



The Church Bell

The First Reformed Church
Walden, New York

Church Bell, Volume 71, Issue 2

March & April 2026

70 Scofield Street, Walden NY 12586 ... 845-778-5405 ... frchurch@frontiernet.net ... <https://waldenfirstreformed.org/>

Transition

Morning has broken like the first morning
Blackbird has spoken like the first bird
Praise for the singing, praise for the morning
Praise for them springing fresh from the world...

"Morning Has Broken" is a 1931 Christian hymn with lyrics by Eleanor Farjeon that celebrates the beauty of creation, dawn, and the renewal of life. It portrays each new day as a fresh start, comparing the sunrise to the "first morning" of creation, offering gratitude for nature and God's renewed blessings.



Psalm 118:24, "This is the day which the LORD has made; Let's rejoice and be glad in it", focusing on gratitude for each new day.

I can feel this on the horizon, the snow will be dissipating and the spring flowers are going to bloom. The ENL program is going to begin, the First Friday program is blossoming and the new array of leaders for our Sunday worship services each Sunday are fitting into wonderful array of colors like the springtime.

We are so very blessed on the Hill Church! Of course this is God's plan, we just need to sit back and listen and trust with his glorious plan. Some may doubt, but for me and my house, we believe that all things are possible with his blessings!

Please continue to pray for our transition – help the current teams and lend a hand, making light work and pure joy for each of you.

In God's Love,

Susan Kennedy

Submitted by **Bunnie Reichle**



Yes, It will be July and yes we will be doing a Snowball Mountain Challenge!

Please join us for VBS July 27-31. We will start with dinner at 5:30 PM and then do all of the exciting VBS activities until 8:15 PM.

The program is based on the key verse: “I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.” (Philippians 4:13)

Each day has a Bible point and Bible story.

Day 1 – Bible Point – I can share my gifts. Bible story: Jesus interprets dreams (Genesis 40: 1-41:45)

Day 2 – Bible point – I can be brave. Bible story: Esther shows courage (Esther 3:7-8:8)

Day 3 – Bible point – I can give my all. Bible story: The Widow’s Offering (Mark 12:41-44)

Day 4 – Bible point – I can pray. Bible story: Jesus Prays in the Garden (Matthew 26:36-46)

Day 5 – Bible point – I can hope. Bible story: Peter and John at the Temple (Acts 3:1-10)

Featuring Biblically sound teaching, hands-on activities and lessons, Road Trip ensures that the Bible story takes center stage. Children will experience each day’s Bible story, starting with a puppet skit in the opening assembly and continuing through each station and rotation. Crafts are creative, eco-friendly keepsakes that create memories of everything learned in Road Trip. Each day’s songs reinforce the message of the day as do the crafts and science lessons.

Students will have student books, T-shirts and Scripture Treasure Lanyards as take-home reminders of the lessons.

For the past several years, we have gotten a \$2000 grant to do the program. We have been cut back to \$500 and so we are reaching out to any of you to donate to help us out. Make checks payable to the church and put VBS 2026 in the memo line.

Share the good news with family, friends and neighbors! See you in July.

WORSHIP



All glory, praise, and honor to God the Father and thanksgiving for His providence in Jesus Christ! The Worship Team sends prayers for you all to enjoy the peace of Christ as we enter the Season of Lent. Let us reflect on the wonderful blessings the Lord has for us in 2026. Through worship we strive to glorify God by keeping our eyes on Jesus and to stand firm on the foundation of His promises.

We pray our worship uplifts your spirit, builds our hearts and minds to service in His Kingdom.

We are so looking forward to worship services during Lent which began Ash Wednesday back on February 18th. We encourage you to invite your friends to worship with us at 10:00 AM Sundays at the First Reformed Church of Walden. For our Sunday morning services during Lent and the coming Spring, the Worship Team has chosen some wonderful and fitting music to compliment the season and sermons from a number of preachers.

As a traditional addition to Sunday morning worship service, we offer a wonderful set of Sunday evening services in what is the 88th Annual Lenten Worship Series. We encourage you to invite your friends to worship with us as the Reformed Churches of the Wallkill Valley as we come together as a greater body of Christ in the ongoing Lenten Series Services. This year, the Lenten Series sermons are reflections from the study of the book, "Jesus Changes Everything", by Stanley Hauerwas. We encourage you to get a copy of the book and follow along throughout Lent.

This year the Series services start at 6PM and are followed by a time of fellowship with light refreshments and beverages at 7PM. For March 1st, the 2nd Sunday in Lent, the Series will be at Wallkill Reformed Church with the Rev. Howie Dalton preaching on God's Alternative Society based on Acts 2:1-4.

For March 8th, the third Sunday in Lent the Series will be held at First Reformed Church in Walden with Master of Divinity student Angel Santana Jr. preaching on Kingdom Economics based on Luke 14:33.

Then the Series will come to a close on March 15th, the fourth Sunday in Lent at Meadow Hill Reformed Church in Newburgh with Rev. Stan Seagren preaching on "Sowing Seeds of Peace" based on Mathew 18:15-17.

We are blessed to have Rev. Ed Hawkins lead us in worship for Palm Sunday March 29th with a foretaste of Holy week. We look forward to the pomp celebration of our Lord's triumphant entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday and the children distributing palms to all in attendance. May we all approach Christ with the loving innocence of children. It's always wonderful and for me quite moving to see their faces shine with joy of serving the congregation delivering these gifts to those of us in the pews. In preparation for this distribution of palms, the Worship Team is seeking volunteers, perhaps some youths to separate the palms upon their delivery just prior to Palm Sunday.

This year we have chosen not to have a service on Maundy Thursday, but we have already chosen new scriptures and hymn selections for our Tenebrae Service on Good Friday April 3rd. This year we will follow the Tenebrae Service "We Remember Calvary".

Worship Continued

This brings us to the pinnacle of the Christian calendar, Easter Sunday April 5th. We are planning a wonderful service of celebration filled with uplifting music such as our Closing Hymn #233 "The Strife Is O'er, the Battle Done", and we will be blessed again to have our beloved Reverend O'Connell offer us another inspiring sermon. Come and join us as we joyfully express our thanksgiving to God for giving us His Son, who was crucified for our sins and raised from the dead. Praise God for our Lord and living Savior Jesus Christ. He has risen INDEED!! Bring a friend or neighbor to any or all these services as certainly ALL ARE WELCOME IN THIS PLACE!!



Yes! Please note that this year's Easter flower orders will be due on Sunday March 15th. We are still considering what supplier we will use, what flowers there may be to choose from and of course their costs. More coming on that soon!!



Participation in our services resurges both in person and live posts on Facebook and as well as on video replay. Jerry Hanen does masterful work preparing our PowerPoint Slide shows for the services and with Bill Freeman's helping hands in the sound booth we continue to broadcast our services live on our Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/FRCWalden>. We encourage you all to like and share our services on social media. It really does help spread the Good News as far and wide as we may! Did you know that we have several people from across the world who are regulars watching our services! It's amazing how we are reaching from our Facebook page, sometimes to the tune of 500 per week! Our sincere thanks to all who participate in services on-line!

We are ever so grateful and give God the glory for everyone who has made the choice to attend Sunday Services by whatever means. 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. Indeed! All are welcome in this place.



We are so very grateful and thankful to all who participate in the Praise Team and those who work diligently behind the scenes to produce our live broadcasts and presentations in Church. What a blessing and joy it is to sing His Praise and Worship together. We are always looking forward to welcoming new voices and instruments of any level to our team. So, if you feel led by the Spirit, or just want to enjoy evenings of music and song, we encourage you to join us Wednesday evenings at 6:30 in Crist Chapel to rehearse and generally have a great time honing our skills. I will unfortunately be away 15 March to 12 July but let that not stop you from stopping by rehearsals and have some real fun singing God's praises.

_Worship Continued....



Speaking of singing, we are always looking to welcome other singers into our Choir! Rehearsals are a great time 10:30 AM Monday mornings in Crist Chapel where we practice wonderful choral selections. Bunnie Reichle our choir directory has chosen for us, and... she has chosen anthems for the Choir all the way through the first of June! Thank you, Bunnie!!!

If you have a heart for and enjoy singing, please get in touch with Bunnie Reichle! Your voice would be a very welcome addition to the fun, and I do mean fun! We really do have a great time rehearsing and joking around as well as focusing on the music, learning more each week. We'll run through selections weeks ahead of their scheduled presentation giving us lots of time rehearsing each piece. It's a blast! We are so very blessed and deeply appreciate Bunnie Reichle for sharing with us her tremendous talents and dedication to providing wonderful selections and accompaniment in our services. Her efforts and thoughtfulness are so very visible if you recall the wonderful Christmas decorations on the walls, trees, and all around the Church for Advent, the banners displayed on the walls and anticipate the wonderful Easter Flowers she sources.

I would be replete if I we're to not express our thanks to Pastor Jim < Angel Santan Jr, Kristin Sclafani, Melody Meeter, Juliete Gaebel and Howi Dalton who will at one time or more be providing us with pulpit supply. We are so very thankful for their teaching, leadership, caring, prayers, and selflessly sharing their wonderful gifts and presence in conducting our worship services with inspiring, enlightening, and uplifting sermons. Thank you, God!

I love to list for you the lyrics of our Hymns for these coming months as they are indeed very much like prayers we can use to glorify God at home. So here we go!

Our Hymn of the Month or the "Closing Hymn" for March will be #200 "Lord Who Throughout", an adapted American folk melody authored by Claudia F. Hernaman (1873) and harmonized by Annabel Morris Buchanan (1938). It is based on Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13; Hebrews 4:15-16. We'll carry this throughout March including Palm Sunday.

¹ Lord, who throughout these forty days for us didst fast and pray, teach us with you to mourn our sins and close by you to stay.

² As you with Satan did contend, and did the victory win, O give us strength in you to fight, in you to conquer sin.

³ As you did hunger and did thirst, so teach us, gracious Lord, to die to self, and so to live by your most holy Word.

⁴ And thro' these days of penitence, and thro' your Passiontide, forevermore, in life and death, O Lord, with us abide.

⁵ Abide with us, that through this life of doubts and hope and pain, an Easter of unending joy we may at last attain!

The Closing Hymn for Easter will be #233 "The Strife Is O'er, the Battle Done", is a Latin hymn (c. 1695) authored by Francis Pott (1861) and composed by Giovanni P. da Palestrina (1591) and arranged by William H. Monk (1861). It is based on scriptures from Psalm 107:16; Isaiah 25:8; Isaiah 45:5 and Colossians 2:15.

Refrain: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

¹ The strife is o'er, the battle done; now is the victor's triumph won; now be the song of praise begun: Alleluia!

[Refrain]

² The powers of death have done their worst, but Christ their legions has dispersed; let shouts of holy joy outburst: Alleluia!

[Refrain]

³ The three sad days have quickly sped, he rises glorious from the dead; all glory to our risen Head! Alleluia!

[Refrain]

⁴ He broke the age-bound chains of hell; the bars from heaven's high portals fell; let hymns of praise his triumph tell: Alleluia!

[Refrain]

⁵ Lord, by the stripes which wounded thee, from death's dread sting thy servants free, that we may live and sing to thee: Alleluia

[Refrain]

Worship Continued....

Our Hymn of the Month or the "Closing Hymn" for the remainder of April will be a selection from our new 'green' hymnal "Sing, A New Creation", Hymn G #157 "Lord I Lift Your Name on High". A favorite of many with words and music by Rick Founds (1954).

*Lord, I lift your name on high; Lord, I love to sing your praises,
I'm so glad you're in my life; I'm so glad you came to save us.
You came from heaven to earth to show the way,
From the earth to the cross, my debt to pay,
From the cross to the grave, From the grave to the sky.
Lord, I lift your name on high!*



The worship team encourages you all to take the time to assess your gifts and talents and prayerfully consider offering them in service to the Lord. There are no bounds on what blessings your gifts may bring to others. None is insignificant. We are a diverse congregation with equally diverse gifts and God has use for each of us in our own way as He leads. We may never know how our service touches the lives of others. We can express our faith by taking a step in the confidence that He will shape the outcome of our efforts to be exactly what is needed at exactly the right time all to bring Him the glory.

You don't have to be experienced or anything special. God equips those He chooses. He often picks the humble for His greatest service. He will provide all that we need through whatever gifts or talent you bring to His table. Those could be simply providing sanctuary decorations, banners, flowers, greeting guests, or other tasks such as running power point slide presentations, singing, providing accompaniment for Hymns or Songs of Praise, panning a video camera, being an acolyte, or a greeter, reading scriptures, praying, online production work, or running the sound board.

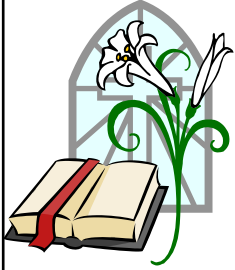
With His help, we can bring you to feel and know that you are welcome in any role; comfortable and supported in any manner joining in making our worship a moving and meaningful experience. No act in offering is too small, no act of service meaningless. They all add up to be even far greater than the sum of our individual acts. Trust in the Lord and see.

We rest assured in His promises and confident in the hope we express as we faithfully worship the Lord to strengthen the body and glorify God. Hallelujah & Amen!

With love in Christ Jesus,

*Joe Weikel
(845) 820-2317
sjbw@ymail.com*





Easter Flower Orders

Kindly complete this form if you wish to place flowers in the sanctuary for our Easter service. Flower availability and prices are listed below. Flowers may be given in memory or in honor of someone. You may take your flowers home with you after our Easter Service on April 5th. The deadline for ordering is **Sunday, March 15, 2026**. People can take the flowers home

\$4.99 Price

4" Tulips _____

4" Hyacinth _____

\$7.99 Price

6" Lily _____

6" Tulip _____

6" Hyacinth _____

\$19.99 Price

8" Lily _____

\$29.99 Price

10" Lilly _____

Given by: _____

In Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____

Check here if you will be bringing your plant home

**A Prayer from the General Secretary of the Reformed Church in America, Rev. Eddy Aleman**

A Prayer for Peace in Iran and in the World

Heavenly Father,

Yesterday the world woke up with news about armed conflict in Iran. We lift up with heavy yet hopeful hearts all those affected by conflict, fear, and unrest — especially in Iran, the Middle East, and every land where violence has taken hold.

We pray for your peace to flow where there is fear, comfort where there is suffering, and hope where there is despair.

Where guns roar and hearts ache, pour out your calming presence.

We pray for the innocent — women, men, children, and the elderly — who long for safety, shelter, and dignity; for families grieving lost loved ones; and for communities that yearn for peace, not pain.

Guide the hearts of world leaders and decision-makers. Grant them wisdom from above, compassion, restraint, and courage to pursue justice and reconciliation rather than conflict.

May dialogue silence weapons, may reason triumph over anger, and may your peace — which passes all understanding — sweep across borders, bringing unity and healing.

Help us, your people everywhere, to be instruments of peace — showing love instead of hatred, forgiveness instead of revenge, and solidarity instead of division.

In this season of Lent, we pray for a world at peace, where every person's dignity is honored, and where compassion replaces conflict.

I pray in the wonderful name of Jesus Christ our Lord, the Prince of Peace. Amen.



NYC EVENT

Reformed Church of America

Asian American experience Sankofa Journey

Asian American experience Sankofa Journey, happening **May 15-18**, in and around the greater NYC area. This journey is hosted by the Council for Pacific and Asian American Ministries (CPAAM) during Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. The focus of this Sankofa Journey is learning the stories and experiencing the history, culture, cuisine, customs, and worship of our Indian, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Taiwanese, Chinese, and multicultural congregations.



All those with an open heart for learning and growing are welcome to join.

Together we will journey around the greater NYC area to hear stories, engage in the process of Sankofa, and experience the history, culture, cuisine, customs, worship, and life experiences of our Indian, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Taiwanese, and multicultural congregations.

Logistics: The dates as mentioned above are May 15-18, 2026. The cost will be app. \$500, per person, double occupancy for 3 nights at the Crown Plaza, with ground transport, most meals, and all materials included. There will be some single rooms available for a supplemental cost. Transportation to and from Metuchen, New Jersey is the participant's responsibility. Partial scholarships may be available.

High level itinerary: Friday, May 15: 5pm Gather at Reformed Church of Metuchen for meet and greet, opening worship, orientation, and dinner. Saturday, May 16: 7:45am Sankofa in the City - board the coach bus, first stop at New Brunswick Theological Seminary, then to Elmhurst, Queens for lunch, walking tour, meetings with church and other local leaders. The Day concludes with dinner in Chinatown and a view of the City Lights on the bus ride back to to the hotel. Sankofa teachings and conversations will take place on the bus to deepen our experience. Sunday, May 17: Worship, fellowship and lunch in area RCA CPAAM congregations. More information to follow, once registration is available it will be posted in a church bulletin.

Sankofas are 4-5 day journeys where a diverse group of people (app. 30-45) from across the RCA travels together to learn and grow. 3 pre-trip Zoom meetings will build community, begin to engage with the Sankofa process, and make sure all participants are well-prepared.

Each Sankofa is unique and centered on a particular group of people to explore their history, culture and customs, spiritual practices, and life experiences. And include stories of hardship, injustice, and challenges as well as hopeful ones.

Sankofas are taken within the United States and comfortable lodging, ground transport, most meals, and materials will be included in the registration fee.

Sankofas are led by ministries from the Center's Rev. 7:9 department (Racial and Ethnic Councils, Women's Transformation and Leadership, Disability Concerns, and Dismantling Racism) and overseen by the director of Equity-Based Hospitality. All logistics will be carefully planned with the RCA Events department and, at times, Short Term Missions.

Some Reminders & Other Information

Sunday Fellowship: Lots of folks pitching in bringing food and helping with clean up. Thank you to all. Remember the first Sunday of each month is Soup & Bread.

Choir: meets on Monday mornings at 10:30 AM in Crist Chapel.

Property Team: meets at the church on Wednesdays at 9am to work on projects and maintenance.

Backpack Snack Attack: packs on Wednesdays at 5:30pm in Fellowship Hall. No deliveries - 4/1/26. The last distribution for all buildings will be 6/12/26.

Praise Team: practice Wednesdays at 6:00pm in Crist Chapel.

Men's Breakfast: every Saturday, in Fellowship Hall, from 7:30am to 8:30am, donation of \$5. Around 9 to 15 men meet weekly.

Montgomery Food Pantry: The Food Pantry operates on Tuesdays from 10AM-Noon & on Wednesdays 6:30-8:00PM. First Reformed Church staffs the pantry during the months of February, June, and October.

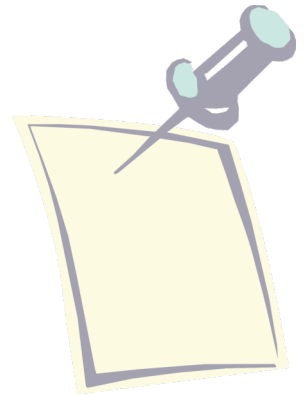
Operation Christmas Child: In 2025, 12.2 million boxes were collected, our 76 boxes going to Thailand.

Hearts for Hungary: Carol Ann will be going to Hungary the last two weeks of March and will be an English-as-first-language teacher to present programs in the Hungarian Reformed Church Dual Language School in Gyula.

First Friday Family Night: First Friday Family Night here at First Reformed Church is every first Friday of every month, from 5:30pm to 7pm. The evening begins with a light dinner, followed by crafts, activities and songs. Each month during our gathering we plan to have a service project for the kids. Our last First Friday was March 6. There is no First Friday Family Night gathering in April and the next First Friday Family night will be May 1st. More information to follow.

Church announcement requests: please contact Sabrina the church secretary at frchurch@frontiernet.net or leave a voicemail at 845-778-5405.

Church Newsletter: newsletter deadline for articles and information for the May/June Church Bell newsletter is April 10th. Please email the information to frchurch@frontiernet.net





march 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 10:00 Worship Communion Soup & Bread	2 10:30 Choir	3	4 9:00 Property 9:30 ESL 5:30 Packing Snack Attack 6:00 Praise Team	5	6 5:30 to 7:00 First Friday Family night	7 7:30 Men's Breakfast Daylight Savings @ 2am Sunday
8 Daylight Savings 10:00 Worship 6pm Lenten Series First Reformed	9 10:30 Choir	10	11 9:00 Property 9:30 ESL 5:30 Packing Snack Attack 6:00 Praise Team	12	13	14 7:30 Men's Breakfast
15 10:00 Worship Fellowship Easter Flower Order due 6pm Lenten Series Meadow Hill	16 10:30 Choir	17 St. Patrick's Day	18 9:00 Property 9:30 ESL 5:30 Packing Snack Attack 6:00 Praise Team	19 7pm Consistory	20	21 7:30 Men's Breakfast
22 10:00 Worship Fellowship	23 10:30 Choir	24	25 9:00 Property 9:30 ESL 5:30 Packing Snack Attack 6:00 Praise Team	26	27	28 7:30 Men's Breakfast
29 10:00 Worship Fellowship Palm Sunday	30 10:30 Choir					



APRIL 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 9:00 Property 9:30 ESL 5:30 Packing Snack Attack 6:00 Praise Tm	2	3 Good Friday	4 7:30 Men's Breakfast
5 Easter 10:00 Worship Communion Soup & Bread	6 10:30 Choir	7	8 9:00 Property 9:30 ESL 5:30 Packing Snack Attack 6:00 Praise Tm TmTeam	9	10 Articles & calendar info for the May/ June newsletter are due	11 7:30 Men's Breakfast
12 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship	13 10:30 Choir	14	15 9:00 Property 9:30 ESL 5:30 Packing Snack Attack 6:00 Praise Tm	16 7:00 Consistory	17	18 7:30 Men's Breakfast
19 10:00 Worship Fellowship	20 10:30 Choir	21	22 9:00 Property 9:30 ESL 5:30 Packing Snack Attack 6:00 Praise Tm	23	24	25 7:30 Men's Breakfast
26 10:00 Worship Fellowship	27 10:30 Choir	28	29 9:00 Property 9:30 ESL 5:30 Packing Snack Attack 6:00 Praise Tm	30		

Around the Congregation



**Happy
Birthday
to You**

Church Prayer List

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

I Thessalonians 5:16-18



Please keep in your prayers:

The Middle East, People of Ukraine, People of Gaza, People of Israel, Kevin Doyle, Mary Mentz, Military personnel, Jill McCormick’s Family, Louise Stewart Family, Conor Spencer Family, Richie Lendle, Nick Petrolo, The home-bound, Those in nursing facilities



**Finance
Update**

Total Deposited

December &
January
\$30,543.17



Happy Anniversary

Nicholas & Nancy Petrolo

March 22nd

Dominic & Judy Bonasio

March 31st

March

Jaymee Barringer March 7

Justin Lendle March 8

Angel Santana Jr. March 9

Vanessa Simmonds March 11

Jordan Conklin March 13

Lucas Barringer March 16

Matt Kryger March 16

Molly Macnamara March 20

Brenda Hawkins March 21

Elizabeth Cocks March 22

April

J. Daniel Harrington April 5

Donna Bohler April 10

John Harrington April 10

Landon Bergeron April 11

Rev. Jim O’Connell April 15

Jennifer Kotchenrather April 24

Weston Sanger April 27

Goodwill Envelopes:

January - Deacon Fund

February - Backpack Snack Attack

March – Operation Christmas Child

April - Hearts for Hungary

May - Discipleship

June – English as a Second Language

July - Deacons Fund

August – Backpack Snack Attack

September – OCC Shipping

October – Food Pantry

November – Operation Dalmatian

December - Hearts for Hungary



"A quick reminder that directly following the service this morning, second-guessing the sermon will be held in the fellowship hall."

We thank you for your support and encourage you to continue to support us with your tithes, talent, and prayers. You are welcome to mail donations to First Reformed Church, 70 Scofield Street, Walden NY 12586 or go to the church website <https://waldenfirstreformed.org/> and click on the giving button. You may also download the Tithe.ly giving app at <https://get.tithe.ly/give-download-app> and search for the First Reformed Church, enter zip code 12586 to easily find the church on the app. You may also make donations through your bank’s online bill pay.