

FORT PLAIN and SPRAKERS REFORMED CHURCHES SPRING NEWSLETTER

- May 2024 -

LOAVES AND FISHES FOOD PANTRY

The pantry is now open on **WEDNESDAY** from 9:00am to 5:00pm

This change in day and time allows us to streamline shopping, shelf stocking, volunteers, and paperwork. It also allows those who work to use the pantry when needed and we can now utilize the gifts of our local students to help. If you would like to volunteer, there is a sign-up sheet in the kitchen with shifts for every Wednesday. We seek to have three or more people working each shift.

You can also help by donating any of the following items: Elbow macaroni, spaghetti, pasta sauce, tuna, peanut butter, grape or strawberry jam, instant oatmeal, rice crispy's, cheerios, canned beets, corn or beans, canned fruit cocktail or peaches, boxed macaroni and cheese, ramen noodles, pasta sides or packets of instant potatoes, creamed or tomato soup. You may leave any of these items in the kitchen.

If you prefer, monetary donations can be made out to the FPRC with Loaves and Fishes in the memo line. Place those donations in the offering plate.

We are grateful for the many who are volunteering and donating to make this ministry so successful.

Please prayerfully consider how you can make a difference by pitching in with us at the pantry.

On another Pantry note, the Montgomery County Office of the Aging is moving the Fort Plain Food Pantry from The Fort Plain Senior Center to **28 Church Street**. It will be open every **2nd and 4th Monday** from 9am to 2pm.

During the months of June and July there will be a Bible Study offered on Sunday mornings at 9:30am.

The dates will be June 23 and 30, July 14 and 28.

There is a sign up in the back of the church to help Pastor Ryan prepare.

If you plan to attend please sign up and

INDICATE ANY PARTICULAR TOPIC YOU WOULD LIKE TO LOOK INTO.

The Faith Formation Team at Fort Plain continues to collect bottles and cans. There are two garbage cans near the back RAMP entrance to the church. Please place your bagged bottles and cans in or very near the cans and we will get them returned.

THANK YOU for your support of the Christian Education program.

*This year the FORT PLAIN SENIOR BACCALAUREATE worship will be held
June 20th, 7:00 pm at the Our Lady of Hope Catholic Church
Please join us as we send our graduates off with God's blessing.*

Church Website: fortplainandsprakersreformed.org

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

We shared in the Winter Newsletter that the consistories of Fort Plain and Sprakers have been in conversation about formalizing our shared ministry by covenanting as a Multi-Parish ministry. With the help of the Schenectady Classis, we have developed a Multi-Parish agreement and are ready to move forward.

The consistories have continued to discuss how to envision our future ministry together as we share Pastor Ryan as our Minister of Word and Sacrament and as we grow our outreach and mission in the Mohawk Valley.

Our Multi-Parish agreement around sharing the services of Pastor Ryan includes sharing the expense of having a full-time pastor; collaboration on special worship services; and shared mission and ministry opportunities as they present. We believe this agreement will not only help both of our congregations to continue to engage in ministry, but to position us to thrive as we navigate the changing culture, church, community, and world around us. This agreement has grown out of years of prayer, learning, and listening to the Spirit.

In some ways nothing is really changing. Pastor Ryan is the installed pastor at Fort Plain, and the supervising pastor at Sprakers and we do share much of the pastoral services of her calling. However, nothing has been codified, in writing, or formally approved by our Classis of Schenectady. This agreement makes it formal and a visible sign of our desire to follow where Christ is leading our two congregations and our ministry. Once fully approved, Pastor Ryan will be installed at Sprakers.

We have tried to keep both congregations in the loop of our conversations, and some of you have asked us some good questions and helped us to polish our agreement so that it truly reflects our ministry together. Thank you for that. We want to offer you an opportunity to ask any other questions and to give us your support. To this end, we ask you to stay after church on Sunday, June 2 for feedback. If you are unable to make that please feel free to speak with any consistory member or put a question in writing in the offering plate before the June 2nd worship.

You may also email Bev Dingman (lizingman52@yahoo.com) or Diane Reynolds (drteach1@hotmail.com)

Please continue to keep us in prayer, as we are praying for each of you. We believe that God is up to something in our congregations and seek to discover what that is and endeavor to follow wherever God leads.

In Christ,

The consistories of Sprakers and Fort Plain Reformed Churches



**During the month of June, Pastor Ryan will be doing a worship series on
Metamorphosis: Becoming a Christian Character.**

You are invited to read N. T. Wright's book

After You Believe: Why Character Matters, available from Amazon.

This book along with various scriptures will be the inspiration for this sermon series.

Sprakers says, “Thank You!”

Sprakers Reformed Church recently had a very successful Rummage and Bake Sale and would like to thank everyone who participated! We had many donations and shoppers from the community and surrounding area, as well as from our sister church at Fort Plain.

One participant remarked on what a tremendous amount of work it is to set up and organize a rummage sale and wondered if it was really worth it? Couldn't they just make a big contribution of money instead?

As tempting as that seems as we move tables and chairs, unpack boxes and bags, organize and price, and then figure out what to do with everything that's left, a rummage sale offers much more than just bargain prices. It brings the church community together as it soon becomes “all hands on deck!” New relationships are made as well as old ones strengthened and deepened. It brings the larger community together as well through new introductions and renewed connections. And it provides a much needed mission in offering gently used items at a reasonable price instead of just discarding them in this “throw away” world we now live in.

So yes, Virginia, rummage sales are worth the trouble and effort. Thank you, again!



5 Years Later and Going Strong!

In 2019, the Sprakers Reformed Church took a giant leap in faith and unlocked their doors to provide a comfort station to travelers on the Erie Canal Bike Trail. Water, snacks, bathroom facilities, and emergency shelter are provided. Hundreds of visitors from all over the country stop each year and it has proved to be an overwhelming success. We even get a few international guests each year! Our guest book and whiteboard soon became full of very appreciative comments of thanks and gratitude. Some travelers reach out to us months later with bike supplies to offer to others, as well as donations to carry on this mission. It has been a true blessing for our church as an opportunity to reach out to others and provide hospitality. Volunteers keep everything clean and stocked, as well as providing donations of water and snacks.

So if you're ever walking or biking by, stop in for a break!



WELCOME to Charles Schermerhorn the new Janitor at the Fort Plain Reformed Church. Charles is a Fort Plain graduate, works at the Fort Plain Central School, and is attending college online.

If you see Charles around, please welcome him to our congregation!

**Did you know that
the Sprakers Reformed Church has a
monthly Saturday evening worship service?
It's called the Gathering and is held
every fourth Saturday of the month at 6:00 pm.
Pastor Ryan is the worship leader and communion is
always served. Following each service there is a
light supper and great fellowship. The service is
very similar to what is offered the next day
at Fort Plain for the regular 11:00 am service.
Sprakers also worships at 9:00 am on the first and third
Sundays of the month with Pastor Ryan leading.
These are other worship opportunities as well as the
traditional 11:00 am service each Sunday at Fort Plain.**



WORSHIP AT SPRAKERS REFORMED JUNE-AUGUST

Sundays at 9:00 am	June 2 and 16 July 7 and 21 Aug. 4 and 18
Second Saturday	June 8, July 13, August 10
The Gathering	June 22, July 27, August 24

FORT PLAIN REFORMED WORSHIPS AT 11:00 AM EVERY SUNDAY

Communion is celebrated each first Sunday at both churches and at each Gathering



The Fort Plain and Sprakers Reformed Churches share a webpage.

We could use some help keeping it current!

Do you like to fiddle with the computer?

Like posting items on social media?

**If you would like to hear more about what is involved
in keeping our social media/webpage up to date,
please call Pastor Ryan (518-466-3340)**