

Baptized in Water, Sealed by the Spirit



We welcomed many new members into the body of Christ through the sacrament of baptism this fall!

Welcome to **Kole Reardon, Amber Tobin, Dominic Lombardo, and Catherine Scholer!**

First Communion

Zachary Huiest, Stella Reynolds, Corinna Reynolds, and Annabel Macomber all made their first communion on Sunday, October 30th. They were resilient and persevered, as they were supposed to start their classes all the way back in spring 2020!!



December 2022

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Upcoming Events

Angel Tree Deadline	Dec. 11 th
Interactive Mission in Motion	Dec. 11 th
Christmas Eve Worship	Dec. 24 th
Christmas Day Worship	Dec. 25 th



Bibles were handed down to our third grade students this fall.
Congratulations to **Finn Pickett** and **Gabriel Braungard!**



Leadership Retreat 2022

Every November our church consistory and staff trek to the beautiful Christ the King Center in Greenwich. The focus of this year's time away was looking at ourselves and our church in this post-post Covid world. Much has changed; much is new.

Because of our use of Zoom, our church reaches much further than our building. We may be apart, but we remain one family. How do we strengthen these bonds?

The discussions were facilitated by **Rev. Bruce and Sandy Cornwell** with participants **Linda Murphy, Jessica Kaercher, Karl and Lori Cote, Ben April, Sarah Huiest, Kevin Ingalls, Marv Helf, Ana Crosbourne, and Tina and Kevin Bottini.**

Community Reformed Outreach Committee will have their First Interactive Mission in Motion on December 11th, at 11:30 am.

We will be making and signing Christmas cards for residents at Shaker Place and Van Rensselaer Heights. Participation is welcome in person or virtually through Zoom. For those who will be participating via Zoom, if you are in need of cards or have any questions, please contact Lori at crccclori@gmail.com or by calling the church's office. You will hear back from someone on the Community Outreach Committee.





Our annual Angel Tree collection continues!

This year we will be collecting gifts for **Things of My Very Own** and **StreetSoldiers** in two ways – even our Angel Tree is hybrid!!

There are angel tags on the tree in the back of the sanctuary for your choosing, or you can go to:

<https://www.target.com/gift-registry/gift/crcc-angel-tree-2022>

Please return unwrapped gifts and items by **December 11**.

Questions? Contact **Sandy Cornwell, Sarah Huiest, or Tina Bottini**

Thank you for your support.

Reverse Advent Calendar???

The typical Advent calendar is the December countdown to Christmas. With great anticipation, each of the 24 little doors is opened revealing maybe a drawing, saying, little toy or even a chocolate. What if the calendar focus was on giving instead of receiving this Christmas season?

The idea of the Reverse Advent Calendar is simple. Start with a large sturdy cardboard box. Decorating the box could be a fun family activity – let your imaginations soar. Make it merry, or keep it plain. It's all up to you.

For each day December 1-24, add one item to your box. Again, use your imagination. You could focus on a specific item such as a different pasta for each day, or personal care items, or only canned soups, or just a variety of non-perishable foods.

This reverse calendar is your very own design and would be fun at home or at work. The best gifts are those we give away.

Bring your calendar box or items to church after Christmas, or let the church office know if you wish to have the box picked up. We will deliver all items to local agencies that strive to aid our neighbors in need. For those of our church family who live afar, consider donating your box to your local agencies. Near and far, we remain together in Christ.

To view a list of suggestions for items or themes, click on this link:

<https://tinyurl.com/CRCCReverseAdvent>

We encourage you to take a photo of you or your family with your box when it is complete or throughout the filling process. Photos can be sent to Sarah Huiest (crccsarah@gmail.com) throughout the month of December to help us all encourage one another and stay connected.

Questions? Contact Jessica Kaercher, Tina Bottini, or Sandy Cornwell.

Celebrating a Greener and More Sustainable Christmas

Lou Ann Connelly

In the first chapter of Genesis we read that God said, "Let us make humankind in our image...and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals, and over every creeping thing that creeps along the ground."

The natural world, and everything in it, is God's gift to us. By giving us dominion, God left this world in our care. And now we have a duty to manage it wisely for ourselves and future generations: to enjoy it without abusing it and to use its resources to our benefit without depleting or exploiting them.

We don't want to be the source of damage to the world God has endowed to us. And yet, many of our daily practices contribute to its harm.

What can we as individuals do in the face of the tidal wave of natural destruction that we see going on?

Actually, we can take some steps to reduce our own contributions to this global crisis. They may seem insignificant, but when multiplied over millions of people, they make a difference.

Since Christmas is coming, let's look at some of the ways you can make Christmas a greener one this year and in the future.

Your Tree

Artificial or Real? Which is better for the environment? Most artificial trees are produced overseas and then transported here using petroleum fuel. And they are not recyclable. But real trees that go into landfills contribute more to methane production than the artificial ones. So, which is the better choice?



According to the Carbon Trust, the carbon footprint of an artificial tree is 10 times that of a real tree when each is put into a landfill. Therefore, if you're using an artificial tree, they recommend keeping it for more than 10 years before discarding it.

If you opt for a real tree, though, you can reduce its carbon footprint by making sure it is burned or chipped rather than added to a landfill. As another option, some goat farms near us accept Christmas tree donations for feed for their animals. The Spectrum News website lists Tamarac Hobby Farm and Mariaville Goat Farm in our area. You can also put your old live wreaths, boughs, or trees in the garden to provide cover for insects and small animals during the winter snows.

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Gifts



We love giving gifts but have all experienced receiving gifts that we don't want or won't use. Instead of giving a tangible item, consider giving an experience instead.

Concert tickets or a restaurant gift card make great gifts.

Are you handy? Think about making a homemade gift. Even a homecooked meal makes a great gift.

Still want to give a gift? Choose one with the least packaging you can. And buy locally rather than online so your gift won't need to be transported to you, thus minimizing the use of gasoline.

Giftwrap

The traditional giftwrap is used once and then sent to the landfill. Think of how much giftwrap is produced and then discarded every year in the United States. Multiply that year after year.

Instead, **Soilassociation.org** suggests using reusable gift bags. Or you can make your own by decorating plain paper bags. How about reusing magazine, newspaper, or comic book pages? Years ago, gifts arrived in children's stockings, another alternative to giftwrap. Instead of cellophane tape, reuse ribbons or string.

Reusable cloth bags are another sustainable alternative to paper giftwrap. Sandy Cornwell has been making and using cloth bags for Christmas gifts for many years.

Sandy says that she uses various materials in her cloth gift bags. Although she uses a lot of cotton, flannel, or fleece cloth, she finds other fabrics in lots of other places, too. She has used Christmas tablecloths and curtains found

at garage sales and thrift stores. She has even repurposed her mother's old Christmas vintage hand-me-downs.

To close the bags, she uses a drawstring or a ribbon sewn into a side seam and wrapped around in a bow.

Once her family has exchanged gifts on Christmas, she collects the bags and returns them to storage for the next year. On the other hand, when she gives a gift away, the recipient gets the bag, too, so they can pass it on to someone else in a chain of sustainability.

The use of cloth bags as gift wrap reduces the amount of paper in landfills.

If this seems overwhelming, consider choosing one or two suggestions for this year and plan to make further changes for future Christmases. Adding your efforts to making Christmas greener and more sustainable in just a few ways each year will still be a step towards a better world.



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Worship Hours

We invite you to join us for worship and fellowship every Sunday at 10 AM in person and via Zoom.

Outdoor Services are also available in the Summer every Sunday at 9 AM

Holiday and Special Services will be announced on our website and this newsletter

Colonie Community Day Care Center

701 Sand Creek Rd
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Carol Grasso, Director

Tel: (518) 869-0131

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Thank you to everyone who has signed up to cook dinner for the Overflow Shelter at First Lutheran Church in Albany. Participation has been robust, but we still need some volunteers for springtime.

Signup is available at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D4EAEA92AA6FAC43-overflow3>.

If you have any questions contact Tina Bottini at tinambo85@gmail.com or Vicki Lane at vlane1020@gmail.com.



Church Choir is BACK!

Rehearsals: Sundays at 9AM AND 11AM

See Director Ben April for more info.



Winter Weather Cancellations

If wintry weather mandates the cancellation of church services, a notice will be posted on the School/Business Closings on local television stations and local internet news sites, as well as communityreformedchurch.com



"For unto us a child is born and his name shall be called Wonderful."

*Christmas Eve
Candlelight Worship
Welcome the Christ Child in the
soft glow of candlelight
7:00 PM*

*Christmas Day
Sunday Worship
10:00 AM
Sanctuary and Zoom*

THE CRC C QUILT GROUP

The Quilt group continues their mission to bring cheer and comfort to the residents and patients at Shaker Place this month by constructing Christmas and winter-themed placemats. To date, more than 70 of these placemats have been delivered. This adds to the 50 made and delivered in October. The project will continue throughout the winter and spring. In addition, the group has been making tote bags for people served by Things of My Very Own and Street Soldiers.

Communications/Media Coordinator: **Sarah Huiest**

Layout Designer: **Bob Becker**

Articles are due by the 15th of the month and can be submitted to crcsarah@gmail.com or given to Sarah Huiest.