



July 2006

SECOND THOUGHTS

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FROM THE DESK OF

REV. ANDY RIENSTRA

People are watching



Recently one of my friends was riding with another man through some very beautiful sections of Sussex County, New Jersey. It was a magnificent day with brilliant blue sky, bright sunshine, and perfect summer temperatures. My friend remarked on the wonder of God's creative imagination. Immediately the fellow shot back with this remark: "Did the same God who made all this also kill the Jews in W.W.II and cause Hurricane Katrina?"

"How do you respond to that kind of question," was what my friend asked. How do we? Is it possible to use the right words to convince someone who doesn't believe?

Elizabeth Barrett Browning put it this way:

"Earth's crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God:
But only he who sees takes off his shoes—
The rest sit round it and pluck blackberries."

There are certain people who simply lack the gift of faith and as much as we may try to persuade them other wise, our words fall on deaf ears. They are like the hard soil of which Jesus spoke in the Parable of the Sower. The seed falls on that soil, but can find no place to catch root, and birds come along, eat it up and the seed of faith never grows.

The best way we can respond to such people is to reflect God's presence and power in our lives. Many years ago some Christian missionaries from New England went to Hawaii and were warmly received by the natives, but when the missionaries began to tell stories about how cold it got back in New England, the natives began to wonder. The missionaries told of water so cold it became hard enough to walk on. The natives laughed at such absurdity. Consequently they were reluctant to believe other things these missionaries were relating.

After some time however things changed. The natives experienced the kindness with which the missionaries related to them. They gradually discovered that the missionaries could be trusted to do what they promised. Their lives told a story that moved these simple people to not only want to know more about cold water that became hard, but about the God these missionaries proclaimed.

That is our principal weapon for combating unabashed unbelief. By our fruits they shall come to know the One in whom we believe. Some time ago a man told me about his coming to faith. He had many doubts, but he worked with a fellow who was always early to work in order to have time to read his Bible. When work began this man put his Bible away and never did any preaching to any of his co-workers, but he was ever kind and most helpful, a very understanding person. One day he asked this man what motivated him - what conditioned him to behave as he did.

His answer - "I try to let God live through me. God is always willing; sometimes I'm not."

He was open and willing enough however, for God to use him to get the attention of that one man who came to faith through him. May God use each of us in a similar fashion. *"For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."* Eph 2:10

YOUTH GROUP MEMBERS

Please let Annie Hays know when you are available to help out in Nursery....hey you will be paid this summer!!
Email Annie at jaalh@msn.com or Kathy Fisher in the church office at SRCNB@aol.com



Letter from NBTS

May 22, 2006

Dear Andy:

Thank you so much for graciously opening your doors to New Brunswick Theological Seminary for its Baccalaureate Service on Friday evening, May 19.

Second Reformed Church is a second home to us and provides a beautiful setting for our graduates, their families and our academic community to gather on such a momentous occasion. The exquisite singing of the Central College A Cappella Choir filled your choir loft, your church and our hearts with their spiritually uplifting performance. It was a truly memorable evening.

Thank you, again, Andy for your welcome and, even more, for your friendship which we value and cherish.

Sincerely,
Gregg A. Mast
President

Many Thanks to our Christian Education Staff

The consistory and congregation of SRC want to give a big thanks to the following members for their outstanding contribution to the education and spiritual formation of our youth during this past year. Their hard work and faithfulness have benefited not only the children, but have also helped to touch all of our hearts by enriching our worship experiences as a congregation:

**Michael Beals
Phyllis Beals
Judy Chibbaro
Annie Hays
Taylor Hays
Marilyn Koops
Ellen Van Glahn**



Mark Your Calendars: Congregational Meetings

September 17th & October 1st

Plans are being made for two congregational meetings in Demarest Hall (our gym), after worship on **Sundays, September 17th & October 1st**. It is imperative that members attend both meetings. The October meeting is a follow-up to September's mtg.

The purpose of these meetings is to provide us with an opportunity to reflect on what members want to see in their church and in their pastor for our future.

More details to follow!



June 2006 Financial Figures:

	June	Year To Date
Income rec'd:	\$ 10,504	116,358
Expenses :	12,059	95,361
Pledges Rec'd :	3,917	26,101

Rev. George Bitar to Visit Second Church

An exciting program is being planned by area Reformed churches in America denominations to take place this Fall. The Rev. George Bitar, of Lebanon, will spend the month of October preaching and sharing his experiences as a Christian minister in a predominately muslim part of the world.

In return, our churches, will host events providing opportunities for dialogue on Christian muslim issues. Do look and listen for further details. Your ideas and assistance will be needed and much appreciated. Below is a tentative schedule of his appearances:

Week of October 2nd—First Reformed church
Week of October 9th—Suydam Street Reformed

Week of October 16th—SRC

Week of October 23rd—Middlebush Reformed
Week of October 30th—Highland Park Reformed

Martha Palmer

Annual Picnic: Sunday, August 27th

Members of the Collegiums of Reformed Churches will gather together for an all church Worship Service and Picnic on **August 27th**.

We will follow our usual routine: bring a dish to share with others, bring your own chair to use at the service and for eating, and plan to enjoy a splendid day in God's Beautiful World!

More information on place and time will be provided as soon as you receive more details.



Summer Worship

In July and August, worship will begin one half-hour earlier, to take advantage of (possibly) cooler temperatures earlier in the morning. This summer, again, we will hold ALL SERVICES here at Second Reformed's Church building. Beginning at 9:30 am. The exception will be on the fourth Sunday of August (the 27th), when we expect to join with other Collegiate Reformed Congregations for outdoor worship and a picnic.

**Worship in July & August – 9:30 am
At Second Reformed**

Vacation Bible School

VBS will be held this summer at Highland Park Reformed Church **August 21 - 25** from 9-noon on the first day and 9:30 to noon for the rest of the week. We are using a new curriculum this year focusing on *God's Family in Action*. There will be **crafts, story telling, music, games and snacks** as well as a special program for 7th and 8th grade children to provide dramatic messages for the younger children each day..

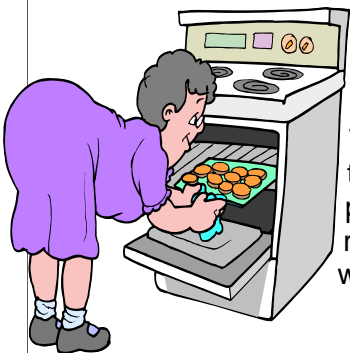
VBS is open to children who are four years old and up through sixth grade. Any seventh or eighth grade students are welcome to help with the drama portion or as general helper/volunteers. If you are in need of transportation for your child(ren) just let us know and we will take care of it for you. Registration is strongly suggested so that we can be certain to have enough supplies. We are asking for all registrations to be in by **July 30**.

Look for the registration forms on the table heading towards the parlor for coffee hour. You can return them to Ann Hays or Kathy Fisher in the Church Office. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Ann 732-828-8345.

KITCHEN TASK FORCE

The time has come when we must do something about the upstairs kitchen!

The stove is a fire hazard and the cabinets are full of junk mixed with useful items. In order to have a functional kitchen, we need to do some work. If you are interested in being part of this task force, please see Annie Hays. We will meet and discuss what our options are. We can then make recommendations to the consistory. We need people with muscles to do the heavy work and people with some kitchen design ideas. Everyone is welcome!! It may end up to be rather "dirty work" but we might get some really good meals out of it once things are working again!!



Neighbor's Breakfast

On **July 24**, between 7:30am - 9:00am, there will be a "neighbors" breakfast in David Demarest Hall. Please come and have breakfast and enjoy the Christian fellowship with our neighbors. If you are able to help staff the kitchen or help with setup/take down, please contact Hap Harris at 732 545-9243 or Hapsfarm@aol.com.

July

Coffee Hour



2—Hap Harris & Dawn Harris
 9—Ann Hays & Marilyn Koops
 16—Kathleen & Tom Williamson
 23—Helmut & Deanna Horr
 30—Tom & Fliss O'Shea

Ushers

2—Communion—Helmut Horr & Hap Harris
 9—Hap Harris & Annie Hays
 16—Kathleen Williamson & Dawn Harris
 23—Curly Boelhouwer & Annie Hays
 30—Curly Boelhouwer & Rich Horr

July 2006

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 9:30 am Communion 10:30 am Self-Study Mtg. 10:30 Coffee Hour	3	4	5	6	7	8
9 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Coffee Hour	10	11 12:00 pm Women's Lunch 7:00 pm Consistory Mtg	12	13	14	15 Consistory Training
16 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Coffee Hour	17	18	19	20	21	22
23 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Coffee Hour	24	25	26	27	28	29
30 9:30 am Worship Coffee Hour	31					

Congregational Care Committee Wants to Know . . . If you or anyone in your home is in need of any help such as seasonal yard work or occasional repairs. The Deacons want to provide help to church members and neighbors with meals during times when one of our members may be ill.

Please let **Kathleen Williamson**, Chair of the Congregational Care Committee know if you have a need or think someone else may need some help. Kathleen's home phone is 732 605-9345 or email: semuncia@aol.com.