

MESSENGER

Niskayuna Reformed Church

March 2021

Lent is always a time of mixed emotions for me. A season designed to remind the church of its need for God; of penitence and of confession. While I think these things are always necessary, for the past several years, I've often thought *"The world is broken enough already. Do we really need another season designed to make us feel bad about ourselves?"*

It's a fair question, I think. In my experience as a psychotherapist, my clients, despite coming to therapy to address difficult life circumstances, often recoil when we attempt to lean into areas of past pain, hurt, and suffering. They tell me, *"I thought therapy was supposed to make me feel better. But every time I come in to talk about my difficulties, I end up leaving feeling worse than I did to begin with."*

This has been a hard year. We have been made brutally aware of the frailty of our human condition, with masks worn on faces like ever-present marks of ash, always reminding us of how close we are to our own earthly limitations. No matter what way you look at it, we have experienced a variety of losses and pain over the past twelve months. It is easy to give ourselves over to gloom.

Psychotherapists talk often about the "five stages of grief." While a bit overly simplistic, it is the idea that processing grief often passes through five distinct emotional experiences: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. For me, I've seen all five stages over the past year- denial of the reality of what goes on around us, anger at the injustice of it all, bargaining around what feels safe and reasonable, depression over feeling hopeless at the never-ending monotony, and acceptance coming when the full weight of the loss is acknowledged.

In this Lenten season, there is, in a particular way, a sense of profound grief that has overcome us. Pain and loss stare us in the face, threatening our shaky resolve. Many of us are experiencing one of those five stages. Many of us feel as if we have experienced all five, sometimes multiple times in the course of a week. We're overwhelmed, tired, short, and on edge.

As much as we might want to run away from this pain, I want to encourage us in this Lenten season to lean in to the grief. I often remind my clients that you never "get over" a loss, instead you have to "go through" the loss. This is hard. This is painful. And this is a season when we journey together. We are reminded that we are on a path with a Savior who understands this pain. As the author of Hebrews reminds us in chapter 4, verse 15 and 16: *"For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."* Christ is with us in this season. Let us boldly bring our pain, our hurt, our fatigue, and our needs directly to the one who is able to sympathize with us.

Beloved people of God, we are not alone. In this season, we are reminded, yes, of our need for God, but more importantly, that we have a God who meets us *in* our needs.

We are not alone.

Grace and Peace,

Rev. Jonathan Vanderbeck, LMSW
President, Schenectady Classis

Birthdays

1	Gabrielle Maclutsky	19	David Perlee	29	Tracey Duesterdick
10	Tiffanie Wood	19	Addison Kreig	29	Joe Tuttle
11	Betty Connelly	20	Benjamin Wood	29	Sue Felpel
12	Joan Peebles			31	Lois Danis
13	Ron Valenti			31	Emily Roth
13	Dolores Hutchins				
15	Jaclyn Clemmer				
15	Camryn Munro				
15	Owen Wood	22	Abby Doss		
16	Michele Kopp	25	Josie Mirel		
17	Scotty Clark	25	Evan Groudine		
19	David Anderson	26	Doris Alois		



Anniversaries

Lyle & Eileen Eldred	11th
Richard & Aimee Munro	20th

The Women's Fellowship Group (WFG)

The WFG will meet via Zoom on Wednesday, March 10 at 2:00 pm. The group will be working on an Easter project.

The Women's Book Group (WBG)

The WBG will meet via Zoom on Saturday, March 13 at 10:00 am. The group will be sharing their individual readings.

All women are welcome to join in - contact Trudy Lehner for access details.

History & Archives Committee (H & A)

After a 1-year COVID-induced hiatus, the H & A is ready to get going again. Lots of fascinating activities expected for 2021. The meeting will be by Zoom on **March 9 at 6:30 PM**. Please contact the church office (office@niskayunareformed.org) if you are interest in finding out more about the work of the committee or simply want to come to the meeting to see what it's about.

Musicians Needed

▲ We love appreciating the musical talents of our congregation and zoom allows us to enjoy the gifts that others have to offer! If you are interested in recording and sharing a musical contribution, please contact Ellen at office@niskayunareformed.org and we will get you scheduled for one of our services! You can share music by recording a video of your piece, or you could perform live if you want (but please set up a sound check with us in advance to make sure this goes smoothly)! If you would like piano accompaniment, Rebecca is happy to make a recording and send you a track to use, as long as you send her sheet music.

Mission and Service Committee

March Mission of the Month:

Our Mission of the Month Collection for March will benefit our own mission group. The M&SC will use the donations for our 2021 "Soup Kitchen" expenses. Our church members volunteer at the Salvation Army soup kitchen several times a year. These dedicated volunteers shop, prepare and serve a nutritious meal to the hungry. The next date for the Soup Kitchen is **April 15th**. Your generosity is greatly appreciated. Thank you!

Looking ahead: April— Safe Incorporated of Schenectady

Communion Collections

January: Wildwood Programs—Collected \$195, donated \$250

Once again, we appreciate the generosity of our congregation. For prior contributions, we have received Thank You notes from the following organizations:

- Rotterdam Challengers Tri-County Baseball League
- Guiding Eyes for the Blind

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.

Did you know that you can make Mission of the Month Collections through the Church's Web Site? There is now a dedicated Mission donation selection for the Pay Pal contributions.

SICM Emergency Food Pantry

We are still collecting disposable adult and child sized face masks. For the months of January through March SiCM is

continuing the CAN You Help Food Drive will be collecting Canned There are collection boxes in the education building for donations. You can drop them off Monday-Friday, after 1:30 pm.

The Food Pantry is now accepting volunteers - call the pantry at 518-346-4445 for more information.

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.

2020 Volunteer Opportunities

Schenectady City Mission-

Currently the volunteer opportunities for serving dinner are on hold due to Covid-19 restrictions. But there are still ways you can get involved. Please see the following to learn more
<https://citymission.com/get-involved/>

Salvation Army Soup Kitchen-

April 15th will be the first lunch for NRC for 2021. It will again be a prepackaged bagged lunch. Volunteers will be needed on April 14th to help pack the lunches. Please contact Barb Valenti or Sue Lichtig if you are able to volunteer.

UPCOMING M & SC Events

Brooks BBQ 2021

April 21st

August 18th

We will be looking for volunteers very soon!

Next Meeting:

March 8, 2021 @ 6pm

All are welcome

PRESS RELEASE ON NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AT SICM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
2/4/21

SiCM to Hire New Executive Director, The Rev. Dr. Amaury Tañón-Santos



Schenectady, New York, February 4th, 2021. **Schenectady Community Ministries** (SiCM) is proud to announce the new Executive Director, The Reverend Doctor Amaury Tañón-Santos! After being interviewed by the search committee and with unanimous approval from the Steering Committee and SiCM Assembly of partnered faith groups, SiCM has offered the position to the esteemed networker and former program director in the areas of multicultural ministry, faith and public life, and Latina/o leadership formation. The Rev. Dr. Amaury Tañón-Santos will be joining SiCM full time on March 15th as SiCM races to complete construction on the Resource Center in time for a grand opening.

"I was drawn to SiCM's stated aspiration to be an interfaith organization. This aspiration lit up my commitment to an intercultural framing for the work and of structures. I was also drawn to the urban nature of the work. I was raised in the city, and have always worshipped in the city."
– Rev. Dr. Amaury Tañón-Santos

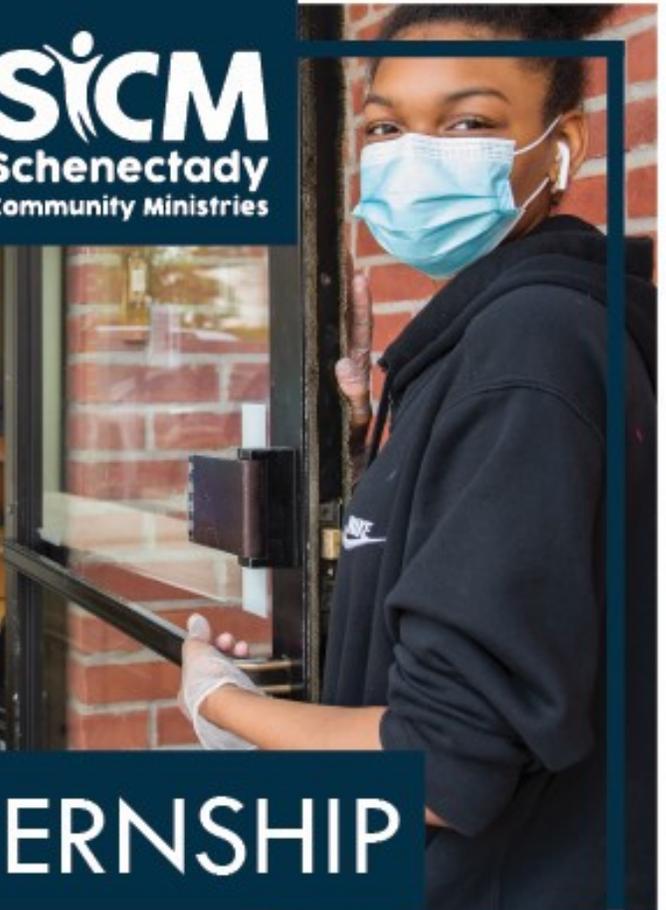
The Rev. Dr. Amaury Tañón-Santos joins SiCM at a time when the organization reaffirms itself as the moral compass of a city dived by racial inequity, disenfranchisement, and social injustices. Most recently the Rev. Dr. Amaury Tañón-Santos was a networker for the Synod of the Northeast - the region of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that serves 1100 gospel communities, organized in 22 presbyteries in New England, New Jersey, and New York. Amaury has also served as pastor of congregations in urban contexts of New York and New Jersey.

"The aspiration to become an interreligious organization that works for social justice and racial reconciliation will require a strategic planning and identity articulating process among partner congregations and with new community partners." – Rev. Dr. Amaury Tañón-Santos

Schenectady Community Ministries (SiCM) invites you to welcome the new Executive Director, The Rev. Dr. Amaury Tañón-Santos! The organization is delighted to begin this partnership and work together to strategize ways in battling hunger during a pandemic, and in revitalizing community unity during political division.

Schenectady Community Ministries (SiCM) hosts the largest food pantry in the Schenectady County, providing over 60% of the temporary and emergency food given out to people in need in our community. SiCM is an inter-faith partnership of 52 faith groups founded in 1967. SiCM undertakes programs of joint service and witness with and on behalf of faith groups in the areas of both social service and social justice.

Join us this spring for a formal welcoming ceremony and grand opening TBD. For additional information, contact: Laura Pinckney, Development Coordinator at 518-374-2683 x 103; or email: LauraP@sicm.us Website: www.sicm.us



2021 INTERNSHIP

PROGRAM



A SiCM Summer Internship will provide paid, hands on experience working during the summer meals program. It will include: planning, training, setting up daily sites, overseeing volunteers, working with children from Schenectady County and organizing site activities – to name just a few experiences. The meals program will run from the end of June 2021 through the end of August 2021. Working dates can be flexible due to school responsibilities.

Positions can be full or part-time. Rate of pay will be \$12.50 with reimbursement for mileage related to extra driving during the work day (not to and from the work site). Complete the application for an overview of the program.

Call **Laura Pinckney** for more information.

SiCM office phone: 518-374-2683 ext 103 or email at LauraP@sicm.us.

Walking Wednesdays

Please join me, Janel Mirel, on Walking Wednesdays!
Let's meet up at Lions Park at 9:30 am, and get some fresh air!
I will be there rain or shine, masked, and socially-distant.
The first session begins **March 3rd**.

"Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well" (3 John 1:2)."
Hope to see you there!



Niskayuna Senior Center

**NISKAYUNA SENIOR
CENTER**
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The Niskayuna Senior Center is excited to announce our intended re-open on Tuesday, March 16th for in-person activities, including eat-in lunch, confirming guidance from the County Health Department and a determination made by Supervisor Syed. All opening information will be posted on the ([Niskayuna Senior Center homepage](#)).

We continue to offer our Gershon's lunch program Tues and Thurs with take-out and drive-thru pick-up. Menus are online at <https://www.niskayuna.org/> – senior news – news & announcements or you can call us to have the menu emailed/mailed directly. Pre-order and reservation for eat-in are required. Call by 12n Monday of that week to place your order.

Our community health partner CDPHP is also adding five more free boxed lunch dates Mondays in March. Once again, with their generous support, we have 100 lunches to hand out to area seniors on Mondays, March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29. Seniors are not required to make advanced reservations as these meals are handed out first come-first serve. Drive-thru pickup only 12–1p, no eat-in option on Mondays*.

In the meantime, we continue to be available to help our Seniors. Our bus/delivery service continues to be available for Niskayuna residents for grocery, pharmacy, post office runs or delivery of masks. You can reach Matt, our bus driver, at 518-495-6202.

You are always welcome to reach out to us at the office, 518-372-4969.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

The January financials are a strong start to 2021 reflecting positive revenue vs. expenses, however these totals do reflect some folks who prepaid their yearly pledge. We are also pleased to report that our mortgage interest rate has decreased from 4.5 % to 4.0%. We have met all the criteria for the forgiving of last year's PPP small business loan, meaning it will not require repayment. Unfortunately, we do not meet the criteria for a second PPP loan in the January Congressional approval.

Thank you to all who faithfully provide your kindness, caring, contact, volunteering, and monetary gifts that keep NRC the strong spiritual community that it is.

As of January 31, 2021

		Income		
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Difference</u>	
Offerings	\$ 28,408	\$ 19,324	\$ 9,084	
Use of Facilities	\$ 3,686	\$ 4,000	\$ (314)	
Nursery School	\$ 1,465	\$ 2,200	\$ (735)	
Rental Income	\$ 1,650	\$ 1,650	\$ -	
Fundraising	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Other	\$ 0	\$ -	\$ 0	
Operational Income	\$ 35,210	\$ 27,174	\$ 8,035	
		Expenses		
Payroll	\$ 15,846	\$ 15,984	\$ 138	
Property	\$ 9,454	\$ 9,000	\$ (454)	
Mortgage (Principal & Interest)	\$ 3,055	\$ 3,110	\$ 55	
Denominational Assessment	\$ (446)	\$ (636)	\$ (190)	
Office	\$ 1,207	\$ 1,000	\$ (207)	
Other	\$ 972	\$ 1,010	\$ 38	
Operational Expenses	\$ 30,088	\$ 29,468	\$ (619)	
Gain from Operations	\$ 5,122			
Budgeted Loss	\$ (2,294)			
Performance Vs Budget 1/31/2021	\$ 7,416			

BLOOD DONATIONS

ARE
Essential



BLOOD DRIVE

Niskayuna Reformed Church

3041 Troy Schenectady Road, Niskayuna, NY 12309

Saturday, April 3, 2021
8:00 AM to 1:00 PM

To schedule an appointment call
1-800-RED CROSS or visit redcrossblood.org and
enter sponsor code: NiskayunaReformedChurch



**Download the Blood Donor App today. Get your digital donor card,
schedule your next appointment, track your lifetime donations,
view your blood pressure, and follow your donation on its way to a
hospital.**

Schedule a blood donation appointment today:

Download the Blood Donor App | RedCrossBlood.org | 1-800-RED CROSS | 1-800-733-2767

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March 2021

Monday, March 1

9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
1:30-5:30 pm-TSL (FH/104)
4 pm-Violin (102)

Tuesday, March 2

9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
1:30-5:30 pm-TSL (FH/104)
7 pm-Boy Scouts (FH)

Wednesday, March 3

9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
10 am-Mid-week Coffee Hour
1:30-5:30 pm-TSL (FH/104)
7 pm-Bells (S)

Thursday, March 4

9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
11-5:30 pm-TSL (FH/104)
4 pm-Violin (102)

Friday, March 5

9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
1:30-5:30 pm-TSL (FH/104)
7 pm-AA

Saturday, March 6

No events

Sunday, March 7

Mission-Soup Kitchen Expenses

9:30 am-Worship Service (S)
10:45 am-Coffee Hour
11 am-Sunday School

Monday, March 8

9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
1:30-5:30 pm-TSL (FH/104)
4 pm-Violin (102)

Tuesday, March 9

9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
1:30-5:30 pm-TSL (FH/104)
6:30 pm- H & A
7 pm-Boy Scouts (FH)

Wednesday, March 10

9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
10 am-Mid-week Coffee Hour
11-5:30 pm-TSL (FH/104)
2 pm-WFG
7 pm-Consistory
7 pm-Bells (S)

Thursday, March 11

9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
1:30-5:30 pm-TSL (FH/104)

4 pm-Violin (102)

Friday, March 12

9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
1:30-5:30 pm-TSL (FH/104)
7 pm-AA

Saturday, March 13

10 am-WBG

Sunday, March 14

9:30 am-Worship Service (S)
10:45 am-Coffee Hour
11 am-Sunday School

Monday, March 15

9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
1:30-5:30 pm-TSL (FH/104)
4 pm-Violin (102)

Tuesday, March 16

9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
1:30-5:30 pm-TSL (FH/104)
7 pm-Boy Scouts (FH)

Wednesday, March 17

9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
10 am-Mid-week Coffee Hour
1:30-5:30 pm-TSL (FH/104)
7 pm-Bells (S)

Thursday, March 18

9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
1:30-5:30 pm-TSL (FH/104)
4 pm-Violin (102)

Friday, March 19

9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
1:30-5:30 pm-TSL (FH/104)
7 pm-AA

Saturday, March 20

No events

Sunday, March 21

Bells Sunday
9:30 am-Worship Service (S)
10:45 am-Coffee Hour
11 am-Sunday School

Monday, March 22

9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
1:30-5:30 pm-TSL (FH/104)
4 pm-Violin (102)

Tuesday, March 23

9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
1:30-5:30 pm-TSL (FH/104)
7 pm-Boy Scouts (FH)

Wednesday, March 24

9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
1:30-5:30 pm-TSL (FH/104)
10 am-Mid-week Coffee Hour

Thursday, March 25

9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
1:30-5:30 pm-TSL (FH/104)
4 pm-Violin (102)

Friday, March 26

9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
1:30-5:30 pm-TSL (FH/104)
7 pm-AA

Saturday, March 27

No events

Sunday, March 28

Palm Sunday
9:30 am-Worship Service (S)
10:45 am-Coffee Hour
11 am-Sunday School

Monday, March 29

9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
1:30-5:30 pm-TSL (FH/104)
4 pm-Violin (102)

Tuesday, March 30

9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
1:30-5:30 pm-TSL (FH/104)
7 pm-Boy Scouts (FH)

Wednesday, March 31

9:15-12:00 pm-NS (101)
10 am-Mid-week Coffee Hour
1:30-5:30 pm-TSL (FH/104)
7 pm-Bells (S)

Please Note:

When no room is included after an event, it will take place on Zoom Sunday Service is available online too. Contact the church office if you have not been receiving the online information and wish to join us remotely.

CCC- Congregational Care

CM- City Mission

H & A- History & Archives

M & SC-Mission & Service

WFG-Women's Fellowship Group

WBG-Women's Book Group