



**Saddle River Reformed Church
Worshiping at
Old Stone Church**

First Sunday of Advent
December 1, 2024
10am Worship

Minister: The Rev. Leah Ennis-Gasero

Head Usher: Pete Freeman

Advent Candle Lighting: Cathy Lowden

Reader: Cathy Lowden

(*Congregation stands as they are able)

THE APPROACH TO GOD

WELCOME

PRELUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

VOTUM

Our help is in the name of the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.

Amen.

Psalm 124:8

ADVENT WELCOME

Across the universe
creation waits
for the prophets to speak
their words of expectation
and their vision of renewal

May we gather round them today
once more
and let their longing grip us
and lead us
into birth and blessing

So come now my friends
this is the meeting place
of promise and prophecy
let us listen through the ancient words
that we might be ready to hear
a baby's cry.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

Lighting a candle in the darkness helps us find our way. In darkness we lose direction. We cannot see where we have been or where we are going. A single candle, flickering brightly, helps us find our way again.

“Stir up your might, and come to save us. Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved” (Psalm 80:2b-3).

The first candle is lit.

Light one candle; see it glow
Brightly, so that all may know
How one candle shows the way
Making our darkness bright as God's day.

Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

Dear God, on this first Sunday in Advent, let this light shine brightly as the days grow shorter, so that we will be ready for your face to shine upon us at Christmas. In the Savior's name we pray. Amen.

OUR HOPE: Heidelberg Catechism

Lord's Day 14

Q&A 35

Q. What does it mean that he "was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary?"

A. That the eternal Son of God, who is and remains true and eternal God, took to himself, through the working of the Holy Spirit, from the flesh and blood of the virgin Mary, a truly human nature so that he might also become David's true descendant, like his brothers and sisters in every way except for sin.

Q&A 36

Q. How does the holy conception and birth of Christ benefit you?

A. He is our mediator and, in God's sight, he covers with his innocence and perfect holiness my sinfulness in which I was conceived.

GREETING

The Peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.
And with you, also.

***HYMN: 245 "O Come, O Come,
Emmanuel" (v. 1 & 2)**

CALL TO CONFESSION

Let us confess our sins to almighty God.

Let us pray.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of the prophets:

You have called us to glorify your name

Through our love for one another.

We confess that we praise you more with our lips than with our lives.

We profess repentance, while we resist change;

We talk about peace, while we prepare for war;

We sing of love, but we curse our enemies;

We pray your will be done, but we want our own way.

Have mercy upon us, O God, and forgive our selfish ways.

May the Christ who came long ago come anew in our lives.

Help us to be at peace with you,

At peace with ourselves,

and at peace with each other as children of your kingdom, now at hand.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

Pray to the Lord

(Silent Confession)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

The Lord is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
He does not deal with us according to our sins,
nor repay us according to our iniquities.

For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so great is his steadfast love toward those who
fear him;

as far as the east is from the west,
so far he removes our transgressions from us.

Psalms 103:8, 10-12

THE LAW OF GOD

Hear what our Lord Jesus Christ says:

“You shall love the Lord your God

with all your heart,
and with all your soul,
and with all your mind.”

This is the greatest and first commandment.

And a second is like it:

“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

On these two commandments
hang all the law and the prophets.

Matthew 22:37-40

PSALTER

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

O my God, in you I trust;

do not let me be put to shame;

do not let my enemies exult over me.

Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame;
let them be ashamed who are wantonly
treacherous.

***Make me to know your ways, O Lord;
teach me your paths.***

Lead me in your truth, and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation;
for you I wait all day long.

***Be mindful of your mercy, O Lord, and of your
steadfast love,***

for they have been from of old.

Do not remember the sins of my youth or my
transgressions;

according to your steadfast love remember me,
for your goodness' sake, O Lord!

Good and upright is the Lord;

therefore he instructs sinners in the way.

He leads the humble in what is right,
and teaches the humble his way.

***All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and
faithfulness,***

***for those who keep his covenant and his
decrees.***

Psalms 25:1-10

THE WORD OF GOD IN PROCLAMATION AND SACRAMENT

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

God of the universe,
revealed to us in Holy Scripture
through the writings of the prophets and the
preaching of John the Baptist,
You have called us to prepare our hearts for your
visitation.

Ready us afresh to hear your word and to respond
as faithful servants. Amen.

LESSONS

Jeremiah 33:14-16

Front of pew Bible page 740

1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

Back of pew Bible page 204

Luke 21:25-36

Back of pew Bible pages 85-86

SERMON: "There Will Be Signs!"

CALL TO OFFERING

As God calls us to cultivate the Church, God asks us to share our time, talent, and treasures. As we give present our treasures, let us spend moments reflecting upon where God may be calling us to share our time and talents.

OFFERING

*DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.

Praise him all creatures here below.

Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

MEANING OF THE SACRAMENT

*CONFESSION OF FAITH: THE APOSTLES' CREED

*I believe in God, the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth;*

*And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried.*

He descended into hell.

The third day he rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven,

*and sitteth on the right hand of God the
Father almighty.*

*From thence he shall come to judge the
quick and the dead.*

I believe in the Holy Ghost,

the holy catholic Church,

the communion of saints,

the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body,

and the life everlasting. Amen.

INVITATION

*HYMN: 255 "Lo! How a Rose E'er
Blooming" (v. 1 & 2)

COMMUNION PRAYER

The Lord be with you

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts!

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Holy and right it is, and our joyful duty
to give thanks to you at all times and in all places,

O Lord our Creator,

almighty and everlasting God!

You created heaven with all its hosts and the earth
with all its plenty.

You have given us life and being,

and preserve us by your providence.

But you have shown us the fullness of your love
in sending into the world your Son, Jesus Christ,
the eternal Word, made flesh for us and for our
salvation.

For the precious gift of this mighty Savior who has
reconciled us to you

we praise and bless you, O God.

With your whole Church on earth and with all the
company of heaven

we worship and adore your glorious name.

(“Holy” - Mass of Creation, Marty Haugen)

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord.

God of power, God of might.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory,

Hosanna in the highest.

***Blessed is he who comes in the name of the
Lord,***

Hosanna in the highest,

Hosanna in the highest.

Most righteous God,

we remember in this Supper

the perfect sacrifice offered once on the cross by
our Lord Jesus Christ

for the sin of the whole world.

In the joy of his resurrection and in expectation of
his coming again,

we offer ourselves to you as holy and living
sacrifices.

Together we proclaim the mystery of the faith:

Christ has died!

Christ is risen!

Christ will come again!

Send your Holy Spirit upon us, we pray,

that the bread which we break

and the cup which we bless

may be to us the communion of the body and
blood of Christ.

Grant that, being joined together in him,

we may attain to the unity of the faith

and grow up in all things into Christ our Lord.

And as this grain has been gathered from many
fields into one loaf,

and these grapes from many hills into one cup,
grant, O Lord, that your whole Church
may soon be gathered from the ends of the earth
into your kingdom.
Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

COMMUNION

THE RESPONSE TO GOD

THANKSGIVING AFTER COMMUNION

Brothers and sisters,
since the Lord has now fed us at his Table,
let us praise God's holy name with heartfelt
thanksgiving!
Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and all that is within me, bless his holy name.
Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and do not forget all his benefits—
who forgives all your iniquity,
who heals all your diseases,
who redeems your life from the Pit,
who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy.
The Lord is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
He does not deal with us according to our sins,
nor repay us according to our iniquities.
For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so great is his steadfast love toward those who
fear him;
as far as the east is from the west,
so far does he remove our transgressions from
us.
As a father has compassion for his children,

so the Lord has compassion for those who fear
him,
who did not spare his own Son,
but gave him up for us all,
and will also give us all things with him.
Therefore shall my mouth and heart show forth
the praise of the Lord,
from this time forth forevermore. Amen.

From Psalm 103, with additions

JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
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.

***HYMN: “Of the Father’s Love Begotten”** (sung
to hymn tune no. 682, “Guide Me, O
Thou Great Jehovah”)

**Of the Father’s Love begotten
E’re the worlds began to be.
He is Alpha and Omega,
He the source, the ending, He.
Of the things that are, that have been,
And that future years shall see
Ever more, and ever more.**

**O, ye heights of heaven, adore Him;
Angel hosts His praises sing.
Pow’rs, dominions, bow before Him
And extol our God and King.
Let no tongue on earth be silent
Every voice in concert ring
Ever more, and ever more.**

**Christ, to Thee with God the Father
And, O Holy Spirit, Thee:
Hymn and chant, and high thanksgiving
And unwearied praises be.
Honor, glory, and dominion
And eternal victory
Ever more, and ever more.**

***BENEDICTION**

***POSTLUDE**

PLEASE PRAY FOR

- **Carol Bierwas**, in rehab at CareOne
- **Kirk Gagnon**
- **Linda Kammerer**
- **Una Ratmeyer**
- **John Seibert**, in rehab at Christian Health in Wyckoff

Our home-bound members:

Joyce McClurg
Laura Parker

Mary Breen

(Requested by Kathy Breen)

Jay Coblentz

(Requested by Dot Coblentz)

Michael Collins; Dina & Mohammed

(Requested by Jane Collins)

Brett Ferra; Bill Conklin; June Conklin; Victor Zeringo

(Requested by Jo Conklin)

Judy Nygern; Andres Magi

(Requested by Peter Freeman)

Jane Sands; Avalyn

(Requested by the Gagnons)

Don Otis

(Requested by Lori Geiger)

Anne

(Requested by Eileen Jones)

Claudia Kammerer; Roger; Suzette A; Anna Hartung; Bertha Mandel; Denny

Thompson; Chris Reilly; Terri; Roger Trespicio; Sydney Sue;

Paul & Barbara Sherman; Chris Hernandez; Patti; Diane; Dick Meuer; Horst; Glen DePiero; Skip

(Requested by the Kammerers)

Tim P; Joe C; Virginia F; Tom K; Ann S; Dave C; Rich H; Carol B; Gary G; Pat O; Kait L

(Requested by Cathy Lowden)

Rhonda Shapson

(Requested by Nancy Peet)

Dorothy Crapanzano; Brian Peters; Cheryl; Paul; Michelle; Emily Bonaventure

(Requested by the Peters)

Janet Sandgran

(Requested by the Sew 'n' Sews)

Alexa Yannuzzi

(Requested by the Strohmeyers)

Marcy Robin; Russell Maitland; Lynn Friedman; Loris Marfilus; Edward Verhulst; Lorraine Kolodziesk

(Requested by Rozanne Sullivan)

Vicki Lunghofer; Nellie LaTesta

(Requested by Christine Van Wetering)

PRAYERS OF SUPPORT FOR

- RCA missionaries
- The Leadership of the Reformed Church in America: General Synod, Regional Synod of the Mid-Atlantics, the Classis of the Greater Palisades, and our Consistory
- Seminary students at New Brunswick Theological Seminary and the Western Theological Seminary
- Rains to ease the wildfires
- All victims of tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, drought, and man-made disasters including hurricane Milton and hurricane Helene
- Leaders of government and international aid organizations
- Those serving our country, veterans, and all peoples affected by war and terrorist attacks including the humanitarian crises in Israel and Gaza, Sudan, and Ukraine
- The victims of mass shootings and their families including those in Saint Louis, Missouri
- Those working to dismantle racism and break barriers for people living with disabilities
- The poor, oppressed, sick, lonely, homeless, unemployed, exiles and refugees, infirm and the dying, prisoners, caregivers, and those struggling with addiction and mental illness and their families
- The families who have served our congregation through their ministry: Marlyn Minnick, Ellen Springsteen, and Bob & Arlene Fretz
- All those who have lost loved ones

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Activities for children are available in the basket in the back left of the sanctuary. Please help yourself! How we love to hear the joyful noise of our smallest and cutest members!

Thanksgiving and Advent Giving Drive!
Through December 18th we will be collecting donations to benefit local domestic violence shelters in Bergen and Rockland Counties. There are donation boxes in the Narthex and Christian Education Building. These donations will benefit the family members who fled from their homes where they endured abuse. Your gifts help support families who leave behind many of their personal belongings when they enter the shelter. Donating helps to ensure that the shelter can provide the necessities to our neighbors. Around December 20th, all donations will be brought to the following shelters: *Strengthen Our Sisters in Bergen County*; *Center for Hope & Safety in Bergen County*; and *Center for Safety and Change in Rockland County*. The following items are requested: Toilet paper, Paper towels, Buckets filled with cleaning supplies, Pillows (new pillows only in package), Blankets/comforters, Disposable razors, Bar soap, Shampoo/conditioner, Deodorant, Toothbrushes, Toothpaste, Baby wipes, Diapers, Facial tissue, Feminine Hygiene Products, New socks and new underpants, Gloves, hats, coats (new or lightly used)

Upcoming Holiday Concerts:

- Merry & Bright! A candlelight Christmas concert, featuring music direction by Peter Lieberman, **Tuesday, December 3rd at 7pm.** Produced in collaboration with StageWorks Theater Group. Performance at **Pompton Reformed Church, 59 Hamburg Tpke, Pompton Lakes, NJ**
- Holiday Concert, **Saturday, December 7 at 3pm, Ramapo Reformed Church, 100 Island Rd, Mahwah, NJ.** Free will offering to benefit the Kajuka Well Project. Light refreshments will be served!
- Holiday Benefit Concert, **Saturday, December 14 at 7:30pm.** Join us for a special evening of your favorite holiday classics. All proceeds to benefit the Parkside Food Pantry. Featuring Janica Carpenter, Christopher Doran, Shane Long, Nancy Feldman, Nina Lionetti, Rita Green. Reserve your seats now!
www.parkside.net, \$20 suggested donation.
Parkside Community Church, corner of 3rd Ave & Park, Westwood
- The Sounds of the Season with Gabrieli Brass Quintet. A freewill offering will be grateful received. All proceeds will be used to help make the church building more accessible to the community members with mobility/physical disabilities. **Sunday, December 22 at 3pm. North Reformed Church, 510 Broad St., Newark.** For more information, email: NorthReformedChurch@gmail.com.

SRRC Bible Study the 1st & 3rd Wednesdays, 7PM. Next session December 4. Join Pastor Leah on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays, at 7:00 pm. We will meet in the Lounge, and via Zoom. If you cannot join us in person, you can log into Zoom. Go to: <https://www.zoom.com/> Click on "Join" in the upper right Meeting ID: 835 4129 0076 Passcode: 095799 We will start with studying the Psalms in light of Thanksgiving and Advent. If you have any questions, please let Pastor Leah know.

The **Sew 'n' Sews** next meeting will be **Friday, December 6 at 12 noon in the Lounge.** This group is open to everyone. The group provides each other with lots of laughs, ideas, and fellowship.

Potluck Lunch at the Parsonage - Sunday, December 22nd at 11:15am after worship. Please join us for this gathering.

The Deacons will be collecting funds December for the Center for Food Action (CFA). The Center for Food Action (CFA), founded in 1976, is a non-profit, 501 (c)(3) organization that provides emergency services to northern New Jersey's poorest and most vulnerable residents. CFA provides food, housing, utility, and heating assistance and offers counseling and advocacy services to low-income individuals and families. CFA is headquartered in Englewood and has sites in Hackensack, Mahwah, Ringwood, and Saddle Brook. In 2014, at the request of Bergen Community College, CFA opened a site on BCC's Paramus campus to serve low-income students and their families. Please make checks payable to "Saddle River Reformed Church" and designate as "Mission of the Month."

WEEKLY Bible Lecture: Meets every Wednesday at 11am in the Lounge followed by the "Lunch Bunch" from 12:15-1pm.

On Wednesdays at 11am, Mr. James Jones leads us in a bible lecture. He teaches on a variety of topics and discussions. A short Q & A time follows the lecture. Around noon, everyone joins in fellowship over a Bring-Your-Own-Lunch. You are welcome to hear new perspectives on scripture and everyday life.

Time for Fellowship!

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

Food Donations

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, Shelf Stable Milk, Cooking Oil, Canned Hearty Soups, Cold and Hot Cereal, Coffee and Tea, Canned Vegetables & Fruits, Pasta, Rice, & Beans, Peanut Butter & Jelly, Tomato Sauce, Tuna, Individually Wrapped Toilet Paper, Bar or Bottled Soap, Paper Products, Laundry Detergent, Diapers (Sizes 4, 5, 6), Baby Wipes, and Baby Formula.

The Saddle River Reformed Church worshipping at the Old Stone Church in Upper Saddle River is a member of the Reformed Church in America, serving the New York and New Jersey area since 1628. The Congregation was formed in 1784.

The Reformed Church is part of the Presbyterian/Reformed Christian tradition. We celebrate the sacraments of Baptism and Lord's Supper.

The congregation is an inclusive community that believes that Jesus Christ is our Lord and Savior and the Bible (Hebrew and Christian) reveals those things needed by Christians for spiritual development and living. We believe that the people of the church are to follow the way of love and action given to us by Jesus.

We believe we are at our best when we serve our community.

Saddle River Reformed Church

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srrcoffice@verizon.net

Facebook: Old Stone/Saddle River Reformed Church

Instagram: oldstonechurchnj

Saddle River Reformed Church Consistory

Minister of Word and Sacrament

The Rev. Leah Ennis-Gasero

Elders

Peter Freeman, VP

Cathy Lowden, Treasurer

Nancy Peet, Clerk

Deacons

Cliff Kammerer

Suzanne Peters

John Seibert

Staff

Rozanne Sullivan
Director of Music & Organist

Stephanie Doyle
Office Manager
T-F 10am-2pm

Ken Conklin
Cemetery Superintendent Emeritus
In Memoriam

