

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I write, having been among you for less than a month. Thank you for your hospitality, warmth, and kindnesses during my transition. And the food. I've never enjoyed cookies more! Your thoughtful words and gestures have altered time perception. It seems that I've been a part of this dynamic community longer than a month. It was great to share Advent and Christmas together. Having many of you to the beautifully refurbished parsonage after the 9:30 Christmas Eve service was a special Christmas gift you gave me.

Together we approach the church season of Epiphany. The word comes from the Greek of Jesus' day, and means 'manifestation'. On the heels of the incarnation in Bethlehem's manger, we are reminded that creation itself, in the form of a star, or planetary conjunction, gave witness to that signal manifestation of God's love. Astrologers, or magi followed the great sign in the heavens until it rested above that little village. We don't know how many wise men there were, although later tradition references three. The inference is understandable because three gifts were brought: Gold, frankincense, and myrrh. In the catacombs of Rome in the 4th Century, however, there are as many as twelve magi painted on the subterranean walls. And in a few later church writings we are given additional information that the magi lived to be centenarians.

It is interesting to speculate on the connections among stargazing, journeying, and longevity. My sense is that following God's lead always confers youthful vitality. We may not live to be 100, but we can live with the enthusiasm of children until we arrive in heaven. To live a direction-filled life, like the magi, is the good news the Gospel offers. To know that you are on God's journey toward greater understanding of his incarnate Son produces a hope which the world can but envy. And finding the sense of God's purpose in his starry canopy reminds us that the Christmas miracle is reflected in the infinite star dappling which at times boggles the mind. Our great God is manifest in tiny infants, and the vastness of the universe. Isn't our faith marvelous!

In Christ's Service,

Doc Bob

Buildings and Grounds

The Parsonage - Something old, something new.

Something old in the parsonage? I'm not referring to Bob. Hey, he's in the NEW category!

There was A LOT of work done at the parsonage to get it up to date for Bob. The old part is the floor in the kitchen. We found that there was nice pine flooring under the linoleum and that old pine floor has been sanded and refinished. It looks great! In addition to the kitchen floor, a new washer, dryer, and oven have been installed, all the woodwork in the house downstairs has been painted, and a new tile floor was put into the bathroom downstairs.

Dennis Horvers was the foreman on this job and many thanks go to him and many others that worked on the parsonage project.

There is a committee forming to look into other areas of the parsonage that need attention in the coming year.

Christmas Tree: The Christmas tree in front of the church was donated by our friends at Herzog's. Thanks very much for a beautiful tree!

Snow removal: It's snow removal time around the church. The church's snow blower is pretty old. It could use a tune-up so if you know anything about snow removal contraptions let me know or come on by and look it over.

Joe Ulrich

Boy Scout Sunday

Attention all Cub & Boy Scouts. Boy Scout Sunday is coming up on 2/8/09. Please see Sandy Emrich to sign up to be a part of this great scouting day.

**The Pregnancy Support Center of
Ulster County**

would like to thank you for your generous
support of the Fall Baby Bottle Campaign.

Hurley Reformed Church

has contributed \$768.50 toward the health and
well being of our Center and all of our clients.

We cannot thank you enough.

Many blessings to you all.

Sharon La Rose

Executive Director

Pregnancy Support Center of Ulster County

Spaghetti Dinner

The Women's Guild will be holding a spaghetti dinner on
February 14th. Your chef for the evening will be Russ Glass.

Please mark your calendar for a great
dinner. This dinner is to off set the cost of
the new commercial refrigerator. Plan to
come and leave full with a full stomach.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Can you smell it??? **It's in the air....that wonderful** **Brook's BBQ smell**

That's right...the Youth Group is
sponsoring a Brook's BBQ here at the
church.

March 3rd 2009 from 4:00pm to 7:00 pm.
Mark your calendar now and watch for more details.



Empty Bottles/Can Return

Holidays are over & those bottle returns are stacking up & now
you have to go to the store & return them....yet...bring them to
church and we will return them for you. This is a fund raiser for
our American Cancer Society Relay for Life team. Let us do the
work for you and help someone out in the process. Thanks for
your support.

Consistory Corner

- The Consistory would like to thank everyone involved with the
renovations of the parsonage. The first phase was completed in
record time and Rev. Gram was ready for his holiday open
house. All renovations look beautiful and we are very happy that
Rev. Gram loves the parsonage and is making it feel like home
very quickly. Additional renovations are planned and will
commence after New Year's.
- The Consistory wishes everyone health, happiness, peace and
inspiration for the coming year.

Cookie Walk Results

You did it again! You baked and bought about 200 lbs. of
cookies on December 14th! The proceeds of this sale has
purchased new furniture for Dr. Gram's church office.

Thank you to all who made this so successful: The Youth
Group who set up tables and put together the boxes, the
bakers, buyers, helpers on sale day, the volunteers who put
away tables and cleaned up the kitchen.

Your support for this Women's Guild fundraiser is wonderful and
truly appreciated.

Happy New Year!

Joyce Pinckney and Christa Conlin, Co-Chairs

Youth Group

Thank you to everyone that brought in hats/gloves/mitten/scarves for the mitten tree. The items were given to Queens Galley. They were so appreciative of them.

In December we offered babysitting as a fund raiser for the American Cancer Society. We raised \$55 from this event. Thanks to all who came.

We adopted a family this holiday season - mom and 5 kids. We gave boots, hats, gloves, pj's, socks, underwear, pants, shirts and, of course, toys. We were lucky to be able to assist this family during the holiday season. Thanks to all of the families that helped us spread some cheer.

We went caroling. It was a beautiful night. We went to a dozen or so homes and spread great holiday cheer. We ended at Rev and Mrs. Stickley's home for hot chocolate. It was a great ending.

We have purchased 2 grills to go on top of the stove in the kitchen. This will enable us to hold Pancake Breakfasts at the church in the near future. Be on the look out for them.

Souper Bowl chili sale is coming up on 2/1/09. So, don't make that chili for your party. Let us make it for you.

We will have another Penny Social on June 5, 2009. Information to come.

Our upcoming events:

1/??/09	Sleigh riding—look for more information on this
1/11/09	Meeting
1/31 - 2/1	Make and sell chili for Souper Bowl Sunday
2/8/09	Meeting
2/21-22/09	CT Aquarium trip
3/3/09	Brooks BBQ
3/8/09	Meeting

Any child who is in grade 5 & above can be in the Youth Group. If you would like to join us please come to a meeting & get involved. We have been blessed in 2008 with Youth Group members bringing friends to meeting/activities & now 3 kids have joined our Youth Group. There are a few more that will be joining us in 2009. So, new kids are joining us all of the time....how about you?

Lisa Longto, Sandy & Katie Emrich, Youth Group Leaders

**The Reverend Classis of Mid Hudson
Request Your Presence at the Installation of
The Rev. Dr. Robert L. Gram, LCSW
As the 29th Pastor of Word and Sacrament
Of the Hurley Reformed Church
Sunday, January 25, 2009
At 4:00 pm**

**The Classis will meet in
Special Session at 3:30 pm**

SPRIRE ARTICLE DEADLINES are the 20th of each Month. Anything received after that date will have to be placed in following edition. We appreciate your assistance in this matter.

If you no longer wish to receive the Spire please give us a call or drop us a note.

Women's Guild

Thank you to everyone that had a hand in anyway for our annual Cookie Walk. It was a great success. We raised almost \$1,000. This money will be used for Pastor Gram's desk. Hope everyone enjoyed the cookies.

Last month the Executive Committee of the Guild met to discuss our annual benevolence giving. Below is a list of the organizations we were able to donate to this year:

\$100 Warwick
\$100 Queens Galley
\$100 Hospitality House
\$100 People's Place
\$100 Hospice
\$200 Salvation Army
\$200 Family of Woodstock - Domestic Violence
\$200 Hurley Rescue Squad
\$1,100 Total donated



We purchased a commercial refrigerator for the kitchen. Please check it out. This will help us all with our dinners. A special thank you to the volunteers who moved it in from the delivery truck.

Below is our calendar of activities:

1/18/09	Annual Birthday Party
2/14/09	Sweetheart Spaghetti Dinner-fund raiser for a commercial refrigerator for the kitchen
2/15/09	Meeting
3/15/09	Meeting & butterfly exchange
4/5/09	Easter egg hunt for the kids
4/19/09	Meeting
5/17/09	Pot Luck Luncheon

Thanks for helping us make 2008 a success in so many areas. Just think of what 2009 will be!! The possibilities are yet to be written.

Sandy Emrich-President