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Fellowship

On the first Sunday of Advent, we got crafty and enjoyed an all ages Advent Wreath making event in Fellowship Hall. Sue Vilagi came up with a creative way for us to transform cardboard rolls into beautiful candles using various craft items including cupcake wrappers, pipe cleaners and wrapping paper. Bird ornaments were also made to decorate the wreath for each week of Advent and Christmas Eve. Wow! Everyone did an amazing job. This all tied into an Advent devotional based on *The Dawn Chorus: The Wonders of Birds*. We hope you found it helpful in preparing your heart and mind for the coming of Christ.

We are blessed to have the kitchen used by so many for so many great events. Our goal is to keep it well stocked for you and to avoid any unexpected surprises the day of your event. To help us keep track of things that need to be replenished, a sheet has been posted on the refrigerator. If anyone using the kitchen notices something running low, please make a note of it and we will make sure it gets restocked. Your help is much appreciated.

On January 29, 2023 coffee hour will be hosted in honor of John Lambert's Consistory Installation. We are also gearing up for another Game Day with Friends on January 29, 2023 after worship. Please bring in your favorite board game to share and play. For those of you up for some challenges, we will also have a few fun minute-to-win-it games to get our game juices flowing.

Reformed Church Women

The Holly Berry and Soup sale was very successful. Thank you to all who made crafts, desserts, soup, prepared items and purchased items. We have donated some of the funds to worthy causes already and plan to decide on other donations soon. In preparation for next year, we plan to do some crafts this winter on selected days at church, please let us know if you would be interested in joining us.

RCW will have a meeting after church on Sunday, January 22 to set future meeting dates, craft times, and events we wish to plan. All women and men that wish to help us are invited to attend.

May God Bless you all with a new year that brings you greater faith and appreciation for what God has granted us.



Pastor's Pen

Wishing you a happy New Year and a blessed Epiphany. Hopefully you enjoyed welcoming the new year in your own way, whether it was celebrating at the midnight hour, a nice dinner with loved ones, or watching sports. The first week of the New Year brings with it the year's first church holiday, Epiphany. Both are a good time to celebrate the past year and to set some intentions for the coming year.

There is much to celebrate in the past year: CACF running two art camps for youth; gardening together and sharing the vegetables of our labor; participating in the Crop Walk; baptizing William Hull, Jr.; installing a new soundboard; working at repairing our organ (parts have been sent off to Canada to see if they can fix notes that don't want to stop playing); welcoming a new tenant; celebrating the life and work of Bill Starsinic; welcoming CALM Academy; and supporting missions throughout the year.

In the year to come, having faced the challenge of COVID, we look forward to revisiting our Revisioning/Strategic Planning work with new demographics of our neighborhood. We look forward to finding new ways to welcome folks into our faith community, practicing radical hospitality.

That brings us back to Epiphany. Welcoming new folks into our lives is one of the things we celebrate at Epiphany. The magi were strangers to Mary and Joseph and the people of Israel. They brought with them blessings that left Mary and Joseph amazed. One of the Epiphany traditions connected to their visit is Marking of the Lintel. Marking the Lintel is a fun physical prayer of blessing. The doors of houses are chalk marked with the year, the initials of the names attributed to the kings (Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar) and crosses. Those initials also represent the Latin phrase: *Christus Mansionem Benedicat*, May Christ bless this house. This year it would look like this: 20 + C + M + B + 23.

A visit changes the visitor and the visited. The magi who traditionally came by horse left by another way, often said to be by ship. After the visit Mary and Joseph soon had to flee to Egypt. Through all the change, wonder, fear, and hope God journeyed with them, and they were blessed. God led them toward a new day and a new light revealed in Jesus' incarnation, teaching, life, death, and resurrection. The New Year and Epiphany invite us to journey with God and the holy family toward new blessings and possibilities.



Reformed Church of Freehold

VOLUME 9, ISSUE 1

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CONSISTORY 2023

Wilfred Ojo– Vice President
Bill Barth–Classis Delegate

Barb Lyon–Hospitality & Congregational Care
Helen McKenzie–Buildings & Grounds
Lee Ann Newland–Worship & Music
Wilfred Ojo–Human & Financial Resources

Bill Barth–Missions & Benevolences
Gabrielle Uchno–Fellowship
Sharon Sanicola–Education
John Lambert–Building & Grounds

Odds and Ends

Communion Offering

On the first Sunday of the month we collect items for **Open Door** which can be left in the church Narthex. Monetary gifts are accepted at any time and can be placed in the offering plate. Please mark “Open Door” on your envelope.

Flowers

If you would like to have flowers given in honor or memory of a loved one or event, please contact the church office. The cost is \$20. Please make checks payable to: “Reformed Church of Freehold” and write “flowers” in the memo.

Secretary’s Hours

Our secretary’s hours are Thursdays, from 8-11:30 AM. She will continue to check emails during the week. In case of emergency Lauren’s cell number is 732-766-5147.

Worship & Music

It's hard to believe that 2023 is upon us. We hope you have had a restful holiday season. The Community Arts Center of Freehold is planning to expand community concerts during the year ahead. Additionally, plans are underway for our Spring Break Arts Camp, Summer Camp, and Fall String workshop. Please be on the lookout for a comprehensive activity calendar that will be available soon.

Recently, the organ repairman has been in to check out the electrical issues with the organ. While no decisive issue has been named at this point, the motherboards of the electronic portion of the organ are being tested and may need to be sent out for further system testing and updates. As soon as more information is available, it will be shared with the congregation.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

JANUARY: 1 The Ojo’s, 4 Madeline Jacobus, 4 Gabrielle Uchno, 7 Matthew Uchno, 11 Audrey Statesir, 15 Alex Sanicola, 19 Kristen Murphy, 21 Julia Uchno, 25 Ashley Tiedemann

FEBRUARY: 4 John Seifert, 11 Sidney Ulm, 21 Wilfred Ojo, 27 Bethany Sanicola



**THE REFORMED
CHURCH
OF FREEHOLD**

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DEMONSTRATING GOD'S
RECONCILING LOVE

Dates to Remember

JANUARY

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 1 Sunday | Worship, 10 AM
Sunday School |
| 8 Sunday | Communion Worship, 10 AM
Sunday School |
| 15 Sunday | Worship, 10 AM
Sunday School |
| 19 Thursday | Consistory Meeting, 7:00 PM
Zoom |
| 22 Sunday | Worship, 10 AM
Sunday School, RCW Meeting |
| 29 Sunday | Worship, 10 AM
Sunday School, Family Game Party |

FEBRUARY

- | | |
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| 5 Sunday | Communion Worship, 10 AM
Sunday School |
| 9 Thursday | Consistory Meeting, 7:00 PM
Fellowship Hall & Zoom |
| 12 Sunday | Worship, 10 AM
Sunday School |
| 19 Sunday | Worship, 10 AM
Sunday School |
| 26 Sunday | Worship, 10 AM
Sunday School |