MESSENGER

Niskayuna Reformed Church ***January 2020***

"*So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today*." – Matthew 6:34

This is a message from Jesus that I must continually return to. I am a worrier, creating worst case scenarios seems to be one of my favorite pastimes. I am sure I am not the only one. All of us are intimately aware of worry. You can be completely calm until that one thought enters your brain and the vicious cycle begins. Stomachache, headache, rapid breathing, and a thought that just won't leave your brain. Then finally some relief because you've found the solution. Yet, the brain is not satisfied, what if it doesn't work? The thoughts in your mind become repetitive and nothing you do will make them stop. Sometimes that process will only last half an hour or so, but for some people that process is a daily battle. Worrying is ridiculously difficult to stop – and science shows us that during intense worry our brains actually get stuck in a particular gear and we can't get out of it.

As we enter a new year, worry may be the first thing that we feel. The change of numbers on the calendar may not bring hope, but anxiety and fear. What will happen this year? We can get so obsessed about what will happen tomorrow, the next week, or the next month that we lose sight of what is right in front of us. Jesus reminds us that there is enough right in front of us to handle, so do not worry about tomorrow. That is certainly easier said than done, but an important lesson, nonetheless.

The basis for Jesus' words here is the faithfulness of God. God will provide just as God always has, in this moment and the next. Worries distract us from the truth of how God works in our lives. Worries take our attention from the word of God and the faith that is planted in us. Jesus encourages us to rely on the fact that God is sovereign. God knows what we need. Worry gets us nowhere, situations are never made any better by worry, and we know that. Yet, as colleague of mine once preached, "That first bite of worry tastes so sweet." This makes it incredibly hard to stop, we actually think worrying will make it better. What we can do in those moments is to hold on tightly to the word which we know is true. We can lean on those around us, who are there to support and encourage. We can take time to pray and lay those cares before God, allowing the peace of the Holy Spirit to enfold us. We can rely on the promises that God makes to us because we know God is faithful.

"*But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well*." -- Matthew 6:33

Birthdays

3	Roy Burger
5	Michele Wyman
5	Arthur Vonk
6	Kim Cerone
7	Adrean Kreig
7	John Burger
8	Bill Dzamba
10	Elizabeth Maclutsky
11	Kim Booth
13	Nick Siver
14	Phoebe Stafford
18	Joanna Burger
19	Mason Roth
21	Jenny Politano
22	Anna Pustay
22	Curt Johnson
23	Cynthia Kuchera
23	Brian Mazza
26	Nancy Guild
26	Judy Valente
26	Shirley Vane
27	Yuliya Peshkova
28	Jane Green
29	Linda Freligh
29	William Booth
30	Jan Clark
31	Andy Burger

Anniversaries

Brian & Jacqueline Maclutsky	1
Ron & Barb Valenti	22
Harry & Cynthia Kuchera	24
George & Joan Buhrmaster	24
Bruce & Sharon Rice Herbst	26

Office News

The office will be closed on **Monday, January 20th** in observance of Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday.

Thank you

Thank you to Linda Gardner, Sue & Leo Lichtig, Pastor Jason and Joan Peebles and Barb Valenti for covering the phones for me while I was on vacation. Thank you to Rick and Ron Ricard for taking care of any property related issues that needed to be handled. I had a fantastic break and it was nice to know everything was being taken care of in my absence.

To our NRC family,
Northern Rivers wishes to thank each and every one of you for making their Christmas special. Items from the Angel tree as well as Mitten tree were welcomed with open arms at their site in Schenectady. They were overwhelmed by the generosity of our congregation. Our gifts are now on display for clients and families to receive and take home. A wonderful way to make Christmas a joyous time for so many.
Thank you again and Merry Christmas.

Women's Fellowship Group (WFG)

The WFG will meet on Wednesday, **January 8th** from 2-4 PM in the lounge. Come join in the fun and fellowship!

Women's Book Group (WBG)

The Women's Book Group will meet at the home of Karen Goddard on Saturday, **January 18th** at 10:00 am. All are welcome. Call Karen at 518-370-0388 for more information.

Mission and Service Committee

January 5th Communion Collection:

Our Communion Collection for January will benefit The Salvation Army in Schenectady. They provide breakfast and lunch for up to 300 people a day, run a food pantry three days a week, shelter women and children in crisis through the Evangeline Booth Miracle Home, offer youth and women's programs to those in need in our community. Please support this important ministry. Thank you!

Looking ahead: February 2nd

Schenectady City Mission

Communion Collections

Nov: McKenna Courtesy Room $2,710 collected

Dec: Operation at Ease $563.75

Once again, we appreciate the generosity of our congregation.

If you have an organization near and dear to your heart that could benefit from one of the monthly communion collections, please let us know.

Special Note: Our Communion Collections run for the entire month. If you are unable to attend church on the 1st Sunday of the month, you may mail your donation to the church. All checks should be made payable to NRC and specify on the memo line the name of the organization that you wish to support.

SICM Emergency Food Pantry

For the month of January we will be collecting boxed macaroni & cheese, canned soup, stew, baked beans (pop top lids please) as well as 2020 calendars. Please consider making a donation to help combat food insecurity in our community. We will be collecting different items each month.
Monetary donations are also welcome and can often purchase more food per dollar than we often realize. There is a green collection box in the narthex.
Every donation impacts lives.

Eyewear/Hearing Aid Collection

There is a collection box in the Education Building for your used eyeglasses and hearing aids to benefit the Lions Club

International which will be distributed to those in need. Please check your homes for glasses or hearing aids that are no longer needed and bless someone else with the gift of sight or hearing. Several full boxes have already been donated—Thank You!

2020 Volunteer Opportunities

Schenectady City Mission- 2020 dates

1/7, 3/17, 5/11, 7/13, 9/14

Please contact Michele Kopp at mishca-ta@gmail.com ,if you are interested in volunteering. Sign-ups to volunteer must be done on-line at https://citymissionofschenec-tady.volunteerhub.com/lp/allevents/events/index

Salvation Army Soup Kitchen– 2020 dates

2020 dates: 4/21, 5/19, 6/6

Time: 10:30 am-1:30 pm

2020 Brooks BBQs: 4/22 & 8/119

UPCOMING M & SC Events

Next Meeting:

Monday, January 13, 2020

7pm

All are welcome

Please remember the needy, the hungry and the poor.

Sunday School News

The Sunday School was hard at work celebrating Advent and the Christmas Season! On December 8th, students made Advent wreaths to take home, and made cards to send to shut-in and elderly members. They also decorated angels for the Angel Tree, a project that the NRC Sunday School works on yearly, to donate gifts to families in need at Northern Rivers.

On December 15th, the Sunday School began rehearsals for the yearly Christmas Eve Family Service, which took place on December 24th at 5pm. The service featured a short play called "A New Star" as well as a short skit entitled "Simply Christmas." It also featured music performed by several Sunday School students. Sinterklaas also came to visit on this day, bringing cheer and candy for kids and adults alike!

Attendance was solid in December, ranging from 28 to 35. The students are currently discussing what organization they'd like to donate their offering to this session.

A merry Christmas season to all from the NRC Sunday School team!

Niskayuna Senior Center

Upcoming Events:

Tuesday, January 7
10a Blood Pressure Screening-Baptist Health
12:30 Celebrate Little Christmas

Thursday, January 9
11am iPad Basics Class
12:30 Nisky Historian Talk

Tuesday, January 14
12:30 Spice of Life Trivia

Thursday, January 16
12:30 Fig Newton Day Trivia/treat

Tuesday, January 21
12:30 Give me a Hug Day Trivia

Thursday, January 23
12:30 Share your memories with Nisky Historian Denis

Tuesday, January 28
11a iPad Basics Class
12:30 Chinese New Year Trivia/craft

Thursday, January 30
12:30 FDR Day Trivia

iPad Classes:
11a Thurs 1/9 NSC-LL
11a Tues 1/28, NSC-LL

Denotes Registration & Possible Additional Fee; *All Meals and All activities are subject to change; *All afternoon programs are on the lower level unless otherwise stated. If you do not want to participate in a program and prefer to play cards/games, arrangements can be made with staff.

LL-Lower Level

UL-Upper Level

TH—Town Hall

Music News

The *NRC Music News* is a biannual publication produced by volunteers of the Niskayuna Reformed Church music program to inform others about the musicians in our community, to explain how music and worship intersect and to encourage participation in various musical events. Stay up-to-date with NRC's music ministry activities by reading the latest newsletter or learn more about our music history by reading previous issues. Find it on our church homepage or under Music Ministry under Church Groups.

Here are a couple articles from the *December Music News*

Meet the Members

This season we welcome two familiar faces to the choir. Deana Perlee and Norm Tellier have both spent time in the chancel. Deana has lent us her voice in between life events and work commitments for the past 8 years. Music has always been a part of her life, from her rock and roll upbringing to her music minor from SUNY Plattsburgh. She even sings in at least one musical a year. When she realized she could make more time for music, she decided to sing with the NRC choir. She enjoys the beauty and the challenge of the music, but most of all comes for the fellowship and sheer joy of singing. While she still balances her job as a McCurdy real estate agent and her family life she wants to stick with singing in the choir because she just feels better when she does.

Norm Tellier has been in the chancel for most of his career as a Reformed Church pastor but is singing with the choir for the first time this season. While he still gets behind the pulpit occasionally, works part time delivering Cadillacs and makes it to the gym at least three times a week, Norm still has time to sing with us. Most importantly he has time to sing together with his wife of 56 years, Nancy, who has sung here for the past 15 years. Norm enjoys the community of the choir and making music for worship. Be sure to ask him about his Invader GT.

Music Preview:

Where Seasonal Meets Sacred
By Andrew Burger

The special music on December 22, 2019 will feature works by Ralph Vaughan Williams whose choral output

Musicians Rebecca Benjamin, Jesse Rawson, Ian Kerr-Mace, Andrew Burger, Will Hayes, Joey Van Ullen, and Pete Fitzgerald after the Easter service, April 21, 2019, at NRC.

ranks among the highest of any composer since Bach. The Senior Choir together with the Youth Choir and a woodwind quintet of local guest musicians will offer "Winter" from his *Folk*

Songs for the Four Seasons. This underrated masterwork, originally composed for women's chorus and orchestra, is set as four short cantatas with each movement based off particular well-known English folk songs of the 19th and early 20th centuries (much like Vivaldi's four violin concerti that make up The Four Seasons). The music itself shows his unparalleled mastery of setting and arranging folk tunes in the classical style. A great deal of the Spring, Summer, and Fall "movements" have to do with nature, harvest, romance, drinking, or a combination therein, but when it comes to his take on Winter, there is a clear Christmas message.

A close look at the seemingly secular lyrics of the first two movements of Winter, "Children's Christmas Song", and "Wassail Song", reveal the theme "kindness to others, and particularly to the poor." This is followed by the third movement "In Bethlehem City", which paints an interesting parallel between being turned away from shelter in modern day and Joseph and Mary being turned away from shelter in Bethlehem. In fact, the word wassail comes from a combination of Old English and Norse, a greeting of good-health. Vaughn Williams combines these two themes in the last movement "God Bless the Master", which at face value can mean bless the master like the literal lord of a house, or Master, as in Jesus himself, depending on how you read the lyrics.

In conclusion, while this music is a wide departure from a service of Vivaldi's Gloria or Handel's Messiah, it has an unmistakably approachable message of peace and good-health to all befitting the Christmas season.

Music and Worship:

By Sue Lichtig

"Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth, burst into jubilant song with music." (Psalm 98:40)

The words of a song are very important in worship, conveying the words of scripture and supporting the development of our faith. However, the music helps us express emotions that transcend words. Worshiping through music transforms us, uplifts us, moves us emotionally and brings us closer to one another and to God. Even though choirs often sing about the hardships of this life, it is in the singing that our spirits are lightened. Hearing the words and feeling the melody allows us to relate to one another and to know we are not alone in our experiences. BB King said "Blues is a tonic for whatever ails you. I could play the blues and then not be blue anymore."

To misquote the old ad, This is your brain on music: As music therapists and neuroscientists know, music has a measurable, positive effect on us. When listening to or especially when engaged in making music, endorphins are released, as are other healing and beneficial hormones. Cortisol, the stress hormone, is reduced and pain is better tolerated. Music utilizes both hemispheres of the brain which has benefits for memory, too.* What a beautiful gift music is from our Creator. As we enter the advent season, let's worship Him joyfully – together! *from "Your Brain and Singing: Why Singing in a Choir Makes You Happier" by Jaime Babbitt

Prayers for Peace and Justice

For those who are hungry

God our Father,
in the name of him
who gave bread to the hungry,
we remember all
who through our human ignorance,
folly, and sin
are condemned to live in want.
Show us, who have so much,
what we can do
to help those who have so little;
and bless the efforts of those
who work to overcome poverty and hunger,
that sufficient food may be found for all;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***
--From the *Book of Common Order of the Church of Scotland,* St. Andrew Press.

For peace

Almighty God,
all thoughts of truth and peace
proceed from you.
Kindle in the hearts of all people
the true love of peace.
Guide with your pure and peaceable wisdom
those who take counsel
for the nations of the earth;
that in tranquility your kingdom
may go forward,
till the earth is filled
with the knowledge of your love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***
--From the *Book of Common Order of the Church of Scotland,* St. Andrew Press.

For inner peace

Set free, O Lord, the souls of your servants
from all restlessness and anxiety.
Give us your peace and power,
and so keep us that, in all perplexity and distress,
we may abide in you,
upheld by your strength
and stayed on the rock of your faithfulness;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***
--From the *Book of Common Order of the Church of Scotland,* St. Andrew Press.

For the human family

Creator God,
in love you have fashioned the human family
in a variety of races, languages, and cultures.
Do not let our diversity divide us,
but help us to welcome gifts
we can give and receive from one another.
Save us from prejudice, arrogance and fear,
and teach us how to live together
as members of one family,
sharing one home,
and the children of one God. *Amen.*

For peace in the church

God of our lives,
by the power of your Holy Spirit
we have been drawn together by
one baptism into one faith,
serving one Lord and Savior.
Do not let us tear away from one another
through division or hard argument.
May your peace embrace our differences,
preserving us in unity,
as one body of Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.
--from the *Worship Book,* Westminster, 1970

January

January 5th
2nd Sunday after Christmas

Ushers-	Glenn Kreig
	Jon Waxman
	Barbara Sim
	Leo Lichtig
Counters-	Les Perlee
	Glenn Kreig
	Tony Pechulis
Greeters-	Dale & Nancy Ellen Swann

January 12th
1st Sunday after Epiphany

Ushers-	Jack Faddegon
	Linda Gardner
	Linda Matt
Counters-	Leo Lichtig
	Judy Henery
Greeters-	Barbara Sim

January 19th
2nd Sunday after Epiphany

Ushers-	Bob & Tracy Sacca
	John & Deborah Bennett
Counters-	Lyle Eldred
	Kim Cerone
Greeters-	John & Trudy Lehner

January 26th
3rd Sunday after Epiphany

Ushers-	Jeff Rivenburg
	Dug Jackson
	Brian Maclutsky
	Scott Haefner
Counters-	Sharon Rice-Herbst
	Dominic Andriano
Greeters-	Bob & Linda Gardner

The Niskayuna Reformed Church
3041 TROY-SCHENECTADY ROAD
NISKAYUNA, NEW YORK 12309
Founded in 1750

Sunday Service of Worship *9:30 am*

Contact Information

Office: 518-785-5575
Emails:
office@niskayunareformed.org (Ellen-admin)
srpastor@niskayunareformed.org (Pastor Jason)
Website: www.niskayunareformed.org

Office Hours

Monday– Thursday	8 am - 3:30 pm
Friday	8 am -1 pm

Staff

Rev. Jason Fulkerson	Pastor
Paul Alois	Treasurer
Joyce Anderson	Director of Youth Choir
Rebecca Benjamin	Organist
Andrew Burger	Director of Music
James Friderici	Director of Bell Choir
Ellen Gauna	Church Administrator
Sabrina Squires	Director of Christian Education
Suzanne Mason	Director of Cherubs Choir
Kathy Mausert	Director of Nursery School
Lester Perlee	Cemetery Superintendent
Rick Wallace	Church Sexton

2020 CONSISTORY

Elders	***Deacons***
Chad Pezzano, VP	Lizbeth Amorelli
John Bennett	Scott Haefner
Linda Gardner	Alan Holmes
Dug Jackson	Leo Lichtig
Adrean Kreig	Richard Mizenko
Suzi O'Brien	Maureen Rizzi

January

Wednesday, January 1
Office Closed
Thursday, January 2
7:30-6 pm-TSL (FH/104)
4 pm-Violin (101)
Friday, January 3
7:30-6 pm-TSL (FH/104)
4 pm-Flute (101)
7 pm-Boy Scouts (104)
Saturday, January 4
12:30 pm-Private Party (FH)
Sunday, January 5
Communion
Mission-Salvation Army
8:45 am-Sr. Choir (S)
9:30 am-Worship Service (S)
9:45 am-Sunday School (EB)
10:30 am-Youth Choir (M)
10:30 am-Coffee Hour (FH)
10:45 am-Cherubs (103)
11:15-3:15 pm-KCPC (S/FH)
Monday, January 6
9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
9:30 am-Wildwood (K)
2-6 pm-TSL (FH/104)
4 pm-Violin (101)
6 pm-WA (104)
7 pm-SA (EO)
Tuesday, January 7
9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
2-6 pm-TSL (FH/104)
4 pm-Flute (101)
7 pm-Boy Scouts (FH)
Wednesday, January 8
9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
2 pm-WFG (L)
2-6 pm-TSL (FH/104)
4 pm-Flute (101)
7 pm-Consistory (L)
7:30-Senior Choir (S)
Thursday, January 9
9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
2-6 pm-TSL (FH/104)
4 pm-Violin (101)
Friday, January 10
9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
2-6 pm-TSL (FH/104)
6-9:30 pm-KCPC (S)
7 pm-AA (104)
Saturday, January 11
No events
Sunday, January 12
8:45 am-Sr. Choir (S)
9:30 am-Worship Service (S)
9:45 am-Sunday School (EB)
10:30 am-Youth Choir (M)
10:30 am-Coffee Hour (FH)
10:45 am-Cherubs (103)
11:15-3:15 pm-KCPC (S/FH)
Monday, January 13
9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
9:30 am-Wildwood (K)
2-6 pm-TSL (FH/104)
4 pm-Violin (101)
6 pm-WA (104)
7 pm-SA (EO)
7 pm-M & SC (L)
Tuesday, January 14
9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
2-6 pm-TSL (FH/104)
4 pm-Flute (101)
7 pm-Boy Scouts (FH)
Wednesday, January 15
9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
2-6 pm-TSL (FH/104)
4 pm-Flute (101)
7:30-Senior Choir (S)
Thursday, January 16
9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
12-IEEE (FH)
2-6 pm-TSL (FH/104)
4 pm-Violin (101)
Friday, January 17
9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
2-6 pm-TSL (FH/104)
6-9:30 pm-KCPC (S)
7 pm-AA (104)
Saturday, January 18
10 am-WBG (K. Goddard)
Sunday, January 19
8:45 am-Sr. Choir (S)
9:30 am-Worship Service (S)
10:30 am-Youth Choir (M)
10:30 am-Coffee Hour (FH)
11:15-3:15 pm-KCPC (S/FH)
Monday, January 20
Office Closed
9:30 am-Wildwood (K)
7:30-6 pm-TSL (FH/104)
4 pm-Violin (101)
6 pm-WA (104)
7 pm-SA (EO)
Tuesday, January 21
9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
2-6 pm-TSL (FH/104)
4 pm-Flute (101)
7 pm-Boy Scouts (FH)
Wednesday, January 22
9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
2-6 pm-TSL (FH/104)
4 pm-Flute (101)
7:30-Senior Choir (S)
Thursday, January 23
9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
2-6 pm-TSL (FH/104)
4 pm-Violin (101)
Friday, January 24
9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
2-6 pm-TSL (FH/104)
6-9:30 pm-KCPC (S)
7 pm-AA (104)
Saturday, January 25
No events
Sunday, January 26
8:45 am-Sr. Choir (S)
9:30 am-Worship Service (S)
9:45 am-Sunday School (EB)
10:30 am-Youth Choir (M)
10:30 am-Coffee Hour (FH)
10:45 am-Cherubs (103)
11:15-3:15 pm-KCPC (S/FH)
Monday, January 27
9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
9:30 am-Wildwood (K)
2-6 pm-TSL (FH/104)
4 pm-Violin (101)
6 pm-WA (104)
7 pm-SA (EO)
Tuesday, January 28
9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
2-6 pm-TSL (FH/104)
4 pm-Flute (101)
6:30 pm-H & A (L)
7 pm-Boy Scouts (FH)
Wednesday, January 29
9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
2-6 pm-TSL (FH/104)
4 pm-Flute (101)
7:30-Senior Choir (S)
Thursday, January 30
9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
2-6 pm-TSL (FH/104)
4 pm-Violin (101)
Friday, January 31
9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
2-6 pm-TSL (FH/104)
6-9:30 pm-KCPC (S)
7 pm-AA (104)

CCC- Congregational Care
CM- City Mission
H & A History & Archives
M & SC -Mission & Service
SA Salvation Army
WFG Women's Fellowship Group
WBG Women's Book Group