

Calendar of events

Saturdays: Saturday Night Live Open AA meeting in the Education Building, 8PM.

Today: Sunday worship: Fourth Sunday after Epiphany with the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, 10:30AM. First Sunday brunch to follow worship in the Education Building. A free-will offering will be collected to support the ministries of the church.

February 3: New Jericho Choir rehearsal in the Lower Auditorium, 5:30PM.

February 5: Adult Education in Coventry House, 10AM & 7PM.

Study: Who Was Jesus and Who Did He Become? Tracing the impact of Jesus on cultural, political, social, and economic history.

February 6: Joyful Noise Adult Choir rehearsal in the Lower Auditorium, 6:30PM.

February 8: Woman's Club of Middletown meeting in the Education Building, 11:30AM.

February 9: Handbell Choir rehearsal in the Lower Auditorium.

February 9: Sunday worship: Fifth Sunday after Epiphany, 10:30AM. Deacons' Offering will be collected in worship.

February 9: Worship Committee meeting after coffee hour, 1 PM.

Middletown Reformed Church Vision

Statement

(Adopted by the Consistory 9 May 2016)

Middletown Reformed Church is a welcoming and affirming congregation, where the inclusive grace of God is the guiding principle for all our ministries. We are people of faith committed to boldly proclaiming and intentionally living out God's command to do justice, share love, show mercy, and walk humbly with our God in our local and global communities. We are a church on the side of love for all God's people – providing for those who are in need, advocating for all oppressed peoples, and caring for our earth – we love because God first loved us.

Consistory

Elders

Dianne Asay, Financial Secretary
Angela Hank
Peter Larson, Clerk
Lisa Leidecker, Vice President
Dan Pannebaker
Cindy Reya, Co-treasurer
Rev. Tricia Sheffield, President

Deacons

Pamela Ehrlich, Co-treasurer
Julie Hertzog
Taralynn VanBrunt, Alternate Clerk
Jamie Zeller

In our prayers

For the healing journey: Chris Coll; Mercedes' mother Fran; Aris Moles; James S; Tom Smigel; Nancy Spayd; Nicole; Steve

Stalgaitis

For God's support, strength, & comfort: Angela Hank & Lisa VanSavage as they grieve the loss of Christine; Erin; Linda Grasso; Harper; Jinny Millward; Linda Millward; Carol Murphy; Patty Pannebaker; Valerie

For God's guidance: Community Church of Keyport

Please continue to remember all those who have served our country, especially those who are serving: David Celeste & Joseph Petrone, United States Air Force; Michael Howlett & Lloyd Petrone, United States Marine Corps

Social media

Website: www.mrchurch.us

Facebook: Middletown Reformed Church

YouTube: MRC: A Fabulous Church of Love

Instagram: [middletownreformednj](https://www.instagram.com/middletownreformednj)

Spotify: Middletown Reformed Church podcast



Scan the QR code for a link to our online giving opportunities.

The flowers today are given by the Flower Fund.

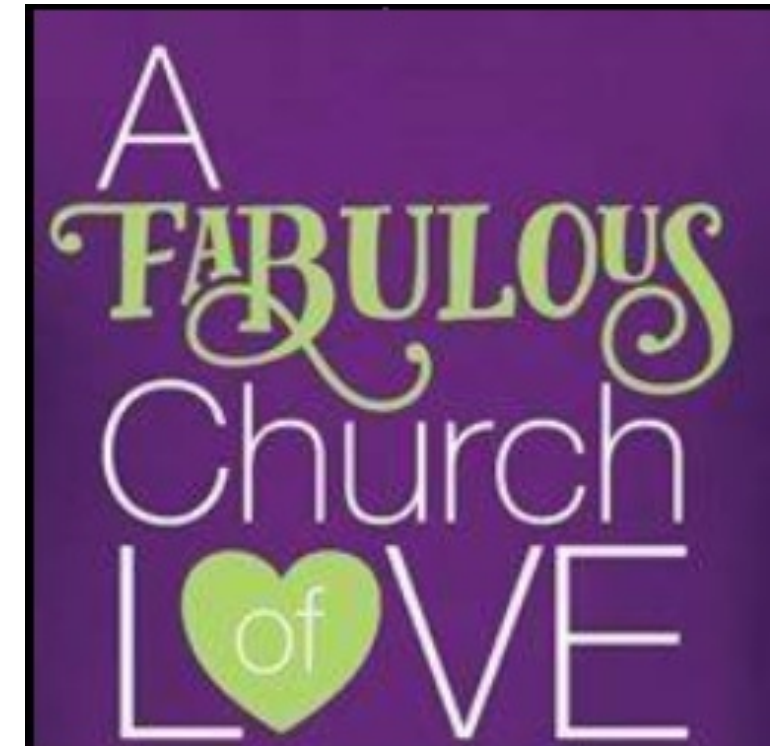
If you would like to place flowers in the Sanctuary for worship, contact Dolores Hofmann at 732.671.9308. The cost is \$25.

Our greeters today are Taralynn Van Brunt & Jamie Zeller.

Our greeters next week will be Angela Hank & Lisa Leidecker.

Our 2025 RCA Annual Denominational Assessment of \$107.10 per member is due. The total amount for the year is \$5,569.55, which the church pays on a quarterly basis (\$1,392.39). This assessment supports the work of our Classis, Regional Synod, and the General Synod. The per capita dues of \$7 for the United Church of Christ is also due. Total amount for both RCA and UCC is \$114.10 per member. If you wish to contribute toward the assessment/dues, please mark your check in the memo section "Denominational assessment/ Dues. You are welcome to request information at any time from the treasurers regarding the current fiscal status of the church.

Middletown Reformed Church



A welcoming & affirming congregation

Middletown Reformed Church

Rev. Tricia Sheffield, PhD, *Pastor*
Thomas Martucci, *Director of Music*
Dan Pannebaker, *Worship Leader*
Julie Hertzog, *Coordinator for Children & Youth*

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

2 February 2025

We approach God

Prelude *I Can't Thank You Enough*

Votum & greeting

Passing of the peace

Message for all ages

Call to worship (from *Worship Ways*, inspired by Psalm 71)

One: In the Holy One, we take refuge; let us never be put to shame. Our praise is continually of you.

Many: In your righteousness deliver us and hear our cries for justice and peace.

One: In the Holy One, we draw strength; let us never be put to shame. Our praise is continually of you.

Many: Be a rock of refuge for the vulnerable, a strong fortress to save creation, for you are our rock and fortress.

One: In the Holy One, we receive courage; let us never be put to shame. Our praise is continually of you.

Many: Rescue us, O my God, from the hand of the wicked, from the grasp of the unjust and cruel, for you, Holy One, are our hope and trust.

*Opening hymn *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling* (351)

Prayer of confession (from *Worship Ways*)

God Who Knows Us, we pray that you form and shape us anew. Remind us who we are and draw us back to you. Transform us in love, correct us with compassion, and lead us with clarity into the paths of righteousness, truth, and peace. Forgive us for the ways that we reject your presence, your guidance, and your will. Redeem and restore us as your beloved creation and active citizens of your kingdom. Through Jesus Christ our Lord we pray, who became what we are to make us what he is. Amen

Kyrie eleison

**Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.**

Assurance of God's grace (from *Worship Ways*)

Liturgist: Hear the good news, beloved: Love never ends. You reflect the goodness, creative work, and imagination of God. The Holy One knows you well and calls you good. Receive the grace of God to live a life that ever transforms and renews through the power of God's abiding, constant, and tangible love.

Law of love/Faithful living

*Halle, Halle (768)

Halle, halle, hallelujah!
Halle, halle, hallelujah!
Halle, halle, hallelujah!
Hallelujah, hallelujah!

We listen to God

Scripture reading Luke 6.1-16 (NT page 55)
Jamie Zeller, liturgist

Anthem *Grace Alone* Joyful Noise Adult Choir

Sermon *When Is the Right Time?* Rev. Tricia Sheffield, PhD

Affirmation of faith (from The Belhar Confession)

(The Belhar Confession has its roots in the struggle against apartheid in southern Africa. It was first drafted in 1982 by the Dutch Reformed Mission Church (DRMC); the DRMC formally adopted the Belhar Confession in 1986. It is now one of the "standards of unity" of the new Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa (URCSA). The Belhar Confession was adopted by the RCA's 2009 General Synod. It was then ratified by two-thirds of the RCA's classes and incorporated into the Book of Church Order as a doctrinal standard at the 2010 General Synod).

We believe that the church must, therefore, stand by people in any form of suffering and need, which implies, among other things, that the church must witness against and strive against any form of injustice, so that justice may roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream; that the church as the possession of God must stand where the Lord stands, namely against injustice and with the wronged; that in following Christ the church must witness against all the powerful and privileged who selfishly seek their own interests and thus control and harm others.

We respond to God

Invitation to the offering

Offertory *Come Quickly, Lord, To Rescue Me* (419)

*Doxology

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below; Praise God, above ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen

Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

The prayers of the people with the Lord's Prayer
You are invited to pray the Lord's Prayer in any version or language you wish.

Ever-loving and holy God, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen

*Closing hymn *How Firm a Foundation* (427, v1-4)

*Benediction

Postlude

*Please stand as you are able.

