



The Church Bell

The First Reformed Church
Walden, New York

Church Bell, Volume 70, Issue 1

January & February 2025

2025 is Upon Us

2025 is upon us, a whole year we have yet to fill with plans, hopes, and dreams. For the farm, I'm planning what I'll plant where, when and what seeds I'll start, I'm taking inventory of the supplies I have and what I'll need to order. I know that in about 4 weeks I'll start washing buckets for sap collection, I need to start stocking up firewood to boil down the sap for Maple Syrup. Planning is part of the process along with looking back over the past year to see what I've learned and what changes I need to make so that 2025 is a more successful year.



When I think about the future of the church my dream is for First Reformed to flourish and grow. When I look back at 2024, I see our in-person attendance going up, our online presence growing, and visitors becoming regular attendees. I also see more children in worship which makes my heart fill with joy. Encouraging more families with children to join us in worship is a wonderful goal.

We received a grant from the denomination to assist us in our ministry to food challenged children through Backpack Snack Attack. For the last 15 years we have helped families have good nutrition for their families, sometimes providing as many as 160 bags of food per week. What we are learning is that the need is great, and God is using us to feed the hungry in our community through BPSA and the Montgomery Food Pantry. We are up to man the Pantry next in February. Again, we are learning how great the need for food is in our community. It seems our calling as a church is to feed the hungry.

Caring for our community and the world is visible in our mission work: Hearts for Hungry, Shoe Box Ministry, Boxes of Aide for Ukraine, Vacation Bible School, Daily Devotions online, Men's Breakfast, Women's book Study, Pastor's Book Study, Wallkill Valley Lenten Services, Walden Clergy Group, Teaching English as a New/Second Language, along with caring for each other. I'm sure that God smiles on those congregations that care for and serve their communities. Our call is to make a positive difference in our community and the world.

The consistory will be meeting for a retreat on January 25th. Our goal will be to look back at 2024 in order to look forward to and strategize for the future. You can help by praying for us to have clarity of vision, hearts overflowing with love, and an openness to the leading of the Holy Spirit. We hope to be planting seeds of faith, hope and healing for the community. Your support and care for our building, ministry, and worship help the church flourish.

As I begin my ninth year of ministry with you, I am aware of your need for someone more full-time and much younger than me. With your support and God's help we can achieve this goal in 2025. I have fallen deeply in love with First Reformed Church's people and for that reason I know that it is in your best interest that I retire, and you call a new pastor to serve and lead you.

As you dream and plan for 2025, I would love to have you share with the Consistory your dreams and plans for the church. It will help us as we gather.

Pastor Jim O'Connell

Submitted by Bonnie Reichle

Hanging of the Greens

Many thanks to the many hands who helped decorate the church for Christmas. The men did the roping, putting up the tree and erecting the creche with the assistance of Joe Weikel, Bill Freeman, Jerry Hanen and Pastor Jim. We had lots of children in attendance making the ornaments and paper chain and then hanging the ornaments including the Crist-Kohns, Horton children, Forino grandchildren, and Berman Children. Many thanks to Carol Ann Freeman and the Barringer children for helping with this task. The Candelabras were decorated by Jan Goutell. Jan Hanen and Pastor Jim made wreaths. Boxwood stars were assembled by many hands (Joyce, Ariana, the Berman Family, the Barringer's, Mary Mentz) with the greens being cut by Jim Reichle, Bonnie Reichle and Teresa Nostrand. A great meal was prepared by Teresa Nostrand assisted by Phyllis with goodies by Jan Hanen, Jan Goutell and Bonnie Reichle. Over 40 people stayed for and enjoyed dinner. The evening concluded with a service of lessons and carols while children decorated the tree.

Advent Wreath Lighting

Thank you to the families who assisted in the services for the candle lighting: Barringer Family, Den Bleyker Family, Lopez Family, Saddle Brook Farm Family and Harrington Family.

Christmas Poinsettias



Given by

Jim & Phyllis O'Connell
Nancy & Nicky Petrolo
Harold Bruggemann Jr.
Bill & Carol Ann Freeman
Schoonmakers
Jan & Phil Goutell

Jerry and Jan Hanen
Dominic Bonasio
Mary Mentz
Mary Mentz
Weikel Family
Weikel Family
Weikel Family
Diane Karsten
Randy Hunt
Randy Hunt
The Heitz & Sairrino Families

In Memory

Our Parents
Clarence & Lucy Nauman
Loretta C. Bruggemann
marilyne freeman flora
Our Parents
Parents of both - G. Parkers
& P. Goutells
Our Children & grandchildren
Anne S Bonasio
Don Mentz
Parents and Loved Ones
Katerina Elizabeth Weikel
Weikel Family
Mitreski Family
Walter H. Karsten
Thomas Wilson
Janet Wilson
Barbara Heitz

Given by

Jim & Phyllis O'Connell
Bill & Carol Ann Freeman
Schoonmakers
Schoonmakers
Ariana Den Bleyker
Ariana Den Bleyker
Ariana Den Bleyker
Ariana Den Bleyker
Ariana Den Bleyker

In Honor of

Our Church family
FRC Consistory - Thank you!
Our Family Members
Our Family Members
Phyllis O'Connell
Jan Hanen
Jan Goutell
Judy Bonasio
Mary Mentz



Submitted By Joe Weikel
Worship Team



Photo credit: Jerin Thamby

All glory praise and honor to God the Father and thanksgiving for His providence in Jesus Christ! Welcome to the New Year as we anticipate wonderful blessings the Lord has for us in 2025. Let us keep our eyes on Him and our hope on His promises as we enter this new season in our lives.

We pray our worship uplifts your spirit and leads us to a closer walk with Him building in us a heart for service to His Kingdom on Earth.

We are so looking forward to worship in the New Year and all the wonder of what this year may bring.

First up will be our work taking down the greens and the tree and its ornaments and placing them in storage. We'll accomplish this starting at 9:30AM on Saturday January 11th. There are tasks for just about every physical ability level and certainly many hands will make light of this work, so we encourage you all to consider coming out to lend a hand.

With the Epiphany of the Lord on Monday January 6th, we enjoy celebrating the Baptism of the Lord on Sunday January 12th and begins the eight Sunday's in the season of Epiphany.



We are in the planning stages of our annual Scout Sunday to tentatively be February 9th, the 5th Sunday after the Epiphany. We are hoping to have the Scouts of Troup 33 again take a large part of this annual service as acolytes, lead the congregation in the call to worship, scripture readings and prayer.

Worship Team



I always look forward to these services where we will recognize the generations of young men and the faithful leaders from the community who have given of their time, talents, and treasures to impart upon these boys the Christian values and guiding principles of what it means to be a Scout. We pray the Scouts may long continue this tradition planting the seeds of citizenship and responsibility in caring for the welfare of others and that we all might support and uplift these tenants every day of our lives. Our most heartfelt thanks to the Boy Scouts, their families and their dedicated leaders.

The Season of Lent begins Ash Wednesday which this year will be on Wednesday February 5th.

We are in the midst of planning another Lenten Series of services with other Reformed Churches in the Hudson Valley. Our tentative plans are to host the Series kick-off on the evening of Ash Wednesday at 7PM on the 5th. We plan to keep with previous year's Ash Wednesday services by not having soup and sandwiches prior to but following the service, we'll enjoy light deserts and fellowship.

The remaining Lenten services are held over the following six Sunday evenings in Lent with a light dinner served at 5PM followed by the Lenten service at 6PM. Although not yet determined at the time of this writing, we hope to host a Sunday evening service in the series. I'm certain there will be more information forth coming on this so keep an eye out for this year's Lenten Series Brochures.



Broadcasts of our services have been quite successful (ok, not perfect!) and will continue on our Facebook page. <https://www.facebook.com/FRCWalden> as well as being simulcast on Reverend O'Connell's Facebook Page. What a blessing to be able to reach out and worship with those from home near or far. As always, and I do mean always, in our on-going efforts to improve your on-line worship experience, your constructive criticism and comments are most very welcome! I encourage you to let me know how we might improve them!

We are ever so thankful and give God the glory for everyone who has made the choice to attend our worship services. We encourage you to talk with friends and neighbors. Invite them to come and experience our services for themselves in the safe and welcoming environment of our sanctuary.

I want to thank God for everyone who contributes to our worship services. There are indeed so many and you too can contribute as well! We are always looking to bring more people to be active participants in worship services. There are many and a wide range of roles you can take. Depending upon the gifts God has blessed you with, you participate by becoming one of our readers of scriptures, light the Christ Candle as our acolyte, lead the congregation in the responsive Call to Worship, or singing in Choir and/or Praise Team, or offer special music, or greet congregants before service, or help decorate the sanctuary with flowers or making banners to display, or assisting in sound and broadcast production. Really, there are so many areas the Worship Team would welcome your contributions, and it is our deep and sincere desire to include as many as possible in our services. We ask you all to prayerfully consider participating in our worship services.

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PRAISE TEAM

The Praise Team meets Wednesday evenings at 6:30 PM for rehearsal in Crist Chapel and you are always most welcome to stop on by and have some fun with us! Even if you're not yet comfortable singing or playing in front of the congregation we encourage you to share in the lift in spirit we experience by singing His praises with us!

We are so very blessed and appreciate Bunnie Reichle for sharing her many talents in music and organization. We look forward to the Choir Anthems this season which she has already selected through February!

We are also very grateful too for our guest accompanist's for providing piano accompaniment when Bunnie is out of town as well as for Angel Santana Jr for leading our services in Reverend O'Connell's absences. This is wonderful experience for him as he enters into formal study for pastoring. God has blessed us each year with even more talented souls to contribute to our worship services.

Foremost we give thanks to God for bringing us Reverend O'Connell, for his teaching, leadership, inspiring, enlightening, and uplifting sermons, for his mentoring, caring, prayer and selflessly sharing his wonderful gifts of music and voice to our worship services. Thank you, and all glory to God!

We will be incorporating more hymns from our new hymnals, "Sing! A New Creation" and I love to list for you the lyrics of our Hymns of the Months, also known as the "Closing Hymn" each Sunday. I find the lyrics are very much like prayers we can use to glorify God.

In January as the acolyte lights the Christ Candle, we will be singing verse #1 from Hymn #8 "Gather Us In" from our new hymnal. Those hymns are noted in the bulletins by the prefix "G", in this case, hymn G8. This hymn was authored and arranged by Marty Haugen in 1950.

*I Here in this place new light is streaming, Now is the darkness vanished away;
See in this space our fears and our dreaming's Brought here to you in the light of this day.
Gather us in, the lost and forsaken, Gather us in, the blind and the lame;
Call to us now, and we shall awaken, We shall arise at the sound of our name.*

Worship Team

Our Hymn of the Month (Closing Hymn) in January will be #635 ““He Leadeth Me Oh Blessed Thought””. Authored by Joseph H Gilmore in 1862 composed by William D. Bradbury in 1864, it is based on Psalm 23:3; Psalm 139:9-10; 1 Corinthians 15:55; 1 Corinthians 15:57; Philippians 4:11; and Philippians 4:13.

*1 He leadeth me, O blessed thought, O words with heavenly comfort fraught!
Whate'er I do, where'er I be, still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.*

*Refrain: He leadeth me, he leadeth me, by his own hand he leadeth me!
His faithful follower I would be, for by his hand he leadeth me.*

*2 Lord, I would clasp thy hand in mine, nor ever murmur nor repine,
content, whatever lot I see, since 'tis my God that leadeth me. [Refrain]]*

*3 And when my task on earth is done, when by thy grace the victory's won,
e'en death's cold wave I will not flee, since God through Jordan leadeth me.
[Refrain]*



We will end our services in January with verse 1 of the Departing Hymn #G 284 “Go My Children, with My Blessing” authored by Jaroslav J. Vajda in 1919, composed from a Welch melody from 1784 and a descant by Hal Hopson in 1933.

*1 Go my children, with my blessing, never alone. Waking, sleeping, I am with you, you are my own.
In my love's baptismal river, I have made you mine forever. Go, my children, with my blessing, you are my own.*

For our Acolyte Hymn in February we'll sing verse 1 from Hymn #G 11 “Be Still, for the Presence” which was authored and composed by David Evans in 1957.

*1 Be still, for the presence of the Lord, the Holy One, is here. Come bow before him now, with reverence and fear.
In him no sin is found; we stand on holy ground. Be still, for the presence of the Lord, the Holy One, is here.*

Our Hymn of the Month for February will be #593 “The Gift of Love”. Paraphrased composed by Hal Hopson in 1972/1971, it is based on John 13:34; John 15:11-12; 1 Corinthians 13:13; Galatians 5:22; Ephesians 3:17.

*1 Though I may speak with bravest fire, and have the gift to all inspire,
and have not love, my words are vain; as sounding brass, and hopeless gain.*

*2 Though I may give all I possess, and striving so my love profess,
but not be given by love within, the profit soon turns strangely thin.*

*3 Come, Spirit, come, our hearts control, our spirits long to be made whole.
Let inward love guide every deed; by this we worship, and are freed.*

We will end our services in February with the Departing Hymn #G 291 “The Lord Bless You and Keep You”, composed by Barbara Boetje in 1959.

*1 The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;
the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace, (and give you peace).*

We welcome all to our worship services, and we encourage you to invite a friend or a neighbor to worship alongside us. We further encourage you to take an inventory of innate gifts God has given you and then prayerfully consider offering them service to the Lord. There are no bounds to the blessings that can come from the least of our offerings. No gift is insignificant. All have a divinely intended impact. We may never know how profoundly our service will touch someone else's life.

With love in Christ Jesus,

Joe Weikel

(845) 820-2317

Submitted by Jerry Hanen

Property

We continue to do our best to maintain our property. With the holidays we did not do much for repairs but more for decorating the building. The one project that we did accomplish was to replace the lock on the fellowship hall door. This has been a problem for quite a while and we installed a higher quality lock that we hope to get a longer life from. If you need access to the building let me know and I can see about taking care of that.

We also put up some shelves for the Back Pack Snack Attack area to help keep their supplies organized.



Search committee

We have received a couple of inquiries to our pastoral search. One withdrew and we are starting to look at the other one that came in just before the holidays. We will see where this leads.



Men's breakfast

We continue to meet every Saturday morning and I need to thank the crew for filling in for me this last month as I have had a series of conflicts, but they have kept everything running smooth. Please come and join us!

Scouts

We are welcoming another Eagle scout to the troop and they have invited us to the ceremony on January 18th. Contact me if you are interested in attending. They are also doing another fundraiser with Little Caesars Pizza. It looks like there are some good deals with this for either shipping the kits to your home or pick up at the pizza shop. They even have cookies and cookie dough! Let me know if you are interested and I will send you the link.

Caroling

We had a small group gather to go out caroling in the neighborhood. It was a cold night and the men in the group went out and sang to our neighbors. The women stayed at church to make sure that we had warm pizza, coffee and hot chocolate when we returned. We all had a good time and we were well received by all when we came to their door.



ENL (ENGLISH AS A NEW LANGUAGE)

It's January and we will soon bid farewell to most all of our students at Crist Orchards. I believe they will be returning home Jan. 15. Here are 2 things we are doing before they leave:

Thursday, Jan. 9: ENL class at 6:30 like usual. My sister presented three of our upcoming U.S. holidays - Valentine's Day, Groundhog's Day and President's Day. She prepared everything needed for that, including worksheets and themed snacks. We remembered President Jimmy Carter as it was the national day of mourning for him.

On Sunday, January 12 at 2:00 at my sister's home we are planning an Italian lunch with lasagna and fixings. It's a get together to wish our students well before they return home.

Carol Ann

**WOMEN'S STUDY SUPPORT GROUP**

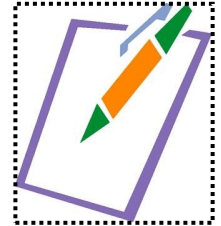
On Sundays, women gather in the Fellowship Hall at 8:15am for study and reflection. Feel free to join us for the first time if you are able. We would love to have you. If you would like a study guide ordered for you, please text or call Phyllis O'Connell (201-294-2293)

SUNDAY'S FELLOWSHIP HOUR

If you can make a donation to Fellowship Hour, please speak to Phyllis O'Connell. Some donation ideas are coffee, bottled water, boxed juice, veggie tray with dip, fruit platter, cheese/crackers, or finger desserts.



Some Other Reminders



Choir: rehearsals are on Tuesday mornings, from 9:15 AM to 10:00 AM, in Crist Chapel.

Backpack Snack Attack: packs on Wednesdays at 5:30 PM. See Angel Santana Sr. for more information.

Praise Team: rehearsing Wednesdays at 6:30 PM in Crist Chapel. All are welcome.

Men's Breakfast: every Saturday, in Fellowship Hall, from 7:30am to 8:30am, suggested donation of \$5.

Communion and Soup & Bread: is on the first Sunday of the month.

Newsletter deadlines: next newsletter deadline is February 15th. Please email articles, and information to frchurch@frontiernet.net by no later than the 2nd Thursday of February, April, June, August, October, and December.

Healing Service: the next healing service will be during the worship service on Sunday, March 30th.

Montgomery Food Pantry: The First Reformed Church is scheduled to volunteer at the Food Pantry in February. The Food Pantry operates on Tuesdays from 10AM–Noon & on Wednesdays 6:30-8:00PM.

Operation Christmas Child: we collect supplies for this mission through-out the year, see Carol Ann Freeman for more information.

First Reformed Church
of Walden, New York

Faith. Fellowship. Family.
Stay tuned for start up date...

**FIRST REFORMED CHURCH
SATURDAY NIGHT WORSHIP**

CHRISTIAN ROCK DEVOTIONAL MESSAGE PRAYER REQUEST FELLOWSHIP

Community Event



Do you have any broken appliances, torn clothing, dull knives, broken jewelry, toys, furniture or bicycles in need of repair? Bring them and more to our Repair Café to get them fixed for free or at cost of replacement parts.

Where:

**Municipal Building 3rd floor, 1 Municipal Square
Walden, NY**

When:

Saturday January 25, 10-1

**Hosted by the Town of Montgomery Conservation Advisory
Council**

This effort is to save items from going to the landfill and to
save everyone money!

In association with Repair Café Hudson Valley

Listed on Repaircafehv.org.

Please call or text Ilene at 845-220-8331 to let us know what you are bringing, or if you can attend with repair skills.





january 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 New Years Day 6:30 Praise Team	2	3	4 7:30 Men's Breakfast
5 Communion 8:15 Women's Study 10:00 Worship 11:00 Soup & Bread	6 Epiphany	7	8 5:30 Packing for Backpack Snack Attack 6:30 Praise Team	9	10	11 7:30 Men's Breakfast
12 8:15 Women's Study 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship	13	14 9:15 AM Choir Practice	15 5:30 Packing for Backpack Snack Attack 6:30 Praise Team	16 7:00 Consistory	17	18 7:30 Men's Breakfast
19 8:15 Women's Study 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship	20 Martin Luther King Jr. Day	21 9:15 AM Choir Practice	22 5:30 Packing for Backpack Snack Attack 6:30 Praise Team	23	24	25 7:30 Men's Breakfast 10am to 1pm Repair Cafe
26 8:15 Women's Study 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship	27	28 9:15 AM Choir Practice	29 5:30 Packing for Backpack Snack Attack 6:30 Praise Team	30	31	



FEBRUARY 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 7:30 Men's Breakfast
2 Communion 8:15 Women's Study 10:00 Worship 11:00 Soup & Bread	3	4 9:15 AM Choir Practice 10:00 - Noon Food Pantry	5 5:30 Packing for Snack Attack 6:30 Praise Team 6:30-8:00 Food Pantry	6	7	8 7:30 Men's Breakfast
9 8:15 Women's Study 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship	10	11 9:15 AM Choir Practice 10:00 - Noon Food Pantry	12 5:30 Packing for Snack Attack 6:30 Praise Team 6:30-8:00 Food Pantry	13 Articles and calendar items for Bell newsletter are due	14 Valentines Day	15 7:30 Men's Breakfast
16 8:15 Women's Study 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship	17 President's Day	18 9:15 AM Choir Practice 10:00 - Noon Food Pantry	19 5:30 Packing for Snack Attack 6:30 Praise Team 6:30-8:00 Food Pantry	20 7:00 Consistory	21	22 7:30 Men's Breakfast
23 8:15 Women's Study 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship	24	25 9:15 AM Choir Practice 10:00 - Noon Food Pantry	26 5:30 Packing for Snack Attack 6:30 Praise Team 6:30-8:00 Food Pantry	27	28	Lent begins March 5th Daylight Savings March 9th

Around the Congregation



Happy Birthday to...

Church Prayer List

“Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Please Pray for:

Alivia Barringer & family, Ariana Den Bleyker, Angel Santana Jr. & family, Gail Yeaple, People of Ukraine, Jonathan Reichle, Jill McCormick, People of Gaza, People of Israel, Ed & Susan Kennedy, George Heitz & family, Mike DeZemo, Richie Lendle, Angel Santana, Sr., Mary Weikel, Smith family, J.T. Randazzo, Military personnel, the home-bound, and those in nursing facilities.



Deposits

October
9,385.00

November
10,927.00



January

- John Nash 5th
- Dalyeris Taueras 7th
- Celia Simmonds 9th
- Marco Diaz Lopez 10th
- Susan Kennedy 12th
- Philip Goutell 13th
- Noah Santana 24th
- Jenny (Crist) Kohn 25th
- Karen Harrington 27th
- Dominic Bonasio 29th
- Richard Lendle 29th

February

- Edmund Kohn 2nd
- Addison Den Bleyker 2nd
- Diane Crist-Moore 14th
- Janice Goutell 16th
- Ken Barringer 23rd
- Jay Wilkins 28th

Please email or call the office if we missed listing someone’s birthday or anniversary. Thank you.

Current Inclement Weather Policy:

Sunday’s mornings- call the church office (845-778-5405) after 7:30am. If Worship service is canceled there will be a message left on the voicemail system stating so. If it has not been canceled then you will just hear a standard greeting.
Monday to Saturday– it will be up to each leader if they want to have their group meet or not.

2025 Goodwill Offering Envelopes:

- January - Deacon Fund
- February - Backpack Snack Attack (BPSA)
- March - Habitat for Humanity
- April - Hearts for Hungary
- May - Food Pantry (TOM)
- June - Operation Christmas Child (OCC)
- July - Deacons Fund
- August - Discipleship
- September - Backpack Snack Attack (BPSA)
- October - Operation Christmas Child (OCC)
- November - English as a New Language (ENL)
- December - Hearts for Hungary

ANNIVERSARIES

Jay & Anne Wilkins
Feb 4th