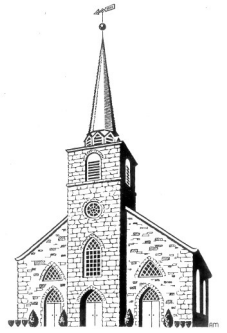


**Saddle River  
Reformed Church  
worshiping at  
Old Stone Church  
January 2024**



**Calendar**

Worship - Sundays at 10am  
Old Stone Church

Bible Study & Lunch Bunch  
Wednesdays at 11am in the  
Lounge

Sew & Sew Group  
Friday, January 5th at 12 noon  
in the Lounge

Consistory Meeting  
Wednesday, January 10th at  
6:15pm in the Lounge

Sew & Sew Group  
Friday, January 19th



If you are unable to be with us to worship in person, you can participate via Facebook Live on our page:

You do not need to be a member of Facebook to access this link.

<https://www.facebook.com/Old-StoneSaddle-River-Reformed-Church-105866604368793>

**Find us on the web and on social media**

oldstonechurchonline.org

Facebook: Old Stone/Saddle River Reformed Church

Instagram: oldstonechurchnj

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## January 2024 Lectionary Year B

### January 6

Epiphany of the Lord  
Isaiah 60:1-6  
Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14  
Ephesians 3:1-12  
Matthew 2:1-12

### January 7 - Communion

Rev. Dr. Jodie Wu  
Baptism of the Lord  
Genesis 1:1-5  
Psalm 29  
Acts 19:1-7  
Mark 1:4-11



### Baptism of the Lord

Time: The Sunday after  
Epiphany

Purpose: This is the day we  
celebrate John the Baptist's  
baptism of Christ in the  
Jordan River.

Liturgical color: White

### January 14

Rev. Mel Van Hattem  
Second Sunday after the  
Epiphany

1 Samuel 3:1-10, (11-20)  
Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18  
1 Corinthians 6:12-20  
John 1:43-51

### January 21

Rev. Leah Ennis-Gasero  
Third Sunday after the  
Epiphany

Jonah 3:1-5, 10  
Psalm 62:5-12  
1 Corinthians 7:29-31  
Mark 1:14-20

### January 28

Fourth Sunday after the  
Epiphany

Deuteronomy 18:15-20  
Psalm 111  
1 Corinthians 8:1-13  
Mark 1:21-2

## WEEKLY Bible Study/Lecture

Meets every Wednesday at 11am in the Lounge followed by the "Lunch Bunch" from 12:15-1pm. God chooses the most unlikely people to serve Him... fishermen, tax collectors, even a prostitute like Rahab. Her story is found in Joshua chapter 2. In our Bible study this week we learned of her courage, her resourcefulness, and her loyalty to her family. Our study leader, James Jones, expanded on her story by describing the protective wall of stone that surrounded the city of Jericho. It was large enough to house whole families within it. And we also learned about the flax that Rahab used to safely hide God's Israeli spies.

Come and visit this group of 10 or 12 men and women who explore the Bible with hearts open to spiritual learning. We know it takes courage to walk in to a new group of people, but you can be sure that this group is open, smiling, and welcoming. †





## Epiphany

Time: January 6

Purpose: Epiphany celebrates the revelation of the Son of God as a human being in Jesus. Western Christians usually commemorate the magi's visit to Jesus.

Liturgical color: White

## Epiphany Party Ideas

Epiphany (traditionally on January 6) commemorates the visit of the magi and is sometimes called Three Kings' Day. It is also the final day of the 12 days of Christmas. To honor Epiphany, consider holding a party.

Here's some ways you might remember this important day.

Make a King's Cake or a Twelfth Night Cake. Before baking, it is traditional to hide a coin, trinket, or dried bean inside the batter. The person who finds it becomes the king or queen for the evening. There are many different recipes to use for this; some are like fruitcake or are spice cakes. On

the following page is a French version.

Be sure to go outside on Epiphany, the twelfth night, to look at the stars or to take a long walk and celebrate the important journey the wise men took to recognize the Christ Child as their King.

Play "Hide and Seek the Light." One person can hide a battery-run or electric candle, while other players wait in a closed room (they could sing or play Christmas carols to cover up any sound clues). When the light is hidden, the players look for it, like the wise men who followed the star, searching for the birthplace of the Savior. This game can also be played by placing glow-in-the-dark stars in an obvious place on the skin or clothing of all players. The player who is "it" searches for the other hiding players. This can be played inside or outside, depending on the climate.



## French Epiphany Cake

(Source: *Festivals, Family and Food*, by Cary, Diana, and Judy Large. Gloucestershire, England: Hawthorn Press, 1982, p.154.)

### Ingredients

8 oz. butter  
3 oz. ground rice  
grated rind of lemon  
6 egg yolks  
5 oz. sifted icing sugar  
3 egg whites  
3 oz. flour  
extra sifted icing sugar

### Instructions

- Cream butter and grated lemon rind. Beat in icing sugar.
- Sift flour and ground rice together, add one third of this to the creamed mixture.
- Add two of the egg yolks and repeat with remaining flour and yolks.
- Fold in the stiffly whisked whites and turn into a prepared tin.
- Bake at 350° for about an hour. Decorate with lemon butter icing or sifted sugar. Top the cake with little figures of the three kings or with crowns or stars.

## Epiphany Traditions

### Dia de los Reyes Magos

Dia de los Reyes Magos, or Three Kings Day, celebrates the arrival of the three wise men, who followed the star to Bethlehem and gave gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh to the baby Jesus. In Mexico, families celebrate by sharing a Rosca de Reyes, a kings cake, which is a special cake with a doll figure or a bean hidden inside to represent how Jesus had to be hidden from King Herod. At a time when many North Americans are taking their ornaments down, celebrating with a Rosca de Reyes can help us continue sharing the good news of Christ into the new year.

### Three Kings Gifts

In Spain and several other countries, children receive gifts from the Three Wise Men rather than Santa Claus. On the night before Epiphany, January 5, children set their shoes out for the Wise Men to fill with gifts, as well as snacks for the Magi and their camels. Filling your children's shoes with gifts like candy, oranges, or small toys can be a fun way to keep the Christmas joy going just a little longer.

## Chalking the Door: An Epiphany Tradition

“Bless this house and all who inhabit it. Fill us with the light of Christ, that our concern for others may reflect your love.”

Chalking the door is a way of marking our homes, usually at the front or main entrance, with sacred signs and symbols as we ask God’s blessing upon those who live, work, or visit throughout the coming year. In Exodus, the Israelites marked their doors with blood so that the Lord would pass over their homes; but in this service, we mark our doors with chalk as a sign that we have invited God’s presence and blessing into our homes

In Deuteronomy 6:9 God tells the people of Israel: “These words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house... You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.” Chalking the door is a tangible way to honor God in our lives.

The first and last numbers simply refer to the current year. The letters C M B come from the traditional names for the three kings: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar. Some also suggest “Christus Mansionem Benedicat” which means, “May Christ bless this dwelling!”

**Epiphany is on January 6th**, twelve days after Christmas. Many families gather in their homes to celebrate with friends, food, singing, and gifts... and to chalk the door. **Find some chalk: Any color will do! Gather your household: Everyone should be involved.** For those who live alone, consider inviting a friend or neighbor. **Pray: Use the prayers and liturgy on the following page. Write the inscription: Using the chalk, and taking turns, make the following inscription above the outside of your door.**

**20 + C + M + B + 24**

Take turns reading the following liturgy and prayers:

Peace be to this house, and to all who enter here. *Amen.*

God of heaven and earth, you revealed your only-begotten One to every nation by the guidance of a star. Bless this house and all who inhabit it. Fill us with the light of Christ, that our concern for others may reflect your love. We ask this through Christ our Savior. *Amen.*

*As participants take turns making the inscription, a reader says:*

The three Wise Men, [C] Caspar, [M] Melchior, [B] and Balthasar followed the star to Bethlehem and the child Jesus [20] two thousand, [24] and twenty-four years ago. [+ +] May Christ bless our home [+ +], and remain with us throughout the new year. *Amen.*

*All say the Lord’s Prayer.*



## **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity January 18-25, 2024**

Every year, Christian communities and churches join together to pray for the visible unity of the Church, faithfully abiding by the will of Christ, who prayed “that all may be one” (John 17:21) during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. This year’s theme is *“You shall love the Lord your God... and your neighbor as yourself.”*

### **Prayer for Christian Unity**

We pray, O gracious Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, that we all may be one as you are one. In your community of complete unity, we have our beginning and our end. To you we pray, asking for the gift of visible unity among all who believe in your Christ.

As we commemorate this Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, we are reminded by your Word that all human beings are our neighbors and that we are to love them like ourselves and in the same way we love you. Help us to overcome the barriers and divisions we have nurtured against your will.

Grant to us, O Lord, a new Spirit of love and solidarity, that we may proclaim your good news to all of creation. We ask this through your Son, Jesus Christ, who with you and the Holy Spirit are one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

For a daily scripture & prayer guide go to:  
[https://geii.org/week\\_of\\_prayer\\_for\\_christian\\_unity/prayer\\_worship/daily\\_scripture\\_and\\_prayer\\_guide.html](https://geii.org/week_of_prayer_for_christian_unity/prayer_worship/daily_scripture_and_prayer_guide.html)



## January & February Missions Offering

The Deacons will be collecting funds during January and February for the Tunnel to Towers Foundation. Since 9/11, T2T has been helping America's heroes by providing mortgage-free homes to Gold Star and fallen first responder families with young children and by building specially-adapted smart homes for catastrophically injured veterans and first responders. They are also committed to eradicating veteran homelessness and helping America to Never Forget September 11, 2001.



You can give to this ministry in person **during Sunday morning worship** (please make checks payable to Saddle River Reformed Church and designate as Mission of the Month) or **on-line using the church website and by selecting "Giving" from the menu or the "Give" button and choosing "Mission of the Month" in the dropdown list.** <https://oldstonechurchonline.org/>



## Thank you!!!

The church office received a thank you letter from **Family Promise of Bergen County** for our donation. Family Promise is able to empower homeless working families and those at-risk of homelessness to become self-sufficient by providing temporary housing and personalized support, including job training, financial education, life skills, transportation, childcare, enrichment for children, and more. Family Promise also addresses hunger in our community through the nightly Walk-In Dinner Program, which since 1991 has served more than 1.2 million meals to our neighbors in need. Their vision is of a community where every working family has a stable home and the means to create a better life.

The church office also received a thank you letter from **Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rockland County** for the donation. Their program positively impacts the lives of children and youth facing the challenges of domestic violence and poverty.

A thank you letter was also received by **The Valley Hospital's Spiritual Care Department**. Their aim is to meet the spiritual and religious needs of all their diverse patients and families.



## Rolling Door Maintenance and Fire Testing

To be in compliance with fire codes, our rolling door on the pass-through window between the kitchen and the hall in the education building was recently serviced. Going forward it will be test dropped annually by a fire door testing company.

## Property Projects Appeal

Our church property, like your own home, needs constant maintenance to provide a safe environment. This year we will have to pay out more than we originally expected for property projects. Upper Saddle River has a new fire and code enforcement official who has been working his way through the town to bring the various buildings up to code. We were sited for over 20 violations. New signage and repairs to our Education Building and Sanctuary have cost us more than \$4000. When the solar panels were installed on the east side of the Education Building, only the roof under the panels was replaced. The remaining roof has exceeded its life expectancy and has been patched as much as possible. We replaced the rest of the roof at a cost of \$25,000. When the parsonage was vacated two years ago, we had it professionally cleaned and made some minor repairs. The contractors that have been brought in to provide estimates for the many needed repairs and updates to prepare the building for our next pastor or possible tenant estimate that it will cost \$50,000 at a minimum to make the parsonage whole. We have all of these expenses on top of the regular wear and tear on three aging buildings.

We know this is a time when many are experiencing higher costs in their own lives, and asking for funding from you above and beyond your normal contributions may be challenging. We humbly ask that you consider designating a contribution to fund our property projects.

In Christ's Name,  
Your Consistory Members

## After Worship Church Community Socials Announcements

There is a sign-up sheet in the back of the sanctuary for Sunday Iced Tea Socials. They are weekly, immediately following the service and provide us with a chance to chat and catch up with our church family while enjoying a treat or two (or three!).

## Website and Social Media

Have you checked out our website or social media feeds recently? There are new postings several times a week on Facebook and Instagram. Be sure to check them out and follow and/or give us a "like." Website: <https://oldstonechurchonline.org/> Facebook: Old Stone/Saddle River Reformed Church Instagram: oldstonechurchnj

**USR Cares Invites USR Seniors** to join them for one or more of their upcoming Thursday events at the USR Library and for one or more of their group outings. Lunch catered by Uncle Giuseppe's before the Library's screening of movies the first Thursday of each month. Upcoming dates are January 4th and February 1st. Third Thursdays - Breakfast snacks and guest speakers, activities, and games the third Thursday of every month. Upcoming dates are January 18th and February 22nd. Interested seniors should rsvp to USR Cares one week prior to each Thursday event at [usrcares@gmail.com](mailto:usrcares@gmail.com) or 201-749-1615. Information about USR Cares is available at [www.usrcares.com](http://www.usrcares.com).



**Women's Bible Study** Please consider joining us for a simple Bible Study at the **Ramapo Reformed Church**. Pastor Mary will lead the group through various scripture readings in the style of Lectio Divina. No preparation is necessary! We will meet in the **Coffee Room of the church building (100 Island Rd)**. We will meet every other Tuesday through June. **The dates for January are 1/9 and 1/23.**

## Camp Snowball 23-24

We are so excited to welcome campers and families back this fall and winter! We have 4 sessions planned and cannot wait to see you there! Registration for the remaining 3 sessions is open!

- Session 1: November 10-12, 2023
- Session 2: **January 12-14, 2024**
- Session 3: February 23-25, 2024
- Session 4: April 19-21, 2024

Registration and Volunteer Application are on our website!  
[campwarwick.org/camp-snowball](http://campwarwick.org/camp-snowball)

Rev. Mark Ennis of the Clinton Avenue Reformed Church in Bergenfield is looking for **ESL teachers for their Spanish-speaking outreach program**. Anyone with an interest can call the church office: 201-384-2454.

REFORMED CHURCH CENTER  
 AT  
 NEW BRUNSWICK THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

presents

### MISSIONS IN A POST-COLONIAL WORLD

**Presenters**

**JP Sundararajan**  
 Director of Global Mission  
 Reformed Church in America

**James Jinhong Kim**  
 Horace G. Underwood Chair in Global Christianity  
 Associate Professor of Missiology and Global Christianity

Wednesday, 17 January 2024 • 12:00 p.m. (EST) • Online

The Center for Food Action in Mahwah at 90 Ridge Road is open M-F from 10am-2pm to **accept donations**. Their most needed items are Supermarket Gift Cards, Canned Hearty Soups, Canned Vegetables & Fruits, Diapers Sizes 4, 5, 6, Pasta, White & Brown Rice, Dried Beans, Baby Formula, Bar or Bottle Soap, Peanut Butter & Jelly, Tomato Sauce, Canned Meat & Fish, Canned Pastas, Stews, & Chilis, Canned Tomatoes, and Low Sugar Cereal.

### Call 988 For Mental Health Emergencies

The Federal Communications Commission approved a 3-digit dialing code, 988, for mental health crisis and suicide prevention. The 988 line will operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for calls, texts, and chat.

## January Birthdays & Anniversaries

Mark Nixdorf	1/2
Christopher Fretz	1/6
Amanda Armstrong Flanagan	1/10
Elyse Moore	1/10
Elaine Armstrong	1/11
Nicholas Peters	1/14
Justin Moore	1/19
Betsy Reichelt	1/23
Mary Bergquist	1/29
Dot Coblentz	1/29

Norm & Ruth McGowan  
1/24

Any updates or additions, please email the church office at [srrcoffice@verizon.net](mailto:srrcoffice@verizon.net)

We welcome your donations through the online giving page on the church website at <https://oldstonechurchonline.org/> and click on the Give button.



If you have anything for the FEBRUARY newsletter please email the church office at [srrcoffice@verizon.net](mailto:srrcoffice@verizon.net).



**Saddle River Reformed Church**

worshiping at

**Old Stone Church**

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