

Calendar of events

Saturdays: Saturday Night Live Open AA meeting in the Education Building, 8PM

Today: Sunday worship: Rally Day with the Blessing of the Backpacks, 10:30 AM. After worship, come to the Education Building for Sunday brunch

September 16: Brownies Troop meeting in the Education Building, 5PM

September 17: Adult Education in Coventry House: I’ve Been Meaning to Ask . . . by sanctifiedart.org, 10AM & 7PM

September 18: Joyful Noise Adult Choir rehearsal in the Lower Auditorium, 6PM

September 21: Sunday worship: Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost with the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, 10:30AM

September 22: New Jericho Choir rehearsal in the Lower Auditorium, 5:30PM

September 23: Middletown Lions Club meeting in the Education Building, 6PM

September 24: Adult Education in Coventry House: I’ve Been Meaning to Ask . . . by sanctifiedart.org, 10AM & 7PM

September 25: Joyful Noise Adult Choir rehearsal in the Lower Auditorium, 6PM

September 28: Sunday worship: Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost worship, 10:30AM

September 29: Middletown Arts Center fall program begins in the Education Building, 4-6PM

Consistory

Elders
Dianne Asay, Financial Secretary
Dolores Hofmann
Lisa Leidecker, Vice President
Cindy Reya, Co-Treasurer
Rev. Tricia Sheffield, President

Deacons
Julie Hertzog
Kim Larson, Alternate Clerk
Dara Steele

Middletown Reformed Church Vision Statement

(Adopted by the Consistory 9 May 2016)
Middletown Reformed Church is a welcoming and affirming congregation, where the inclusive grace of God is the guiding principle for all our ministries. We are people of faith committed to boldly proclaiming and intentionally living out God’s command to do justice, share love, show mercy, and walk humbly with our God in our local and global communities. We are a church on the side of love for all God’s people – providing for those who are in need, advocating for all oppressed peoples, and caring for our earth – we love because God first loved us.

In our prayers

For the healing journey: a neighbor; Irv Beaver; Eric H; Nancy Coffin; Judy Daugherty; Diane Grady; Joy Sheffield; Tom Smigel; Diana S

For God’s support, strength, & comfort: the family of Dot Bradley on the recent death of her husband, Mike; Donna Arnold; Mercedes’ mother Fran; Florence Horsman; Linda Grasso; Magdala; Fleming; Linda

For God’s guidance & discernment: Suzanne

Please continue to remember all those who have served our country, especially those who are serving: David Celeste & Joseph Petrone, United States Air Force; Michael Howlett & Lloyd Petrone, United States Marine Corps

Social media

Website: www.mrchurch.us
Facebook: Middletown Reformed Church
YouTube: MRC: A Fabulous Church of Love
Instagram: [middletownreformednj](https://www.instagram.com/middletownreformednj)
Spotify: Middletown Reformed Church podcast



Scan the QR code for a link to our online giving opportunities.

The flowers today are in celebration of our granddaughter Shayna’s birthday, from Bob & Dolores

If you would like to place flowers in the Sanctuary for worship, contact Dolores Hofmann at 732.671.9308. The cost is \$25.

Our greeters today are Dianne Asay & Dolores Hofmann.
Our greeters next week will be Lisa Leidecker & Cindy Reya.

Our 2025 RCA Annual Denominational Assessment of \$107.10 per member is due. The total amount for the year is \$5,569.55, which the church pays on a quarterly basis (\$1,392.39). This assessment supports the work of our Classis, Regional Synod, and the General Synod. The per capita dues of \$7 for the United Church of Christ is also due. Total amount for both RCA and UCC is \$114.10 per member. If you wish to contribute toward the assessment/dues, please mark your check in the memo section “Denominational assessment/ Dues.” You are welcome to request information at any time from the treasurers regarding the current fiscal status of the church.

Middletown Reformed Church



A welcoming & affirming congregation

Middletown Reformed Church

Rev. Tricia Sheffield, PhD, Pastor
Thomas Martucci, Director of Music
Julie Hertzog, Coordinator for Children & Youth

Rally Sunday14 September 2025

PreludeThe Jesus Way

Votum & greeting

Passing of the peace

Message for all agesBe Still & KnowNew Jericho Choir

Call to worship(from unfoldinglight.net)
Elder Dolores Hofmann, liturgist

Leader: Bountiful Creator, Lover of all, we greet you.
All: God of love, we belong to you.
Jesus Christ, gentle shepherd, you call to us.
Shepherd of love, we belong to you.
Holy Spirit, breath of God in us, you sing, you cry out, you call in us.
Spirit of love, we belong to you. With joy and gratitude, we come home to you. Receive us, bless us, change us, and give us gifts to serve you. Amen

*Opening hymnThe God of Abraham Praise (39, v 1-4)

Prayer of confession(adapted from unfoldinglight.net)
Gracious God, we are your beloved, your treasure. But in the clutter of our lives, in the wildernesses of this world, we have gotten lost. Come to us, God. In the darkest parts of our hearts, find us. Find us, forgive us, and bring us home to you. Let us shine again in your presence. Through Jesus Christ our Lord we pray, who became what we are to make us what he is. Amen

Kyrie eleison
Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

Assurance of God’s grace(from Worship Ways)
Hear the word of God for this season and all seasons:
“Do not be afraid! I will never leave you or forsake you.”
Know that our God who began a good work in us is able to complete it. As we open ourselves to the Spirit of God, may we see more fully the wonder of God already at work in us. And so it is. Amen

Law of Love/Faithful living

*Celtic Alleluia

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

We listen to God
Scripture readingGenesis 21.1-7 (OT page 15)
Beverly Bova Scarano, liturgist

AnthemWe Are FamilyJoyful Noise Adult Choir

SermonThe Laughter-ChildRev. Tricia Sheffield, PhD

We respond to God
Invitation to the offering

OffertoryThe Jesus Way (Reprise)

*Doxology
Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below; Praise God, above ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen

Receiving of Our Light

Song from the childrenImagine

The Blessings of the Backpacks/The Lord’s Prayer
You are invited to pray the Lord’s Prayer in any version or language you wish.
Ever-loving and holy God, 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

*Closing hymnGod, Who Created Hearts to Love
(317, v 1-3, 5)

*BenedictionGo Now in PeaceNew Jericho Choir

Postlude

*Please stand as you are able.

The colors of the candles around the Christ Candle in the sandbox represent:
Pink: Hope
Purple: Peace
Blue: Justice
Green: Spiritual growth
Gold: Unity
Red: Courage

During the Receiving of Our Light, you are invited to come forward and select a colored candle from our C & W teachers based on what you are praying for this year. Please light your candle from the Christ Candle and place it at the back of the sandbox to make room for others. The colors represent:
Pink: Hope
Purple: Peace
Blue: Justice
White: Empathy

