

Fall Edition
October & November
2005

SECOND THOUGHTS

100 COLLEGE AVENUE, NEW BRUNSWICK, NEW JERSEY

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FROM THE DESK OF

REV. ANDY RIENSTRA

As I write this I am preparing for my seventh Sunday with you. Time goes quickly when people are enjoying themselves, and we (Mae and I) are. Everyone has been most helpful. Special efforts have been made to get us living in an apartment in Franklin Greens, and over the past weekend we moved in. We will undoubtedly be using this place to stay 3 to 4 days a week depending on scheduling. We don't have a phone number there, but we can be reached on my cell at 201-738-1539. We are grateful for all that you have done to make this transition to become your interim pastor as comfortable as possible.

Looking back on the brief time we have been together I have been noticing the strengths of the congregation. For the past couple of weeks I have been preaching on the letters to the seven churches contained in the first chapters of Revelation. One of the features we noticed was that in speaking to the churches the writer always begins with some words of approval and commendation. All that he has to say by way of constructive critique is blanketed in positive affirmation. That is the way I want to see and speak with Second Reformed Church. You are a church with numerous strengths and I would like you to be aware of them.

So here is some of what I have seen so far. You have a terrific location and in some ways it is all about location, location, location. Thousands of people walk by the front steps of the church every week, most of them are young and searching for their way through life. They are students with minds waiting to be formed and shaped by the people and experiences they encounter. They have a lot of questions about God and life that the church can help answer even though they might not be looking to the church for their answers.

This church has a wonderful challenge. It has a fertile mission field right at its door step. While some churches are wondering about what kind of ministry they could develop, the potential ministry here is staring us in the face. The church just needs to figure out the best way to do it. I also see people who are willing and anxious to give it a try. As we have talked together in the past weeks I have listened to some of your dreams and visions, and I have noticed people willing to take the time and effort to do the thinking and planning that goes along with the challenge. Very soon we will begin to do that.

At the same time New Brunswick Seminary is also becoming more aware of its place and ministry in this college community. Members of their board are willing to talk with the church about how a partnership of efforts and resources can effectively serve the broader ministry of the Reformed Church in this area where so much Reformed Church history abounds.

As we think and plan together, let us also be in prayer for God's presence and guidance. Someone said to me recently that it was not accidental that the leaders of the past placed this church in this area. A visionary God was at work, and this may be the time when we realize as never before what God wants of this church.

**Did you know that The Reformed Church of America has a website????
This is a wonderful source of information! Check it out the next time you are online.
www.RCA.org**

One Great Hour of Sharing!!

On Sunday, **November 20th**, our congregation will be giving one special offering for both "One Great Hour of Sharing" and Thanksgiving. This date has also been designated, "World Hunger Sunday".

The OGHS program began more than 50 years ago and continues to provide much needed assistance to over 70 countries including the US and Canada. This year RCWS is asking us to reach out to strangers with our monetary gifts, fulfilling our Christian responsibility to show care, concern, hospitality and assistance. In the media we have surely seen the faces of needs of strangers during 2005, strangers who have and still are suffering though a tsunami, hurricanes, floods, mudslides, earthquakes and war.

You may use the enclosed envelope for your contribution to mail into the church office or deposit in the offering plate on any Sunday. Checks should be made out to SRC, indicating OGHS in the memo portion. Your gifts and prayers are much needed and appreciated.

Martha Palmer

C2EA Rallies Throughout Our State!

..... **WITH A PIT STOP AT SECOND CHURCH**

Forty people walked from Times Square, NYC this past Saturday to New Brunswick with a layover at SRC on Tuesday, **October 18th** and Rutgers University in a campaign to stop the HIV/AIDS virus. After an evening of lodging at SRC, their journey continued Wednesday morning towards Washington DC.

SRC assisted the New Brunswick based Hyacinth AIDS Foundation (A Chapter of C2EA) by providing them with a place to sleep and extended our hospitality by offering them cold drinks, coffee and desserts in the gym and parlor. Other area agencies also helped with this venture. Alpha Phi Omega, National Co-Ed Service Fraternity provided dinner on Tuesday evening and Elijah's Promise provided breakfast on Wednesday morning.

Special thanks go to members of our church....**Steve Sandor, Curly Boelhouwer and Hap Harris**. These members welcomed the group, served the goodies and made sure that everything ran smoothly. They served their first cup of coffee in the parlor at 6:45 am Wednesday morning.....yes, that's AM!! Our Sanctuary was also opened to them, we handed out our mission statement and wooden cross necklaces were given to all the walkers as gifts of goodwill. The walkers will be wearing the necklaces as they cross into our nation's Capital!! How cool is that!

Kathy Fisher

Use Gifts for Others

On **November 6th** Rev. Rienstra will speak to us during worship about Christian giving in the context of his sermons to the seven churches in Asia, from the book of Revelation. This sermon series has been wonderful, and I encourage you to come hear Rev. Rienstra preach.

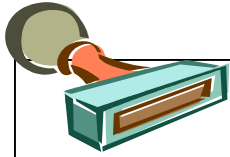
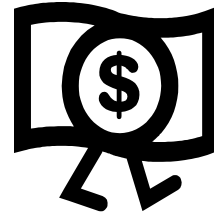
On **November 13th**, church members will consecrate their gifts by presenting their pledges for giving for 2005-2006. Do you remember? Christians practice stewardship by sharing with those in need their God given time, talents and money, as an act of thanks for all his gifts to them. Please be on the lookout for more information about our stewardship program. Thank you.

The Board of Deacons

**OUR DONATIONS TO CHURCH WORLD SERVICE
FOR VICTIMS OF HURRICANE KATRINA TOTALED, \$1,375.00.....WAY TO GO!**

Year to Date information: Month Ending September 2005

Income received: \$153450.82
Expenses Incurred: \$130,912.59
Pledge commitments: \$33,14.52
Pledges received: \$34,928.52



Stamps of Approval

Did you know that for many years Edith Beardslee has collected packaged and mailed away cancelled stamps given to her by members of our congregation? These stamps are then sold to support the ministry of a home for neurologically impaired individuals. So keep on providing your support by cutting stamps from letters and packages, leaving about 1/4 inch of the background paper where possible. Thanks to Edith for her own continuing ministry in this project and to all of you who participate.

Martha Palmer



A big **THANK YOU** to members of the Youth Group who helped clean up around the church for their first meeting on September 25th. **Jenny, Ashley, Catherine, Sam, Will, Kevin and Steph** cleaned out the rubbish and over growth in the window wells on the parking lot side of the church and also cleaned out the old Sunday School cabinets in the basement of the church.

We threw out garbage bags full of dried out paints and markers. We also came across lots of gross bugs living in the over growth. If you have a project that you need some help with, please let the members of the Youth Group or their leaders (Annie Hays and Mike Beals) know.

Annie Hays

Hayride at Suydam Farms

NOVEMBER 6TH!

On Sunday, **November 6th**, at 6:30 pm we will gather for a good old fashioned HAY RIDE (real wagon, real hay, real farm, real atmosphere) at the Suydam Farm. The tradition of riding on hay wagons began as an acceptable way for farm couples to be together, hugging in the hay, perhaps on their way to a barn dance, where square, circle, and line dancing might happen. We'll just do the ride and the cuddle with your own boy/girlfriend or spouse, and then adjourn to the campfire for "hayride goodies", apple cider, doughnuts, and cookies. Do sign up on the bulletin board as soon as you can!

The drinks will be provided, but we could use gifts of doughnuts or cookies. If you can help, indicate what you'll bring next to your sign up name.

DIRECTIONS FROM NEW BRUNSWICK:

Follow Rt. 27 South towards North Brunswick; approximately 4 miles. You will pass Tara Greens Golf Course and Fama's Nursery. Remain on Rt. 27 and you will see a Large sign: *Suydam Farm* on your right. Make a right, before the sign, onto Skillman's Lane. The farm house is immediately on your left. If you pass the WAWA.....you have gone too far!



Restrooms are available at the WAWA on the corner of Cozzens Lane and Route 27.

What is RU Campus Protestant Ministry? Where is Trinity House?



Trinity House is across the street from Second Reformed Church! You certainly can't miss the large cross and sign "We trust." Mike Beals has been attending the RCPM Board meetings since June, and he is becoming acquainted with their ministry. Rev. Barbara Heck is the

director. In September Barbara joined SRC members in greeting students during our welcome Outreach out front.

Mike offers the following observations about RCPM: The RCPM is reaching out to students in a variety of ways for them to discuss their faith, learn as young Christians and have fellowship together. RCPM will also contact any Reformed Church college students who are currently at RU and invite them to become involved in their programs, but the church must first send contact information to Rev. Heck.

RPCM offers weekly gatherings for students including:

Mondays: Bible Study 12:30-2p.m.,
Tuesdays: Forum Discussions on the 1st and 3rd of the month 8-9:30 p.m.
Wednesday: Dinner on the House 5-6:30 p.m.
Thursdays: Liturgy with You, Lunch on Us 12:30-2 p.m.

Many Reformed churches in the area make RPCM one of its local missions that are financially supported. SRC has not been a supporting congregation of late. SRC might also consider offering its support through in-kind donation of use of the sanctuary for larger gatherings. A student working with RPCM did express some interest in holding a forum on world hunger, sponsored by OXFAM, at Second Reformed Church. This will be something for us to consider in the near future.

If you would like to see SRC take a more active supporting role of this Campus Ministry program, either through financial support by making it one of our missions we support, and/or agreeing to have RCPM programs held in our facilities, speak to one of our members on the consistory. Thank You!

Phyllis & Mike Beals



Do you Possess Worship Gifts? In an effort to keep our services varied and dynamic, the worship committee is looking for people who would like to participate in the services on Sunday mornings. Do you enjoy reading scripture? Would you like to share a message with the children for the Children's Sermon? Are you gifted in writing prayers that you would like to share with the congregation? We'd love to hear from you! There are sign up sheets on the bulletin board in the hall. Please sign up for any activity that you are willing to provide. The worship Committee or Rev. Rienstra will then get in touch with you about when we can use your gift of service.

Annie Hays

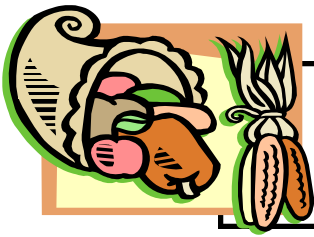
Christian Education: Traveling with Abraham & Sarah

The children of SRC's Sunday School program have been immersed in learning about the promise made to Abraham and Sarah, and their great faith that helped them to trust God and travel far from their home to establish a new home. The students even made traveling satchels to bring home the idea of traveling. The meaning of covenant has been emphasized, thinking about the covenants God has made with his people over time. The greatest covenant of all being in the promise of eternal life for everyone who believes in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

The children have made their own covenants with God, individually thinking about what each can promise, or try to do over the next six weeks to be close to God. One child promises to pray 100 times a day! Another wants to give \$2.00 a week to purchase a rabbit for a family in far away lands through Heifer Int'l. Some promise to attend Sunday School 4 out of the next 6 weeks!

Musically, they are having great fun with some of the VBS music, led by **Alice Beals, Sydney and Georgie Wade! Mrs. Koops** has introduced some music for them to participate in Advent worship time. We said a special prayer of thanks for the great service and dedication of Mrs. Koops for all her years of service in music and ministry. Wherever two, three, six or more are gathered in Jesus' name there we will find the spirit of the Lord at work...and so we do!

Phyllis Beals



FALL

November Ushers

6—Communion—Helmut Horr, Glenn Orban
John O'Shea & Kathleen Williamson

13—Hap Harris, Helen Pally, Ann Hays & Dawn Harris

20—Ashley & Kevin Chibbaro, Curly Boelhouwer & Steve Sandor

27—Curly Boelhouwer, Dawn Harris, Ann Hays & Kathleen Williamson

November Coffee Hosts

6—Barbara McWilliams

13—Helen & Steve Sandor

20—Martha Palmer & Mary Belasco

27—The Mount Family



SRC Youth Group Events

Reminder to all YOUTH GROUP members:

The first trip will be the RU vs. Navy football game on October 29th.

The second event will be bowling after church on November 13.

Come and bring your friends!

We'll provide transportation to the lanes & home again.

Contact Mike Beals or Ann Hays if you plan on attending