

FRONTSTREETER: MARCH 2021

The Reformed Church of Canajoharie

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PASTOR'S PAGE

As 2021 approaches its fifteenth month, we can see some light at the end of the tunnel. As we get ready for reopening, probably sometime this fall, we need to come to grips with the fact that the virus and our response to it has changed the church. We are not as focused on being together. We have gotten pretty used to the way things are. The other day I was watching TV and saw a character with no mask on and I thought, "Where's the mask?"

As we have adjusted to the circumstances, some things have taken a step back, like worship, and Christian Education, and some things have moved to the fore, like the Bean and our relief ministries. As we start imagining getting back together, it's a good time for us to take stock and ask God where we are headed. One way is to engage in a time of prayer and discernment for the future. It is time to put together a team to lead us in this discernment. So we will. We want to hear from all corners of the church, so if you are interested in helping with this, please contact me or a consistory member. The requirement is that you have an open mind to what God is saying to us in this time. Pre-planned agendas need to be put aside as we seek the leading of the Spirit of God.

BEREAN BEAN



WE ARE OPEN - HOURS: Monday – Friday 8:30 AM - NOON

Come Join us! Everyday there is great coffee and all kinds of wonderful teas, also water, kids juices, etc. There is awesome homemade treats too. Here, you never get a bill. It is on a donation base only. If you don't have it, no worries. That is what we are here for. To help out the community. Every day is something different. You can join the girls on Tuesday morning for Knit & Stitch and there are other things going on during the week. This is a volunteer bases. We accept donations and you can inbox us anytime. Mostly canned good or nice items to giveaway on our Tuesday giveaway of bread and goodies. Come in with your friends, sit a spell, have a bite to eat. Sometimes there are even homemade sandwiches, you never know what you are going to find. There is also a corner of free books to take. Always something new to see. We are here for our community. Remember, you will never get a bill... donations are accepted only if you have it. That's the way it works. Helping each other every day.



Highlights from “Year in Review”

MARK & DEB WILSON;
MISSIONARIES SERVING IN CAMBODIA



Dear Friends & Family,

As well as serving on the board of TEEAC (And writing materials for them), I have the privilege of being a full-time member of the faculty at the Phnom Penh Bible School. Responding to God’s call on my life I have committed to using my knowledge, gifts, experiences, and skills to love, encourage, and equip my students at PPBS to increasingly discover, understand, and live into God’s very good intentions for themselves, their families, the church, and their community. I also encourage and pray that they in turn will intentionally and prayerfully lead others to do the same! And so, my role here at PPBS is that of teacher, mentor, coach, and encourager. During 2020, I taught courses in Spiritual Formation, Global Mission, Holistic ministry, and Biblical Leadership. I also served as a mentor to a small group and was on the Chapel Committee.

Blessings of 2020

While 2020 was a challenging year, it was also an exciting one; I heard examples of students and their churches following Jesus into a lost and broken world before and even during the pandemic. In February, our small group went out for our annual Field Ministry Exposure Trip. It was a great time to observe PPBS students as they spend a week in the countryside serving alongside pastors and churches around the country. This year I was again encouraged by their dedication to serving the Lord and the local church, spending hours working together, planning, and responding to the needs of the place to which God sent us. They led worship, visited local families to pray, shared their testimonies, taught Sunday school, etc. At the end of the week, the leaders of the local church expressed thanks to the group for their humble service, noting how it was an encouragement to both their church and their village (often churches mention how helpful it is to have Christians come and share their testimonies with their neighbors. It helps them see that there are Christians who come from every part of the country).

Similar to other countries around the world, the government here stopped public gatherings of all types, including schools and churches. And while it was a difficult decision for many churches, and one that they did not all agree with, they followed the government’s decision, knowing that not doing so would reflect poorly not only them locally, but for all Christians in the country. Of course, that begged the question as to how to “do” and “be” church then you are not allowed to meet formally. Both Deb and I were very impressed and excited about the answers to those questions:

As mentioned in one of our past newsletters, members of our local Cambodian church quickly rallied together using social media to produce an online service of worship. In less than one week after the closure, they found a way to “do” church online!

As you can imagine and possibly have experienced for yourselves, working/learning remotely can be a challenge. This was especially true for us as we were living in the Oregon countryside without stable internet, 15 time zones from Cambodia! As we were living in a trailer behind the barn on my aunt’s property, it was a challenge for Deb and me to work at the same time. We ended up moving my office to a room that we cleaned up in the barn. Likewise, the students from half of my classes were living in

the Cambodian countryside while I was able to Zoom into the classroom for the other half. Though it was a challenge for all of us, I am thankful for God's provision and protection so that students did continue to learn and grow in their understanding and practice following the Lord. Even though some students chose not to study online, all but one of our students returned for the new academic year that began in November.

We continue to pray for wisdom for churches and various ministries such as the Garden of Life and the Phnom Penh Bible School as they navigate the ever changing landscape of ministry during a pandemic. The Khmer Times reported this morning that "*Cambodians woke up this morning literally shell-shocked when news emerged from the Ministry of Health of 58 new cases detected last night*" bringing the total of the outbreak to around 200. All of these cases reportedly stem from several foreigners who left the mandatory 14 day quarantine at the same time (through bribes) and were discovered to be COVID positive. **For now, Garden of Life has postponed training and PPBS has separated students on campus from those who come in from outside**

Our thanks again for joining with us in this journey through your prayers, words of encouragement and so many other forms of support!

In Christ Alone,
-Mark & Deb



**FELIPE & JANELLE SILVA;
MISSIONARIES SERVING ROMANIA**

EDUCATION PROGRAM



With all that has been happening with COVID we were surprised that God used this pandemic to start our education program! A dear friend of ours, Damaris Balan, was as excited as we were about starting a program for the Fara Limte kids, now that we had the church space for classrooms, and we hired her on the spot, trusting God would provide the funds to pay her. Here is some of what she wrote about the program so far:

For me, the Education Program is a way to serve God, which I really wanted. At the same time, it shows a challenge in my life because I work with children who come from disadvantaged backgrounds from an educational and socio-economic point of view. God really teaches me what love and long-suffering really mean. But the children in the program mean a lot for me. I can say that they have a significant impact on my life as I learn a lot from them.

I see an enormous potential in these children and my biggest wish for them is that after years and years, they become people with vision and impact in society.

Whenever I come to work in the Dallas District of Vulcan, at the Education Program, I feel like I'm entering another world and I remember what John 1:5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

Thank you for your continued prayers and support! God's richest blessings to you all! Please keep Damaris and the educational program in your prayers. If you would like to give financially to the Education Program you can do so at the RCA website.

With Love,
Felipe, Janelle, Luca, Sofia and Mila Silva

MARCH

MISSION OF THE MONTH



FULMONT Community Action Agency, Inc.

“Helping People. Changing Lives.”
Serving Fulton and Montgomery Counties since 1965

Fulmont has 5 neighborhood outreach centers: Amsterdam, Gloversville, Northville, Fonda and Fort Plain. The centers offer emergency services (food pantry, baked goods, household items, personal care items, HEAP & FEMA funds), employment supports (job search and resume writing), and other services (tax preparation, head start, school supplies, extra-curricular, holiday baskets, toys and scholarships).

Last year, ALL centers served 1,906 families and 5,041 people. Fort Plain served the most families and people of any of the centers.

Poverty is, unfortunately, widespread in our communities- we know that from charitable non-profits, like Fulmont, Salvation Army, OFA, local schools and our own Comfort Zone.

Typically, poverty is thought of in terms of **financial resources** only. However, the reality is that financial resources, while important, is not the whole picture.

Emotional resources provide the stamina to withstand difficult and uncomfortable emotional situations and feelings.

Mental resources are simply being able to process information and use it in daily living.

Spiritual resources are the belief that help can be obtained from a higher power.

Physical resources are having a body that works, that is capable and mobile.

A support system is a resource.

Relationships / role models are resources. All individuals have role models. The question is the extent to which the role model is nurturing or appropriate.

Knowledge of hidden rules is crucial to whatever class in which the individual wishes to live. Hidden rules exist in poverty, in middle class, and in wealth, as well as in ethnic groups and other units of people.

Ministering to our friends in poverty is what Fulmont does, with the expectation that *Helping People can Change Lives*. So, with this Mission of the Month collection, which the Consistory is matching, we can promote self-sufficiency to achieve our clients' own successes.

A Framework for Understanding Poverty, Ruby K. Payne Ph.D., 1996, 1998,2001,2003



MISSION STATEMENT

To improve and expand human services and programs to promote self-sufficiency and improve the quality of life of the socially and economically disadvantaged, as well as provide services to promote economic efficiency and stability in Fulton, Montgomery and Surrounding Counties.

We employ a staff of 115 professionals who provide quality services to the residents of Fulton, Montgomery and surrounding Counties.

We promote self-sufficiency in our programming, helping our customers to achieve their own success by focusing on the positive aspects of their lives.

FULMONT COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY

MAKES A DIFFERENCE IN FULTON, MONTGOMERY AND SURROUNDING COUNTIES

➤ Early Childhood Services

FULMONT Community Action Agency, Inc. Early Childhood Services Program is a comprehensive preschool program that provides children ages 3-5 and their families a wide range of services. All families who are enrolled in our program receive services in the areas of education, health, nutrition, disabilities and family services. We believe that the parent is the primary educator of their child and therefore, parent involvement is of the utmost importance. In combination with parent input and our school readiness goals The Early Childhood Services Program is dedicated to preparing its students for a lifetime of academic success.

➤ Community Services Department

Food pantry, clothing, baked goods, information and referrals to Fulmont programs and other services in the community. Emergency food and shelter program, HEAP application assistance (Montgomery County only), Wheels for Work (providing vehicles or vehicle maintenance for eligible individuals, allowing them to maintain or obtain employment), FEMA aid, Family Development, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program(VITA), free income tax preparation, employment support and processing for income eligible families.

➤ FULMONT Neighborhood Outreach Centers are in Amsterdam, Fonda, Gloversville, Fort Plain and Northville.

➤ Energy Services Department

Provides Energy Services to HEAP eligible households in both Fulton and Montgomery counties. These services are open to both homeowners and renters. Information or applications can be obtained at any of the FULMONT outreach centers or at our main office in Fonda.

➤ Women, Infants & Children (WIC)

WIC is the supplemental food program for pregnant, breast-feeding and post-partum Women, Infants & Children up to the age of five (5). WIC provides nutrition education and nutritious foods to income eligible families.

PRAYER NEEDS



Prayers for those in need of Comfort and Healing: James Mang Family – as they mourn the passing of James' mother Irene Mang; Beth & Matthew Snyder – as they continue to mourn the loss of John; Deb Limoncelli – recovering from hip replacement surgery; Barbara Bowden – health concerns; Clara & Bob Mount – health concerns; Charles & Nancy Jones – health concerns; John & Janet Rocas – health concerns; Emory Luck – health concerns; Jane Hawkins – health concerns; Karen Konik (KK) – health issues; Jessica Eiss – health issues; Pat Sowizdral – upcoming foot surgery; Cathy Smith – health concerns; Cynthia Clements – health concerns; Melvin Smith – health issues.

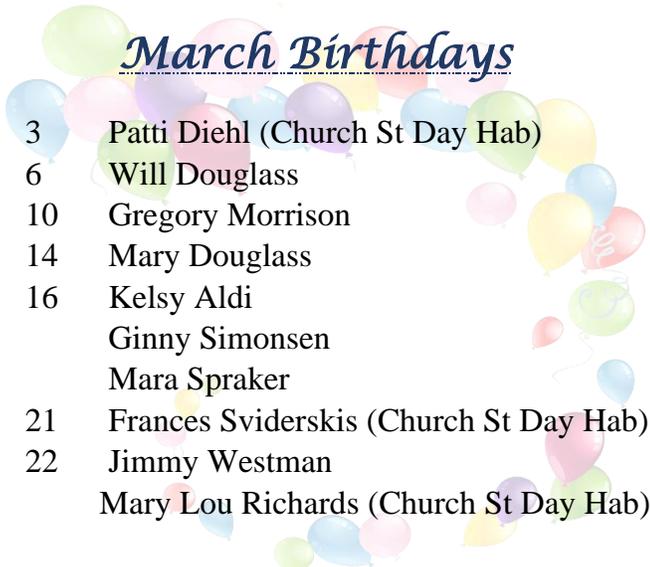
Prayers for those Homebound or in Healthcare Facilities: Grace Fenno – Palatine Nursing Home; 154 Lafayette St., Palatine, NY 13428; Paul Flint – St. Johnsville Nursing Home, 7 Timmerman Ave., St. Johnsville, NY 13452; Barbara Draffen (Pastor's Mom) Glendale Home, 59 Hetcheltown Rd., Schenectady, NY 12302; Alice McEwan (Carol Cechnicki's Mother) – St. Johnsville Nursing Home, 7 Timmerman Ave., St. Johnsville, NY 13452.

Prayers for our Missionaries: Felipe & Janelle Silva – serving in Romania; Mark, Deb & Zach Wilson – serving in Cambodia.

Prayers for those who are incarcerated: Scott Cole – DIN# 15B2351, Great Meadow Correctional Facility Box 51, Comstock, NY 12821-0051.

Prayers for: Dan Cauwenberghs – (*Bobbi Cauwenberghs son*) working in Kosovo.

March Birthdays

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- 3 Patti Diehl (Church St Day Hab)
 - 6 Will Douglass
 - 10 Gregory Morrison
 - 14 Mary Douglass
 - 16 Kelsy Aldi
Ginny Simonsen
Mara Spraker
 - 21 Frances Sviderskis (Church St Day Hab)
 - 22 Jimmy Westman
Mary Lou Richards (Church St Day Hab)



Dear Church Friends & Consistory,

I want to thank you so much for my card and the inspiration and also for keeping me in your prayers. I love praying for others, but sometimes I also need prayers for God's help.

God is my source of inspiration. If it wasn't for him we would be nothing and still lost wandering in the wilderness today! He is my strength every day & keeps me going every day! The Lord is my rock and my foundation I stand on also every day.

God Bless you all
&

May the Peace of Christ be with you always!
Deacon Jessica