



The Blawenburg Beacon

September 2009 Issue

A newsletter for the members and friends
of *The Blawenburg Reformed Church*

An Exciting and Hopeful Year to Come

Autumn ushers in a season that is as hopeful for the Christian church as New Year's Day is for the rest of the country, and this year promises to be as exciting as any in recent history. Beginning in September BRC will once again blossom in the areas of Christian Education, Fellowship and Worship.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Although our enrollment is down considerably due to the present economic crunch, the *Blawenburg Village School Christian Pre-School* opens its doors to a new semester with over 60 children crossing our thresholds the week of September 10.

On Sunday, September 13, after worship with communion, our entire church will gather for some fellowship, fun and refreshment at the Kickoff Picnic in and behind Memorial Hall. Fun events will include a co-ed softball game between the over 40s and the under 40s, basketball, badminton, egg toss and more.

On 9/20 Pastor Rich and Susie will be hosting at the parsonage for a cookout the new Affirmation of Faith group and their families. Eleven young people have been invited to join what used to be called Confirmation Class: *Renee Christenson, Cassie De La Cruz, Patrick Fritzingler, Barry Gurzo, Hannah Haaijer, Concetta Magliochetti, Vincent Magliochetti, Ariel Meyer, Emma Murphy, Morgan Van Liew and Olivia Vande Woude*. Our get-togethers will include Bible studies, movie clips, special outings and more. September 20 also signals the start of Sunday school, with most of our great teachers returning for a new season.

Wednesday morning Bible studies will resume on September 9 at 10 a.m. in Memorial Hall, as will the Sunday after church discussion group on the 20th.

FELLOWSHIP

A church that plays together stays together and the Fall promises plenty of fun.

In addition to the aforementioned Kickoff Picnic, we're planning Tuesday Poker and Pool Nights in Memorial Hall for the men, and Thursday Bunco Nights at *Dee Dee Gebhardt's* house for the women.

Also for the women, the monthly breakfast and book discussion group, called the Mary and Marthas, will resume meeting on the first Saturday of every month at 7 a.m. New this year is Dora's Workshop under the leadership of *Bernice Van Nostrand*, which invites the crafters

among us to keep Dora's passion alive and work together for upcoming fund-raising events. Stay tuned to the website/internet, Sunday announcements and The Beacon for further info.

Movie Nights will have a different look this fall. In addition to a family-friendly feature these twice-monthly get-togethers on Friday evening at 6:30 will include classic cartoons (Looney Tunes, Rocky and Bullwinkle, Popeye, etc.) and classic TV shows (Little Rascals, Abbott and Costello, Ernie Kovacs, The Three Stooges, and more). Look for theme and costume nights for classic films like "Star Wars." All will be held in the Memorial Hall Theater.

For the guys, look for trips to the Somerset Patriots and possibly the New Jersey Nets, as the latter continues to emphatically promote special group nights.

To fill the void created when the Elks Club stopped serving lunch, we've begun serving it here in Cook Hall on Wednesdays at 11:30. We've already drawn over twenty people and it appears the turn-out will grow after school resumes. Please join us.

Please plan to attend also the special SMA (spinal muscular atrophy) fundraiser in Skillman's Van Horn Park on September 26. *Sue Weingart*, who lost her daughter Cindy to SMA, will be hula-hooping to raise money for those presently suffering from this disease, like Griffen Kinginer. Scientists say a cure within our lifetime is very possible.

WORSHIP

Once school resumes, lay participation in the Sunday services will resume as well. Since last summer's Free Preach Sunday seemed to be a success, we'll probably have another sometime in the fall. Also, choir rehearsals start up again under the direction of newly engaged *Chi-Yi Chen*. Watch for a children's choir, the sanctuary choir of course, and - who knows - maybe even a junior high choir (but don't tell them we're discussing this).

The above things are already planned, but there is sure to be more in the coming months. Keep checking our website (www.blawenburgchurch.org) and the Sunday announcements for additional activities and events.

On behalf of all of us: Welcome Back! And have a great autumn.

Peace,

Pastor Rich

Dora's Workshop

On October 7 at 1: I will be sewing in Dora's Workshop in Memorial Hall. I hope I am not alone. I need people to sew, cut, iron, dig ideas out of books, share ideas of what will sell, Embroider, knit hats for monkeys, etc, etc. The list is endless---even someone to visit with is good! No one wants to work alone. Plan on coming and having a fellowship time. We might get some things made for the Bazaar, or a Happy Basket for a shut in, or a Linus Quilt, or even something for yourself. Come and See.

Bernice

Note: Talk to me if you are interested in an evening time and or interested in learning to crochet with Barbara Antoniewicz.

Church Picnic

Sunday, Sept 13th, will be our Sunday School family kick off picnic. Please put this on your calendar and try to come. It is a great time to see old friends and catch up with those who have been on vacation during the summer months. Hot Dogs, Hamburgers, drinks, plates and utensils will be provided. We ask that you bring a salad or dessert (6-8 people) to share. Also bring along and lawn chairs and games you wish to play.

A sign-up sheet will be at coffee hour on Sept. 6th.

Thanks so much and see you all on the 13th.

Evelyn Cochran, Chair
Family Life Committee

Pastor Rich, an experienced composition instructor, will be happy to help you with your college application essays. The summer is a great time to work on the general application question.

Just email him at rvandoren2000@yahoo.com



Former member Janet Ulrey participated in an Iron Man event at Lake George this summer. Cheered on by Don and Ethel Terhune, Bill, Wendy and Will Herbert and her husband, Jim Roberts, Janet was able to complete the event and become an “Iron Man.” Congratulations!

Properties

Cook Hall Entrance

The keypad for Cook Hall will have its combination changed sometime in the near future. Obviously we cannot publish this information. If you need access to Cook Hall after the combination is changed, please call the church office (609-466-3108) or email (BRC2001@msn.com). Thank you

Parsonage

The trim at the parsonage has been power washed and painted and looks great.

Archive Material

The file cabinets have been moved from Cook Hall to Memorial Hall. Now the file boxes need to make their way over to Memorial Hall before September 28th when Ethel will start painting the closet.

Croatia Update

Slower summer pace provides planning for fall

By Nancy Titus

Summertime! We're feeling it here in Osijek. Temperatures have been scorching; mosquitoes have been biting; and students have been leaving. This is the time of year when we get to reduce our frenetic pace of classes, exams and papers and move along at something approaching normal as we wind up things at the seminary and plan for summer projects and the next school year.

Our summer involves three trips. First, we will go to Geneva for the 500th anniversary of John Calvin's birth. This is a short trip to commemorate one of the most important figures in our Reformed tradition. As part of our preparation, every member of the family is reading and learning more about Calvin's life and his theology as well as some interesting things about Geneva itself.

As soon as we return, Eric will leave for Lyon, France, where he will most likely be the only American at a meeting of the Conference of European Churches. He is a delegate representing the Reformed Christian Church in Croatia. Participation at such an international gathering is one of the gifts we bring to the Croatian Reformed Church, as the leader of the church here is too elderly for this kind of travel and there is no pastor able to take his place because of the necessity of proficiency in the English language.

The Conference of European Churches is a fellowship of 126 Orthodox, Protestant, Anglican and Old Catholic churches (though not officially the Roman Catholic church) and 43 associated organizations from all countries on the European continent. The organization began 50 years ago to show that the church was not divided even though Europe itself was cut into two blocks. It seeks to help churches across Europe move into a deeper unity in Christ and for this, its 13th assembly, the group has focused a great deal of attention on "the Europe we are hoping for" as members have tried to envision the Europe of 20 years from now.

Our third trip is our return to the United States, where we will spend the rest of the year. After checking in with our sending church in Fishkill, New York, we will travel to Oklahoma and Texas to visit family. We are all anxious to see them as it has been two years since the kids and I saw parents and grandparents and three or four years since Eric has seen them.

We will again take up temporary residence in Pultneyville, New York, on Lake Ontario near Rochester, while we visit churches during the fall and early winter. While there will not be time to visit all our supporting churches, we will visit as many as we can. Global Mission is putting together our speaking schedule, and the first priority is for those churches we have never visited. Global Mission staff members will begin contacting churches in the next few weeks to coordinate scheduling.

Though we will be in the States for five months, we will only miss three months of the seminary year. Even so, we will continue much of our work the same as if we were here. For example, Eric will work on his dissertation, spending most of his time when not visiting churches, researching and writing this important work. I will focus on Croatian language study as well as planning English classes and coordinating the English Department at the seminary from afar.

We ask for your prayers for our home leave as there are many details that still need to be worked out. Chief among our concerns is the need for a car. We have been hearing about great deals on new cars and hope someone among our churches out there might be ready to replace an older car which they then would be willing to loan or sell us at a good price. Also, there are many details on both sides of the Atlantic, including who will teach English at the seminary. Please pray with us that God will make all these details fall into place.

Eric and Nancy Titus are RCA missionaries in Osijek, Croatia, where they work at the Evangelical Theological Seminary and with the Reformed Christian Church in Croatia. They have three children: Samuel, 14, Valerie, 11, and Penny, 9.

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Dated Material

The Blawenburg Reformed Church is a covenant community of God's people united in Christ through the Holy Spirit. We commit our gifts to worship, hospitality, life-long learning, serving those in need, and proclaiming the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ.