

The Reformer

The Reformed Church of Port Ewen



Volume 23 Issue 1

January 2025

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Sunday Church School	2
Women's Ministry News	2
New Years Resolutions	2
"Yellow Pages"	3
Prayer List	3
January Birthdays	4
RCPE Elves	4
Say it with Flowers	4
Stewardship Moment	5
Spread the Word!	5
Jan. 2025 Lectionary	6
Inclement Weather	6
Prayer Shawls available	6
MOM January	7
Luke 2:6-21	7
Message from RCA	8
"Roadside Signs"	8
The Back Pew	9
Movies with Spirit	9
Women's Xmas Luncheon	10
Jan. '25 Calendar	11
Coloring page	ba ck

"STAR LIGHT, STAR BRIGHT, FIRST STAR I SEE TONIGHT"

What a shame it is that adults no longer wish upon a star! Since not all their wishes have come true, many have stopped wishing. Yet, without wishes, life makes little progress. In the musical, South Pacific, we hear, "You got to have a dream, if you don't have a dream, how you gonna have a dream come true?" The people of ancient Israel had a dream that had been planted in their hearts by the prophets. Expect a Messiah! Look for God to send one, who will be a Savior! Amidst oppression, they probably wondered if the promise would ever be fulfilled, but God was preparing something special.

If we dared to wish upon a star today, what would we wish for? What is on our New Year's list? What would make our life more rewarding? What would bring to us the abundant life that Jesus promised? Thinking about this is important. In a way, we are like a child, sitting in front of a birthday cake, watching the candles flicker and slowly burn down. What shall we wish for?

Our wishing is useless, though, unless we have some hope that the wish will be granted. When the Magi saw a star in the heavens and decided to follow it, the journey required a major commitment to work at it diligently. It was the promise at the end that made it all worthwhile. Today, we need to set out on our new year's journey with a clear sense of direction and a willingness to persevere, even when we grow weary and the end is still not quite in sight.

We are not alone in this journey, though, and we are not without guidance. Perhaps, we need to start with some stillness. Think of the calm and peace of early evening when the first star shines. Take time to pray, "God, help me to seek and to discover what it is that will make my life whole. Then, walk with me to help me find it. With your help, my wish can be attained and my life can become more fulfilling. "

Nick



Sunday Church School needs you!



SUNDAY SCHOOL

We would love to have you come and visit the Sunday School and get to know the students.

We start at 8:45 each Sunday and finish at 9:45am.

Come and see what fun goes on.

Bonnie, Colleen and Shannon

Looking for Ladies to help Plan the Year Ahead:



Contact Bonnie Lalor if you would like to help plan some events for the New Year 2025!

For Christians, New Year's can have multiple meanings, including:

A day of celebration

The Bible mentions New Year as a Christian festival that marks the day Jesus was named, circumcised, and presented in the Temple.

A time for reflection

New Year's can be a time to consider the past, judge it, and reorient oneself to the future.

A time for renewal

Some Christians start the New Year with a renewed commitment to God, prayer, and the Bible.

A time to remember God's newness

Isaiah 43:18-19 says, "The old has passed away; behold, the new has come".

A time to love others

Jesus said that the two most important commandments are to love God and to love your neighbor as yourself.



R.C.P.E. Yellow Pages

Data at your fingertips

Prayer Chain

Proverbs 15:29

“The Lord is far from the wicked, but he hears the prayer of the righteous.”

We amplify this power of prayer when we pray together.

To activate the chain for you or someone else, call Katherine Kinsch at 338-6378. That day, a team will be praying for you.

Consistory Meets

*The 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM
Meetings open--call 331-2782 for agenda space.*

Next meeting January 14th

ELDERS

Matt Van Aken

Ray Wells

Linda McCarthy

DEACONS

Colleen Sutton

Tom Gallagher

Monica Kelbaugh



Prayer List

(Prayers will stay on for one month unless notified otherwise)

World — Israel’s conflict, the Middle East, the innocent Palestinians, all of the people attacked in Israel, People of Ukraine, World Peace, Political Leaders, an end to the coronavirus, A solution for the refugee crisis, For all the homeless.

Church Worldwide — Religious persecution in Bangladesh, Persecuted Church (China, Nigeria, North Korea).

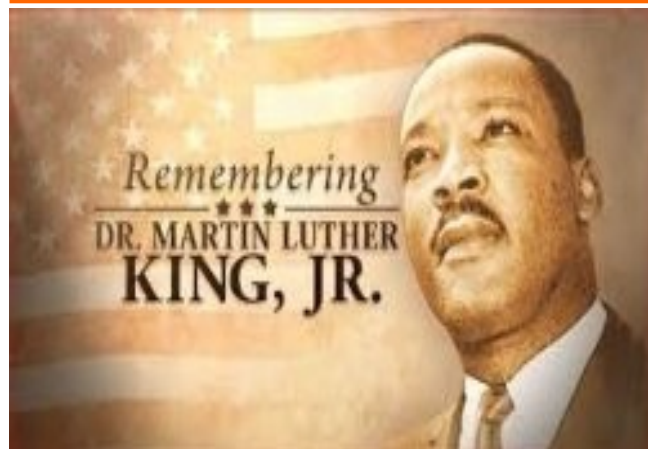
RCA — Sudan Mission, Oman Protestant Church and Bode Family, Al-Amada Center.

Mid-Hudson Classis — Bob Vanderlaan. Petitions of healing, protection, and deliverance — Jennifer Morey, Brie Bauer, Gary Van Voorhis, JoAnne Cross, Bill Geisel, Mike Goodrich, John Pugleesi, Matt Sutton, Mary O’Brien, Jenny, Carol, Rena Beall, Tyson, Charles Barnett III.

Church Family — Fred Harries, Sr., Austin Stokes, Bob Schlichting, Monica Kelbaugh, Rev. Nick Miles, Janis Loring, Elnora McSpirit, Search Committee, Rhoda family, Bob Shelightner.

Homebound/nursing homes/institutions — Bea Hogan, Marie Klippel.

Grieving — Family & friends of: Regina, Robin Ferrini, John Lattieri



January Birthdays

- 2 Linda Bresnahan-McCarthy
- 4 Rick Whitaker
- 12 Ann Beukelman
- 16 Vera Rubeo
- 26 Ray Wells



February Birthdays

- 4 Joseph Relyea
- 10 Mike Kinsch, Sr.
- 12 Bob Shelightner
- 18 Shannon Goodrich
- 19 Joseph Sutton
- 21 Bev Gallagher
- 24 Cheyenne Candlin
- 25 Marie Klippel
- 27 Paula Van Aken

January Anniversary

- 1 Kathleen & Michael DeFelice

RCPE Elves enjoyed wrapping for Christmas Wishes of Ulster County so much that we will be signing up to do this again next year!

Submitted by Paula Van Aken

L to R: Paula Van Aken, Matt Van Aken, Colleen Sutton, Melissa Harshberger, Kathy Kinsch, Joyce Pade, Sunny Scherer, Debra Bogossian, Ben Bogossian.



"Say It With Flowers"



Chancel Flowers

Members can regularly request dedicating altar flowers to commemorate special occasions, memorials, etc. of loved ones (or entities), throughout the year. Please see Anita Hadley to make arrangements. (email: Anita.adh@gmail.com)

Stewardship Moment

Day 13 – Generosity – proportionate to how you have been materially blessed.

Luke 12:48

“From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded;

And from the one who has been entrusted with much,

Much more will be asked.”

Imagine a front desk attendant at a charity opening mail. As she opens one of the envelopes, a wrinkled five-dollar bill falls out with a note attached to it. The note reads simply. “This is all I have to give you. I’m sorry it can’t be more. Yours truly, Mr. Smith.” The attendant is touched by the effort. True, five dollars won’t accomplish a lot at the charity; but it appears that the benefactor has sacrificed tremendously to be able to give to the work of the charity. It is this kind of sacrifice, she thinks to herself, from which we can all learn.

Now imagine that later, while telling her co-workers of the touching deed she mentions Mr. Smith’s name, and one of her co-workers says, “Wait, isn’t that Mr. Smith, the multi-millionaire?” Suddenly, what went from a very touching and inspirational deed becomes not only less spectacular; but, also even deceitful and pathetic. The rich man, not wanting to actually part with his wealth decided that he would just make it look like he had. What was once so commendable suddenly became downright reproachable.

The Bible teaches that in life, those to whom much has been given will have much expected of them (Luke 12:48). There is no percentage or exact figure in the New Testament for what a Christian is to give; but there is certainly an expectation that we give proportionate to what we have. If you have not yet learned to live generously with what you have, consider whether, perhaps, the Lord may want you to change the way you live and the way you give. I can’t tell you exactly what you should do because the Bible doesn’t say so; but, if you are a believer and the Spirit is pricking your conscience, maybe it’s time you stopped sending wrinkled five-dollar bills and stepped forward to the generous life your God has made you capable of living.

Today’s Generosity Challenge:

Today I want you to view your checkbook or bank statement again. This time calculate the last six to twelve months expenditures versus giving before you started your giving journey. What is your real percentage? No cheating – the real number of givings of cash vs. all other gross expenditures. Now, take a big post-it note and put it on your refrigerator. Oh, and remember to write it down, too, at <http://GenerousLife.net/Day13>.

* Michael L. Stickler, *A Journey to Generosity (41 Days to a Generous Life)* the Visiongroup Ltd. 2013. Pages 37-38

Help us spread the word! - Our pastoral candidate, Reverend Brian Steadman, will be preaching on **Sunday, January 5th** at RCPE ! Help us to spread the word to fill the sanctuary. Bring a friend. There will be a potluck luncheon following service in Fairbrother Hall.

Lectionary Scripture Readings for January 2025



First reading	Alternate first	Second reading	Gospel
And Psalm	reading		

January 5,2025	Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14; Ephesians 3:1-12; Matthew 2:1-12
January 12,2025	Isaiah 43:1-7; Psalm 29; Acts 8:14-17; Luke 3:18-17,21-22
January 19,2025	Isaiah 62:1-5; Psalm 36:5-10; 1 Corinthians 12:1-11; John 2:1-11
January 26,2025	Nehemiah 8:1-3,5-6,8-10; Psalm 19; 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a; Luke 4:14-21

Reminder about snowy weather.

In the event we cancel church, a phone chain will be initiated. (make sure you are up to date in our system) and we will let you know if we will be able to have church via *Zoom*.

Thank you from the Worship Committee



The mission of the Prayer Shawl Ministry is to provide a tangible reminder of God's love to those in need. The making of a prayer shawl is a spiritual practice which embodies our thoughts and prayers for the receiver. It is a gift freely given with no strings attached. Made in prayer, as prayer, for prayer, the shawls are passed on hand-to-hand and heart-to-heart.

Joyce Pade has many prayer shawls. If you would like to give one to someone in need, please see her or call the church office.

“May the new year bring you courage to break your resolutions early! My own plan is to swear off every kind of virtue, so that I triumph even when I fall.” —*Aleister Crowley*

The Mission of the Month for January is the Transformation Life Center

The *Transformation Life Center (TLC)* is located in West Park, NY. TLC is a registered non-profit, faith based organization for men and women 18 and up. TLC's Christian discipleship program helps men and women learn how to recover from addiction and manage new lives of hope and freedom in mind, body and soul, through the understanding of rebuilding their true self-identity and purpose found only in Jesus Christ. Upon completing the three phase program, many of the graduates feel called to extend their journey of healing beyond themselves, engaging in missionary work to spread hope and compassion.



If you feel called to donate to this mission, please write checks to Reformed Church of Port Ewen and write "January M.O.M." on the memo line. Online giving through the RCPE is available as well.

Note: The Mission of the Month for November collected \$421.00

Scripture reading: [Luke 2:6-21](#)

Into the darkness of that dank stable, a child is born. Into the darkness of the world, a light shines. From the knotty, gnarled stump of Jesse, a shoot springs up.

This is it. *To you is born this day a Savior. A Savior!*

The waiting is over. Hope is here. This is the olive branch in the beak of Noah's dove, the confirmation that all is not lost. Life will flourish again.

And who gets to witness it? Who gets the privilege of being called over to see the solitary green shoot, so fresh it hasn't yet unfurled?

The shepherds.

Not the clean, charismatic professionals with access to big marketing budgets and platforms to publicize the news. Just a shabby bunch of shepherds. Maybe it's because they share the vocation of the one who was just born; like him, they tend and guide a dim-witted flock, prone to wandering. Maybe they're more likely to rejoice in his birth rather than feel threatened by it. Maybe they understand best of all what his coming means.

And guess what: today, you're among those shepherds. You get to hear the news, to be a witness. You're invited to the birthing room of Jesus. You're sent back to glorify and praise God for all you've heard and seen.

What a privilege! Cherish it. Go see the Savior and come back singing.

Prayer

Welcome, Jesus! How thrilled and grateful I am that you willingly entered into the darkness of the world to bring your light and life. The life you bring is just the beginning of a whole new creation in your Spirit. I can't wait to see what's yet to come. Amen.

***"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors "***

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

As we approach this Christmas season, I am reminded of the special yet challenging nature of the holidays. This year holds even deeper significance for our family, as my dad passed recently after a long battle with dementia, and it has been just one year since my father-in-law passed away from cancer and the complications of a fall.

The holiday season has always been a time for joy, reflection, and celebration, but for many of us, it can also be a season of grief. It's a time when the absence of loved ones is felt even more deeply, and the realities of loss become even more poignant. In my own experience, I've found that while Christmas brings warmth and hope, it also brings moments of sorrow as we remember those we've lost. This duality can make care giving and supporting those who are grieving even more complex.

As leaders in the church, we are called to care for the hurting, to offer compassion to those who are navigating grief during this time, and to walk alongside those who are struggling with the weight of loss. I encourage each of you to reach out, extend a listening ear, and offer the hope of Christ to those in your congregations and communities who are mourning. The holidays are a time for sharing love and peace, and there is no greater gift we can offer than the comfort of Christ's presence in the midst of pain.

May God give us all the wisdom and strength to be sources of hope and healing during this Christmas season.

With prayer and gratitude,

Daniel DeCook
 Chief Communications and Advancement Officer
 Reformed Church in America



A *Coffee Table* book of local interest, “Roadside Signs” features those amazing Hamlet signs we see around town. Finely crafted, these signs serve to welcome visitors upon entering the various Hamlets within the Town of Esopus.

“I have put together this collection of both the Roadside signs, and a photo I made of each of the depicted images on the signs themselves.

As a proud resident of Port Ewen for over 30 years, and a local photographer, I felt a ‘calling’ to celebrate this very impressive community effort.”

~ Anita DeFina Hadley

*** Purchase price: \$25.00, tax included

The Back Pew Clean Humor & God's Truth



MOVIES WITH SPIRIT

Jan. 18, ALIVE INSIDE: A STORY OF MUSIC AND MEMORY (2014), Old Dutch Church, 272 Wall St., Kingston —



This award-winning, stirring documentary, directed and produced by Michael Rossato-Bennett, explores music's capacity to reawaken our souls and uncover the deepest parts of our humanity. It follows social worker Dan Cohen, founder of the nonprofit organization Music & Memory, as he fights the medical establishment and Big Pharma to demonstrate music's ability to combat memory loss among people with Alzheimer's disease and restore a deep sense of self to those suffering from it. Winner of 12 critic and festival awards, including the Sundance Film Festival's Audience Award. *"Packs as potent a simple emotional wallop as anything you'll see — or hear — anywhere."* — Geoff Pevere, The Globe and Mail. *"Gloriously inspirational."* — Duane Byrge, The Hollywood Reporter. *"Without the use of a single CGI effect, you see literal miracles happening."* — David Noh, Film Journal International. *Not Rated.*

"I can't believe it's been a year since I didn't become a better person." —Unknown

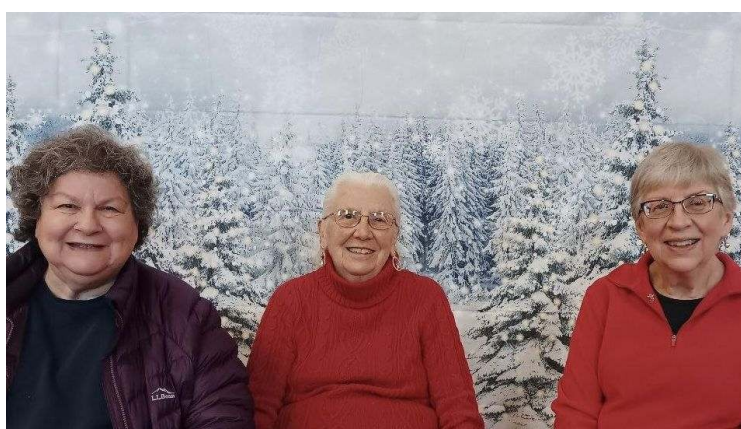
"You know how I always dread the whole year? Well, this time I'm only going to dread one day at a time." —Charlie Brown



Women's Ministry Christmas Tea and Luncheon was held Monday 12/16 in Fairbrother Hall.

Thank you to all the Ladies who attended our first Women's Christmas Luncheon. A good time had by all.

Our next Women's Luncheon will be in May!



January 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 4:30 pm SCA (FH)	2	3 5:9:00 pm Private (FH)	4 6:30:10:30 pm Hudson Valley Comm Dance (FH)
5 9:00 am SCS 10:00 am Worship followed by luncheon 2-4 pm 4-H (FH) 5-8 pm AA (FH)	6 5:30–7:00 pm Girl Scouts (SCS) 5:30–7:00 pm Brownies (SCS)	7	8 12:30 pm Bible Study 4:9:30 pm SCA (FH)	9	10	11
12 9:00 am SCS 10:00 am Worship 2-4 pm 4-H (SCS) 5-8 pm AA (FH)	13	14 9 am–2 pm Woodstock Weavers 7:00 pm Consistory Meeting	15 12:30 pm Bible Study 4:9:30 pm SCA (FH)	16	17 5-9 pm ANA (FH)	18
19 9:00 SCS 10:00 am Worship 2-4 pm 4-H (FH) 5-8 pm AA (FH)	20 REFORMER DEADLINE 5:30–7:00 pm Girl Scouts (SCS) 5:30–7:00 pm Brownies (SCS)	21	22 12:30 pm Bible Study 4:9:30 pm SCA (FH)	23	24 5-9:00 pm Private (FH) Snow Date for 1/3	25
26 9:00 am SCS 10:00 am Worship 2-4 pm 4-H (FH) 5-8 pm AA (FH)	27	28	29 12:30 pm Bible Study 4:9:30 pm SCA (FH)	30	31	



Our facilities are handicapped accessible

We're on the net!
Therpcpe.org

January 2025 Reformer

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The Reformed Church of Port Ewen