

Calendar of events

**Saturdays:** Saturday Night Live Open AA meeting in the Education Building, 8PM  
**Today:** Sunday worship: Eighth Sunday after Pentecost with the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, 10:30AM  
**July 26:** Sunday worship: Ninth Sunday after Pentecost, 10:30AM  
**August 2:** Sunday worship: Tenth Sunday after Pentecost with the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, 10:30 AM. After worship, come to the Education Building for the 21st Annual Lt. Dennis W Zilinski, II Youth Group Memorial Scholarship BBQ & Picnic  
**August 9:** Sunday worship: Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost, 10:30 AM Deacons’ offering collected on this Sunday  
**August 12:** Bayshore Lunch Program, 9:45AM  
**August 14:** Summer days sabbath backyard party at Coventry House, 7-9PM  
**August 16:** Sunday worship: Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost with the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, 10:30AM  
**August 21 - 31:** Pastor Trish on vacation

Consistory

|                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Elders</b><br>Dianne Asay, Financial Secretary, Alt Clerk<br>Dolores Hofmann<br>Beverly Bova Scarano, Vice President<br>Jamie Zeller<br>Rev. Tricia Sheffield, President | <b>Deacons</b><br>Pam Ehrlich<br>Kim Larson, Clerk<br>Dara Steele<br>Abbey Thorpe |
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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.

Notes from Pastor Trish

In the event of a pastoral emergency, please call Pastor Trish 212-729-9150 or e-mail at [pastortrishmrc@gmail.com](mailto:pastortrishmrc@gmail.com). You may also call the Church Office phone at 732-671-1786. Messages are picked up during the week. Pastor Trish’s office hours are Tuesday, 1-3, Wednesday, 2-4, Thursday, 1-3 or by appointment. Weekend and evening times are also available. Her day of Sabbath rest is Monday. She does not answer texts, emails, or phone calls on this day, unless it’s an emergency.

In our prayers

**For the healing journey:** Mike Somma; Jane E; Brian Hegel; Eric Holderbaum; Joy Sheffield; Donovan Mikula; Jim D’Amico; Barbara Mannix; Tom Baldino; Jamie Zeller; Bob Bark; Diane Grady  
**For God’s support, strength, & comfort:** the Thorpe family; Cheryl & Charlie A; John & Patti Wilson; the Hertzog family; Mercedes’ mother, Fran; Florence Horsman; Magdala; Fleming

Please continue to remember all those who have served our country, especially those who are serving: Joseph Petrone, United States Air Force; Michael Howlett & Lloyd Petrone, United States Marine Corps; and all those serving overseas now in the Middle East

Social media

**Website:** [www.mrchurch.us](http://www.mrchurch.us)  
**Facebook:** Middletown Reformed Church  
**YouTube:** MRC: A Fabulous Church of Love  
**Instagram:** middletownreformednj  
**Spotify:** Middletown Reformed Church podcast



Scan the QR code for a link to our online giving opportunities, or go to [www.mrchurch.us/give](http://www.mrchurch.us/give)

The flowers today are from 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 Pam Ehrlich & Dara Steele.  
Our greeters next week are Beverly Bova Scarano & Abbey Thorpe.

Our 2026 RCA Annual Denominational Assessment of \$140.00 per member is due. The total amount for the year is \$5,992.58, which the church pays on a quarterly basis (\$1,492.15). This assessment supports the work of our Classis and the General Synod. The per capita dues of \$7 for the New Jersey Association, UCC is also due. These dues support the work of the Association. Total amount for both RCA and UCC is **\$147.00 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 treasurer 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  
Julie Hertzog, Coordinator for Children & Youth

Eighth Sunday after Pentecost19 July 2026

We approach God

PreludeAlways Do

Votum & greeting

Passing of the peace

Call to worship(adapted from Reclaim Today)  
Deacon Dara Steele, liturgist

All: Lord of the dolphin and the otter, your playfulness pervades the earth. Just as you called children to you, help us to remember ourselves as your children. Take the weight of solemnity off our chests, and replace it with delight and curiosity. Source of Joy, help us see the opportunities for playfulness and laughter in life around us, and let us be inspired to participate in your good gifts. Help holy merriment overflow abundantly in our lives, as a light that reflects you. Amen

\*Opening hymnJoyful, Joyful We Adore Thee (581)

Prayer of confession(adapted from Whitney Hopley)  
All: Thank you for the gift of joy that comes from your goodness. Life often becomes busy and serious, and we admit that we sometimes forget how to slow down and enjoy the simple opportunities you have given us to play. Help us rediscover the wonder and freedom of childlike play. Teach us that not every moment needs to be productive in order to be meaningful. Help us notice and appreciate the wonderful blessings you’re pouring into our lives every day. Fill our lives with playful experiences that lead to joy that points back to you. Let our lives reflect the goodness you’ve shown, so that others can see and say that you have done great things. 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

Law of Love/Faithful living

\*Celtic Alleluia

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

We listen to God

Scripture readingJohn 15.5-15 (NT page 96)

AnthemPraise The Lord

SermonHoly MerrimentRev. Tricia Sheffield, PhD

We respond to God

Paying attention to God(Mary Oliver, One Hundred White-Sided Dolphins on a Summer Day excerpts)  
Fat, black, slick, galloping in the pitch of the waves, in the pearly fields of the sea, they leap toward us, they rise, sparkling, and vanish, and rise sparkling, they breathe little clouds of mist, they lift perpetual smile, they slap their tails on the waves, grandmothers and grandfathers enjoying the old jokes, they circle around us, they swim with us - a hundred white-sided dolphins on a summer day, each one, as God himself could not appear more acceptable a hundred times, in a body blue and black threading through the sea foam, and lifting himself up from the opened tents of the waves on his fishtail, to look with the moon of his eye into my heart, and find there pure, sudden, steep, sharp, painful gratitude that falls . . .

Invitation to the offering

OffertoryAlways Do (Reprise)

\*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

The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper  
(All are welcome to the table of the Lord. Communion bread is free of gluten, dairy, soy, and eggs and the cup is grape juice.)

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 hymnJoy to the World (92)

\*Benediction

Postlude

\*Please stand in body or in spirit

The baptismal font is filled with water every Sunday to remind us of the sign and seal of God’s love for us in our baptism.

+ Our restroom is located downstairs through the entryway next to the filing cabinets.

