



# The Newsletter

## Summer of Activities, New Ministries this Fall

### Summer 2012- a busy time for our Church Family

While our sanctuary is still under construction, we have continued to participate in events in our fellowship hall and throughout the community. We are reminded again that “ a church is not a building, a church is not a steeple, it is the

people” of God gathering together to praise the Lord. While we look forward to the day we can worship in our beautiful sanctuary, we must continue to do the work of our Lord in the places we find ourselves.

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### The Church Cookbook

Fundraising never tasted so good. Celebrate a major holiday or a several minor bank holidays by giving the gift of the cookbook.

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### Stewardship Committee

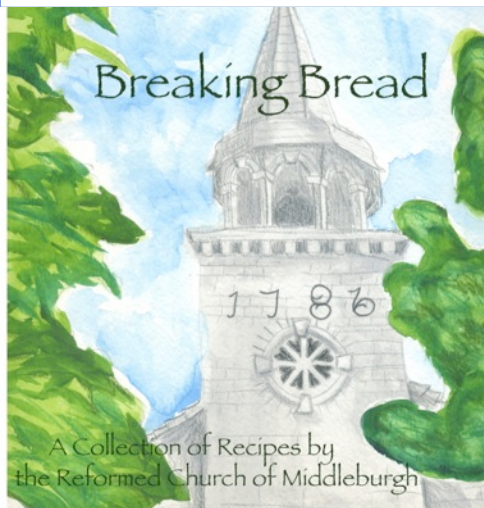
A new committee is forming- see if it's something that excites you.

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### Sunday School, Youth Group, & Book Group

And more! Fall activities will be in full swing soon.

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## Cookbook

*Breaking Bread, A Collection of Recipes by the Reformed Church of Middleburgh* is now for sale. Profits from the sale will benefit the church's recovery and rebuilding project. The cookbook contains some of our tried and true favorite recipes as well as many new ones. The beautiful cover was designed by our very own artist in residence, Lara Kelley.

Cookbooks are available at Barber's, the Carrot Barn, and Middleburgh Chiropractic. You may also see Karen Miller after Sunday services to purchase one. The price is \$20. If you live out of the area, a cookbook can be mailed to you for an additional \$5.15. Please send your request and a check in the amount of \$25.15 per book to:

Church Cookbook  
PO Box 112  
Middleburgh, NY 12122

## Wonderful Progress in the Sanctuary

If you haven't looked in the sanctuary in awhile please do. We are blessed to have a sturdy foundation, an unfinished floor, electric going in, insulation, exposed brick and stone work on the back wall being repointed, window sills/trim in progress, lights under the balcony, stairs to the balcony are installed.

Drywall is almost ready to start. Our balcony has been reinforced and is now stable. We still need our floor finished, radiators to go in for heat, painting on the walls and trim.

We still have items to be discussed: what to do about the pulpit, finishing of the alcove, communion table, doors to the sanctuary, sound system, rug for the center aisle, and lastly pews.

Yes, all these items are expensive--but--when the next flood comes we pray what we have done will make it a lot easier to clean. Again please visit the sanctuary-- each step forward is one day closer to when we can return to worship our Lord there.

In grateful praise

- Joan Youmans,  
Sanctuary Committee Chair

[Pictures and a panoramic view of the Sanctuary can be seen the website:](http://www.middleburghreformed.org)

[www.middleburghreformed.org](http://www.middleburghreformed.org)

## Meals for Volunteers

We have had the privilege of providing meals for several volunteer groups who have served in our area over the past year. These wonderful people exemplify what it means to love one's neighbor. All of the groups have commented on the warm hospitality they were afforded in Middleburgh. Thank you to everyone involved in planning, preparing, and serving meals to these dedicated servants of our Lord.



# Stewardship Committee

*A new committee exploring what it means to use our gifts*

Starting next month, through prayer and reflection, Committee members will:

- review what the Bible has to say about stewardship;
- consider the ways in which our Church is currently practicing stewardship, including in the community and beyond;
- using our Church's mission statement as a frame of reference, explore possibilities for enhancing stewardship awareness and/or implementing new initiatives, taking into consideration the time, talents, and resources of the members of our Church family.

We will begin by:

- Noting honestly the awkwardness of the topic - rethinking congregational stewardship practices can be challenging, unsettling, even threatening. Gratefully, some thoughtful people who care passionately about this topic have done a lot of good work in the last few years. We will be delving into this material to try and discern if/how it may or may not be suitable for further consideration.
- Acknowledging that it is often easier to talk about biblical expectations than to fulfill them.

Some of the many questions and issues we will be looking at are:

Why does God give some of his children more than they need and others less than they need?

What do I own, and what owns me?

“What shall I return to the Lord for all his bounty to me?” (Psalm 116:12)

How can we teach good stewardship to our children?

What does it mean to belong to God, to be stewards, not owners?

Can we learn to surrender control (or the illusion of control), and trust in the generous God who has given us everything we have and all that we are?

The current economy is difficult. Is our Church only as strong as the economy?

What examples of good stewardship communication in our Church come to mind?

Poor communication?

What does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus Christ in an affluent, consumer-oriented society?

Finally, we invite you to join us if you feel called to this adventure in mutual learning. Meeting information will be announced in the weekly Bulletin.

“Let everyone regard themselves as the steward of God in all things they possess.”

- John Calvin

- Stan Roesler, Stewardship Committee Chair



*Continued from page 1*

The ecumenical **Historic Church Series** wrapped up on June 26. Those who participated enjoyed it so much, that they are already hoping to have another series next spring with a focus on music in our churches.

On July 15, our church hosted a **community picnic** in our fellowship hall. Those who attended enjoyed a delightful dinner and the opportunity to test their skills at various board games. The evening concluded with vespers.

Several children from our congregation participated in the **Schoharie Valley Community Day Camp** hosted in Schoharie thanks to the time and talents of leaders from Camp Fowler and several churches in the valley. We also had several of our youth attend **Camp Fowler** for wonderful week away from home.

Terry Pilon, area coordinator for **Operation Christmas Child**, came to our fellowship hall on July 23 to share stories of her shoe box distribution trip to Uganda.

It was our turn to host the **ice cream social** at the Friday night band concert on July 27. Proceeds from the sale of cake and ice cream went into our flood recovery fund.

Our Church had a booth at the **Middleburgh Arts and Crafts festival** and again at the **Middleburgh 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration**. We displayed pictures of the flood and recovery efforts at our church and sold copies of our new cookbook.

On August 5, our congregation joined with all the churches in Middleburgh as well as many visitors to our village for an **Ecumenical Service of Worship** on the front lawn of the school. A community picnic followed with each church providing beverages and dessert for those in attendance.

Our **Trash and Treasure sale** on August 18 was a huge success. Several members helped with set up on Friday and the sale and clean up on Saturday. Again, all proceeds will go to our flood recovery fund.

As Fall approaches, we

### Choir to Begin, Again

Our Church Choir will resume practices and participation in church services on September 16<sup>th</sup>. All persons past Sunday school age are welcome and encouraged to attend. The choir can not exist without your help.

Come join, September 16 at 9:45 in the Fellowship Hall.

look forward to the start of Sunday School and a return of our church choir. Our book discussion group will start on Sept. 10 and youth group on Sept. 16. As we resume some of our normal activities, we are aware of the fact that we are still far from normal in our building operations. We ask for your prayers and participation as we continue on the road to recovery. God Bless you all.

*- Leslie Hooper, Spiritual Life*

## Youth Report



### Sunday School Resumes!

The first day for Sunday school classes will be September 9th. Class will begin at 9:45AM.

Children from Pre-Kindergarten through 5th grade will meet together at the beginning of each session for singing, games and a large-group lesson. The children will split up into 3 smaller groups for prayer time and activities to reinforce each weekly lesson.

When we begin classes we'll be learning about "The Art of Prayer". Our first memory verse comes from 1 Thessalonians 5:17, "Never stop praying."

Later on in the fall we'll spend time learning about ways we can serve God (just in time for Operation Christmas Child) and then we'll be ready to learn about the birth and life of our Savior, Jesus Christ



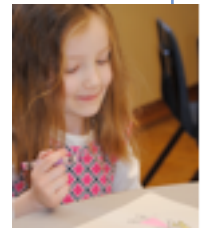
### Who can you invite?

Reach out to your friends and family

and invite them to come and spend a Sunday morning with us.

Questions or concerns?  
Email is preferred....

Kim Smith (827-6630)  
[dr.kim.smith@gmail.com](mailto:dr.kim.smith@gmail.com)  
Sarah Bramer (852-4099)  
[sarahlynn34@hotmail.com](mailto:sarahlynn34@hotmail.com)



# YOUTH GROUP

For Students in Middle & High School

Sundays from 7-8:30PM

A chance to hangout, talk & have fun.

Beginning September 16th

## Recovery Update

The Reformed Church of Middleburgh has been part of the history of our community for over 275 years. The Church's mission has been to share the gospel of Jesus Christ through worship and service to the community. The flooding caused by Hurricane Irene on August 28, 2011 did major damage to all areas of our church property.

The fellowship hall of the Middleburgh Reformed Church is utilized regularly by many community groups including Alcoholics Anonymous, American Legion, Association for Retarded Citizens, Boy Scouts of America, and the Timothy Murphy Players. Other groups have used the facilities on occasion for both civic and social functions. An ecumenical food pantry is permanently housed in the back portion of the fellowship hall and serves those in need on a regular basis.

The Reformed Church of Middleburgh is undertaking fund raising activities and seeking

contributions to fund the recovery and rebuilding of our Church property. So far money from insurance, investments and contributions has totaled \$387,933.00. Of this amount, \$347,831.00 has already been spent on the fellowship hall and sanctuary. The estimated cost of the full recovery is over \$500,000.00.

As work continues in the sanctuary, decisions have had to be made regarding financial resources and the amount of work that can be done with the money available. Some of the items which were lost in the flood have been replaced, but other items have been put on hold until it can be determined what is needed now and what can wait. The rebuilding effort is dependent on the hard work and generosity of those who wish to see the Reformed Church of Middleburgh remain a vital part of this community.

- Karen Miller, Recovery Finance Committee

## Operation Christmas Child

Middleburgh Reformed Church is going to help make something BIG happen this fall. Samaritan's Purse is expected to receive the one hundred millionth shoe box gift during the 2012 collection season! Since 1993, these simple gifts have been used to offer hope to children in need all over the world. Here is how you can assist OCC at the local level:

- Pray.
- Purchase gifts.
- Sponsor boxes for \$7 each to cover costs of shipping and discipleship materials.
- Volunteer to serve at the relay center during national collection week, November 12-19.
- Provide refreshments for the relay center.

Look for OCC announcements in church bulletins and email messages for details.



## Food Pantry Continues to Work in the Community

Thanks to the space provided in our Fellowship Hall, volunteer workers from all the local churches, and donations from the community the Middleburgh Ecumenical Food Pantry continues to help those in need. Your donations of food continue to be delivered at the door of the pantry. The volunteers put it on the shelves so it is ready to hand out to those who come needing food supplies.

July brought 16 households requesting food for a total of 53 people. The first half of August saw a total of 17 households with a total of 56 people.

Thank you to everyone who has helped the food pantry. We are helping those who are in need.



### Come to our Veggie Tales Party

on October 13th

and preview their new movie: *The League of Incredible Vegetables!*

This event is aimed at elementary age children and the young at heart. There will be games, crafts and snacks all centered around themes from the movie which explores the question; Where does a hero go for help? Time TBA. We hope to see you there!

## Pastor's Pen

One of the highlights for me this summer was the 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of Middleburgh. The weekend was a culmination of a huge amount planning. This, along with the flood, has encouraged people to share their stories. The church buildings tell part of our history as a church. It's a script of God's action, and we get to tell story of his faithfulness to us over the last year and our generation.

No one knows when we'll be back in the sanctuary for worship, but we are in the finishing stages. Some of us might be getting used to being in the hall for worship, even if the sanctuary is ideal. In my own experience, it takes 6 months to get comfortable and after 12 months it is familiar. I am guessing that moving back to the sanctuary will be a similar experience. It will take some adjustment and not just because things like the paint color or new floor have changed. We have changed.

As a community of Christ, the church buildings can play an important role in our ministry here. When Jesus called his disciples salt, he was telling them they preserve what is good. As the church we are called to be the refrigerator fending off the potential rot of the world. Jesus warns for disciples not to lose saltiness-otherwise it's not good for much. Gathering together in God's name is one of the key ways we stay pliable to life in Christ – even in the hall on metal chairs under florescent lights.

Enjoy.  
In Christ,  
Jeff



Sunday Worship: 11 a.m.  
Sunday School and Choir: 9:45 a.m.

Book Discussion: Mondays, 7 p.m.  
Play!Group: Wednesdays 10-11:30 a.m.  
Thursday Bible Study: 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Consistory Meetings: 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month

**Food Pantry is Open:**  
Wednesdays 4-6 p.m.; Saturdays 9-11 a.m.  
and by appointment  
Food Pantry Phone: 827-7121

**Upcoming Events and Notable Dates**

**September**

9<sup>th</sup>: Sunday School Begins  
10<sup>th</sup>: Book Discussion Starts, 7 p.m.  
11<sup>th</sup>: Elders Meeting, 7 p.m.  
16<sup>th</sup> : Youth Group Begins

**October**

7<sup>th</sup>: World Communion Sunday  
13<sup>th</sup>: VeggieTales Movie Event

**November**

4<sup>th</sup>: Daylight Savings Time Ends  
10<sup>th</sup>: Ham Supper  
21<sup>st</sup>: Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service

**December**

2<sup>nd</sup> Advent Begins  
24<sup>th</sup>: Christmas Eve Service, 7 p.m.

**Consistory Members**

**Elders**

Sarah Bramer  
Charles Shoemaker  
Jim Spencer-(Vice President of Consistory)  
Donna Wynia

**Deacons**

Brian DeFeo  
Leslie Hooper  
Stan Roesler  
Karen Miller

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**Pastor Jeff Kelley:** Home Phone: 827-8785  
email: [jeffa.kelley@gmail.com](mailto:jeffa.kelley@gmail.com)

Church Office Phone: 827-5134 Church  
Email: [reformed@midtel.net](mailto:reformed@midtel.net)

Church Website:  
[www.middleburghreformed.org](http://www.middleburghreformed.org)

And somehow we are also on Facebook.

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