

FRONTSTREETER: JANUARY 2021



The Reformed Church of Canajoharie

15-19 Front Street, Canajoharie, NY 13317

Phone: (518) 673-2816

Email: office@canjoreformed.org Website: www.canajoreformed.org

Pastor's Page

If you read Isaiah, chapter one, you will find a startling declaration. God wants his people to stop coming to worship at his temple. Stop coming to church, stop offering sacrifices, stop all your religious show. In saying this, he's not ending worship for all time. His desire is that his people begin living as his people in their daily lives. Don't come to worship with blood on your hands, and planning to cheat your neighbor, and plotting how to follow the letter of the law but not the spirit. In the last nine months I have often wondered if God is using this difficult time to underline this point for the American church.

A further issue for us is when we are able to fully reopen and take the separation cords out of the benches in the sanctuary, why should we come back to church? Does God need our worship? Does he cease to be God if he is not worshipped? No. Since the people of Judah did not heed the words of Isaiah, God had the temple destroyed and took them out of the country for seventy years. He told them to worship the no-gods they had been serving so they could learn the difference between him and idols.

Do we need to be present in church to worship God? Not according to people for many decades who have told you that they worship God in the mountains or on the golf course. For the young, worshipping by watching their computer screen is no big hurdle, especially when you can wear your jammies and drink coffee while you are doing it, or even switch to you tube if the sermon gets dull, and be back for prayer time.

So, why join together for worship? I invite you to think this over and come to your own conclusion. But for me, I think the answer is found in the last word of the question. "Together". We worship together because we find strength and unity in gathering for worship. That is the way it is supposed to be. So the question may better be asked as "How can joining together for worship help us to glorify God?" and "How can we build a worship environment that calls people to worship in joy?" It's a great question to ask, and how we answer the questions will set the direction for the church for a generation to come. Let's search and find the answers together. And start with prayer.

Pastor Matt

Luke 2:7. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Matthew 2:13. ... an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt ...

Luke 2:10. And the angel said to them [the shepherds], "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger."

សួស្តីណូអែល - Merry Christmas

Dear Friends and Family,

THESE DAYS we are somewhat at a loss about where to begin this Christmas letter; these past months have been unsettling for us and we can only imagine what you all have faced. This brings us to the passages above where we read of the birth of Jesus amid *unsettling times*; Mary and Joseph faced isolation from home and family, homeless, threats on the life of their newborn child, and the need to seek help from strangers.

An Advent devotion that we have been reading together summarized their situation this way: "Mary's main preparation [for the coming of Jesus] was adjusting to the *unexpected and unwished-for*." And yet it is in the middle of this *confusing, unsettling* environment that the announcement is made that there is *good news of great joy*, a *Savior has been born* (and, by the way, He was not born in a palace but rather in a cattle stall).

And so, our prayer for your family and ours is that this Christmas, as we remember the great faithfulness of God in the past, we can look forward to the future with courage putting our trust in the One for Whom *nothing is impossible* (Luke 1:37), and find tangible and appropriate ways share this *good news of great joy of a Savior* with others who are also facing *the unexpected and unwished-for*.

THANK YOU ALL for making it possible for us to rejoin with God in what He is doing here in Cambodia. For the most part, Cambodia appears to have been spared the worst of this pandemic and the work of the church here continues, though often in unexpected ways. Soon we will share with you the latest news from the ministries of the Garden of Life and the Phnom Penh Bible School. Please continue to pray that more people here will hear and experience the *good news of great joy* and respond in faith to God's gift to all people of the Savior, who is Christ the Lord. Joy to the world, the Lord has come!

Happy Merry Christmas!

-The Wilsons





Thank You!!

We thank you for all that you do to touch the lives of people in our community. This year has been a challenge, to say the least.

Thank you for being there!

Your kindness, perseverance and dedication are greatly appreciated and do not go unnoticed.

From all of us at the Regional Food Bank of NENY and the Food Bank of the Hudson Valley, we wish you and your loved ones Happy Holidays and a healthy, happy New Year.

November Financial Report

The following is the general financial update, as approved by Consistory.

Regular Offering Income:

Budgeted: \$65,000.00 Jan. – Nov. 2020: \$ 61,190.41

Benevolence & Special Offering Income:

Budgeted: \$ 6,775.00 Jan. – Nov. 2020:\$1,994.01

Total Operating Receipts:

Budgeted: \$205,778.00 Jan. – Nov. 2020:\$162,081.88

Total Expenses:

Budgeted: \$205,778.00 Jan. – Nov. 2020:\$174,590.01



Birthdays & Anniversaries

- 6 June Lunde
- 13 Trinety Lanier
- 19 Pastor Matt Draffen
- 21 Cornell Lanier
- 24 Carol Cechnicki
- 25 Maria Mallett
- 27 Daisyann Fredricks
- *Paul Roberts (Church St. Day Hab)
- 28 Dolores Talmadge
- Frank Snyder
- 31 Evelyn Van Kersen

* Please send all ARC cards to:
Liberty Day Hab
66 Church St.,
Canajoharie, NY 13317

Operation Christmas Child

Dear OCC Friends,

I am sending this message to share some wonderful numbers with you. These numbers illustrate how God is able to use us even in a challenging year such as this one has been. At the end of national collection week, **1,393** shoeboxes had been delivered to the drop-off site at Middleburgh Reformed Church. Those shoeboxes were transported to a central drop-off at Grace Fellowship Church in Latham/Watervliet where they were loaded onto a tractor trailer with shoeboxes from Schenectady,



Albany, Rensselaer, Columbia, and Greene Counties. The total number of shoeboxes from our six-county area was **9,189**. An additional **466** shoeboxes from our area were built online making a grand total from the NY Greater Capital district Area of **9,655**. *"To God be the glory, great things He has done!"*

May the days ahead be a celebration of God's great blessings, especially the gift of His Son.

Mary Lou Ryan;
OCC Regional Leader

December 2020

Dear Ones,

*"Old is good in some things; old songs, old movies, and best of all old friends!
Stay well, old Friends*

*Love & Prayers,
Janet Brill*



For updates to the Birthday or Anniversary listings, contact the church office at:
(518) 673-2816 or send us an email at: office@canjoreformed.org .