen Richards for chairing this event.

Pentecost Sunday is coming up on 6/8 & we are asking everyone to bring in a red geranium to decorate the altar. Flowers will be planted around the church & parsonage. Thanks for your help!

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!

Our calendar of events:

5/18/14 Meeting

6/8/14 Pentecost Sunday bring in a red geranium

Blessings,

Sandy Emrich-President

Strawberry Hill Fiddlers are coming . . .

Saturday, May 10

Mark your calendars!

(Continued from page 2)

a-religious feelings. In turn asked if there was some way to prove the existence of God. I simply noted that he himself was proof, and not simply because of his culinary skill. "Can you believe that you were simply a biological hit and miss, and that your conception and being was sheer random?" He thought and ate, and thought some more. Finally he said, "It's hard to believe that." I wanted to shout out, "Welcome to my world!" But I thought a subtle approach was in better keeping.

Easter is the exclamation point to our yearnings for heaven; it is the hope beyond hope which continually affirms that "There are no atheists in foxholes, or hospital beds." This Easter let us proclaim wonderful life. And with that marvelous 18th Century poet and cleric, John Donne, may we chorus the great hope which animates all Christians: "One short sleep past, we wake eternally/ And death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die!"

Yours in Christ,
Doc Bob

CLEAN UP DAY

Saturday, April 19, 2014

8:45 Coffee, Juice & Sweets

9:00 Work Assignments & Q&A



General Clean Up
Painting
Raking



For more information see

Jim Pirro, Dennis Croswell or Dave Giles

See list of projects & sign up in Schadewald Hall on Sun., April 13.

BIRTHDAYS

	April	Shirley Burns	9	George Nekos, Jr.	5, 11
Travis Horvers	2, 98	Esther Stickley	11	Terry Conlin	2
Zachary Burns	15, 99	Beverly Roosa	12	Kristen Helm	2
Lily Barra	16, 13	Barbara Baker	12	Lori Baker	3
Kyle Constant	17, 97	Christine Beesmer	14	Gil Hoppenstedt	4
Lauren Shaffrick	20, 01	Ann Every	17	Faye Jansen	4
Kendra Rubino	26, 02	Liz Carpinelli	17	Kathy Burns	4
Miranda Davenport	27, 98	Joan Sutton	19	ANNIVERSARIES	
Cody Baker	27, 04	Todd Jordan	19	Allan & Bonnie Dumas	13
Molly Shambo	29, 10	Lois Morehouse	20	Nita & William Rockwell	19
Wayne Waligurski	1	Esther Keator	22	Carla & Craig Paton	22
Mildred Mattison	4	Henry Dussol	24	Dan & Midge Stott	23
Barbara Bondar	4	Karen Waligurski	25	Gary & Lisa Longto	30
Trevor Davenport	4	Julie Jordan	27	Jim & Sheila Craven	May 5
Kathy Hauck	5	Emily Waligurski	26	Debbie & Glenn Decker	6
Thomas Mann	5	Pat Brennan	28		
Fred Kurtz	6	Cole Jordan	May 1, '96		
Jeff Rafferty	7	Mikayla Mellin	2, '96		
Jean Dussol	8	Jonathan Helsley	5, 05		



Dear Rev. Dr. Gram, Staff and
Congregation of Hurley Reformed
Church,

I am sincerely delighted to send this letter of great gratitude, on behalf of the Reservoir Food Pantry. When we received your remarkable donation of \$748.00 we were astonished at the generosity and genuine kindness of your wonderful church! That you had chosen the Reservoir Food Pantry to be the focus of your mission shows that your church is so very insightful and supportive to our Pantry's mission!

The funds you've provided are succinctly proactive to the health and well-being of individuals and families in

need of assistance in our shared towns and communities. This is truly both wonderful and necessary! Bless you!

You donation will provide a tremendous boost toward varied and ongoing issues for our Pantry. For starters, the wonderful amount you've sent our way will help keep our shelves stocked with nutritious food. Another major concern you've helped us with is the ongoing expense of car maintenance and gas. We'll make many weekly trips to the Albany Food Bank in the months to come, as well as regular deliveries to our homebound clients. Your church has gifted us with notable relief.

For this thoughtful action of directing

your hearts and minds toward the Reservoir Food Pantry, we commend, and certainly hold your staff and entire congregation in the highest esteem. Your compassionate participation in helping those who need assistance will always be remembered by us. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts, and if you ever find someone in need, please don't hesitate to contact us immediately.

Yours truly with heartfelt blessings to each and everyone of you.

Bonnie, Sean, Prasida, & Thurman

The Reservoir Food Pantry
PO Box 245, Boiceville NY 12412

HOLY WEEK BEGINS . . .

PALM SUNDAY, APRIL 13

Worship at 10:00 am



MAUNDY THURSDAY, APRIL 17

Communion and Tenebrae

Services at 7:30 pm

RESURRECTION IS A REALITY!

SUNDAY, APRIL 20

EASTER DAWN WORSHIP 6:30 am

Sunrise Service in the Parsonage backyard

Led by the Youth Group

Followed by a Continental Breakfast

(In the case of inclement weather the service will be moved to the sanctuary)

EASTER WORSHIP 10:00 am

As we meet Him at the open tomb

BRING YOUR FAMILY AND CELEBRATE
LIFE, HIS AND YOURS!



The Fresh Air Fund. This is a wonderful organization, started as a non-profit in 1877, providing free summer experiences for many, many New York City children. I have been involved with it for several years now, and had the same teenage girl at my house for 2 weeks 2 summers in a row. Unfortunately, she moved out of state, but I am hoping to have another one this summer. We had a lot of fun together, and I tried to show her a lot of the things that go on around here, like Stone House Day (she loved it), Zoom Flume, Woodstock, Albany Museum, Howe Caverns, mansions on the other side of the river, the small beaches on the river, the county pool in New Paltz, etc. She is a wonderful and very brave girl. This program gives you an opportunity to enrich the life of a young person who might not otherwise be able to leave the city behind in the summer time. Please give it a try, you might just like it!

Brochures are on the large table downstairs by the Office, or call Ellen Richards.

Project HOPE. There is another very worthwhile organization in Kingston called Project HOPE. It is in need of mentors for their associates, who might be women of any age, color and creed, who need a little extra help to get back on their own two feet, whether it is because of divorce, family illness, addictions, etc. I have been involved for a while now, and have made a new, very good friend and found the program both enriching and enjoyable. You can e-mail



jbromley.projecthope@gmail.com

or talk to Ellen Richards. If we all do a little bit, we can change the world for a better one.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
		7am - Center for 9:30am - Badminton 9:30am - Quilters @ 1pm - Finance 4pm - Hurley Purlers 4:30pm - PC 101 @ 7pm - Boy Scouts	9:30am - Tax 5:30pm - Dog 6pm - Cub Scout 6pm - Den 1 Bears @ 6:30pm - Girl Scout 7pm - Boy Scouts 7pm - Men's Group 7pm - Women's	9:30am - Badminton 9:30am - Tax 1:30pm - Hurley 3pm - Quilting @ 4:45pm - Dog 6:30pm - Personnel 7:30pm - 1st Capitol 7:30pm - Choir	3pm - Retreat Set	9am - Women's
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
10am - Worship @ 11am - Prayer Chain 1pm - Private @ Hall 7pm - Youth Group	5pm - Dog Training 6pm - HVEYH @ 7pm - Hudson Valley 7pm - Little League 7:30pm - Al-Anon @	8:30am - Hillside 9:30am - Badminton 9:30am - Quilters @ 4pm - Hurley Purlers 7pm - Boy Scouts 7pm - Lenten Study	7:30am - Lenten 9:30am - Tax 5:30pm - Dog 6pm - Cub Scout 6pm - Den 1 Bears @ 7pm - Local 1582 @	9:30am - Badminton 9:30am - Tax 3pm - Quilting @ 4:45pm - Dog 7pm - Eagle Scout @ 7:30pm - Choir	7pm - Motorcycle	10am - Genealogy @
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Palm Sunday Thomas Jefferson's 10am - Worship @	11am - VFW @ 5pm - Dog Training 7pm - Consistory @ 7:30pm - Al-Anon @	9:30am - Badminton 9:30am - Quilters @ 4pm - Hurley Purlers 7pm - Boy Scouts 7pm - Lenten Study	7:30am - Lenten 5:30pm - Dog 6pm - Cub Scout 6pm - Den 1 Bears @ 7pm - Hurley Lions	9:30am - Badminton 3pm - Quilting @ 4:45pm - Dog 7pm - NE 7:30pm - Choir		9am - Spring Clean
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Easter Sunday 6:30am - Sunrise @ 10am - Worship @	10am - Genealogy @ 5pm - Dog Training 7:30pm - Al-Anon @	9:30am - Badminton 9:30am - Quilters @ 4pm - Hurley Purlers 7pm - Boy Scouts	7:30am - Lenten 5:30pm - Dog 6pm - Cub Scout 6pm - Den 1 Bears @ 7pm - Men's Group	9:30am - Badminton 3pm - Quilting @ 4:45pm - Dog 6:30pm - Hurley 7:30pm - Choir		
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
10am - Worship @ 3pm - Order of the	10:30am - Genealogy 1pm - Baskets @ 5pm - Dog Training 7:30pm - Al-Anon @	9:30am - Badminton 9:30am - Quilters @ 4pm - Hurley Purlers 7pm - Boy Scouts	7:30am - Lenten 8:30am - HNS @ Hall 5:30pm - Dog 6pm - Cub Scout 6pm - Den 1 Bears @ 7pm - Men's Group			

April 2014

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

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THE SPIRE
APRIL 2014
HURLEY REFORMED CHURCH
Hurley New York 12443
The Rev. Dr. Robert L. Gram, LCSW
Pastor

