



Middleburgh Reformed Church Newsletter

178 River St., PO Box 112

Middleburgh, NY 12122

Contact us at: 518-827-5134 or reformed@midtel.net

www.middleburghreformed.org

Consistory: Pastor Jeff Kelley, Elders: Leslie Hooper, Mary Lou Ryan

Deacons: Michele Becker, Robert Spencer

Fall 2024 Dates to Remember

Sept. 1 – Communion

Sept. 8 – Church Picnic following the worship service

Sept. 21 – Harvest Bazaar

Oct. 6 – Communion

First CoP Gathering

Oct. 16 – NET Dinner at MRC

Nov. 3 – Communion

OCC Packing Party

Nov. 10 – CoP

Nov. 18-25 – OCC Collection Week

Nov. 20 – NET Dinner at MRC

Nov. 28 – Thanksgiving

Dec. 1 – Communion

Dec. 18 – NET Dinner at MRC

Jan. 12 – CoP

Creation Care Day Camp

MRC hosted 16 children for a week of Wild Wonder in July. Volunteer leaders and helpers came from Our Lady of the Valley as well as MRC. Both campers and adults were immersed in exploring and enjoying God's amazing creation and giving thanks for His wonderful gifts.

Each day focused on different components of our world. Campers visited various stations to participate in activities designed to encourage their curiosity for and exploration of creation. Songs and art projects reinforced what the children were learning.

Everyone enjoyed the daily feast of fresh fruits and vegetables and other healthy foods. It was a special time of sitting around a table together. Campers and adults had an opportunity to relax, talk about the day's topic, and get to know each other. Cloth napkins and tablecloths, ceramic

plates, and real glasses were used to reduce waste. It worked. At the end of the week, we had not filled a whole garbage bag!

Our verse for the week:

***What a wildly wonderful world, God!
You made it all, with Wisdom at your side,
made earth overflow with your wonderful
creations.*** Psalm 104:24



2024 Harvest Bazaar

Plans are going well for this year's Harvest Bazaar. We hold the event to raise funds to ship our Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes. Your support will be greatly appreciated. Some ways in which you may participate include the following:

- Donate handmade goods for sale.
- Donate a gift basket or gift certificate for the raffle.
- Give of your time to serve before/during/after the event.
- Contribute food for the Harvest Café.
- Pray for good weather and the success of the event.

Operation Christmas Child

Since 2010 we have tracked the destinations of the shoeboxes we have packed for Operation Christmas Child. Our gifts have blessed children in

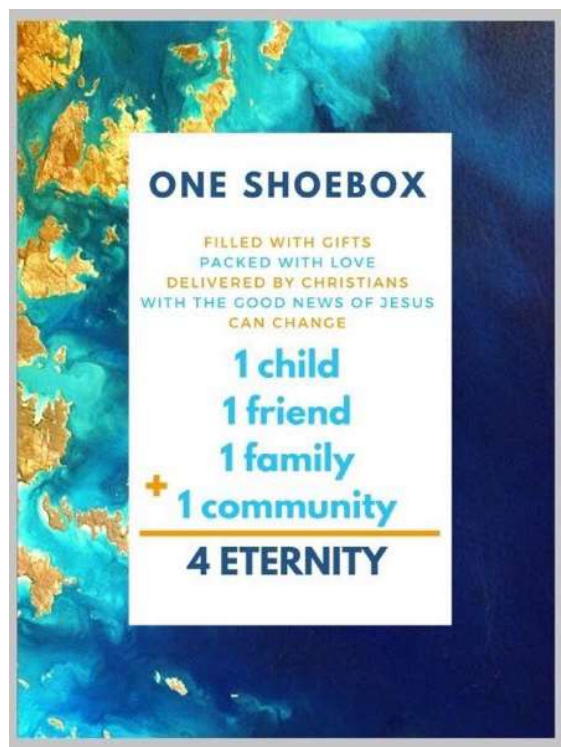
36 different countries. We do not know where this year's gifts will be distributed, but we may be certain that they will be given with the love of Jesus.

Since our 2023 packing party we have been stockpiling and crafting gifts for this year's shoeboxes. While we have a good number of items, more are needed to make our boxes FULL and FUN. Most needed are stuffed animals and filler items. Filler items are those small things we add to the "must haves" to make a box full. Good filler items are such things as socks, hats, gloves, small toys, craft materials, and markers.

Please save the date of Nov. 3 for this year's packing party. We have 309 shoeboxes to fill!

Collection week will be Nov. 18-25. There will be many opportunities for volunteers to serve during that week as we host a drop-off site.

Thank you for generously supporting Operation Christmas Child with your time, talents, resources, and prayers.



NET Dinners

As we 'fall into fall' and into our cooler months, we bring back the churches' NET Dinners. This is a wonderful time for our church to have community fellowship and meals with neighbors and friends, as well as people who may not know what our church is all about. Our turn to host the

meal is the 3rd Wednesday of each month beginning in October. Sign-up sheets will be in the foyer, and volunteers are welcomed and appreciated. Contact Kellie Rogers or Paul Ferenczy if you are interested in being a part of our program.

Project Heat Fundraisers

In January, we shared news that the boilers for the church heating system needed to be replaced. Because this was a major expense, consistory decided to take some of the cost out of investments and attempt to raise \$ 30,000 through a letter appeal and various fundraising events. The church has been blessed with many donations made directly to the boiler replacement fund. Meanwhile, our fundraisers were a lot of fun while contributing to the goal set in January.

The fun started with "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner" where dinner was provided by a host and the guests, who made a donation for the meal, were kept secret. Sharing a meal together has the added benefit of great fellowship. Next, we held a two day bake sale at Barber's Greenhouses on Mother's Day weekend. It was a rainy weekend but the baked goods were delicious and sales were great.

In May, we hosted a Quilt and Fiber Art show and began a raffle of two beautiful quilts donated by Joan Youmans and Ron & Edna Lower. Over 100 fiber arts pieces were displayed in the sanctuary including quilts belonging to Anne Doerge, Ellie Spencer and Marian Lynes-Bouck. It was a lovely way to remember these amazing women. Tea and cookies were served in the "Tea Room" fellowship hall where Deborah Gibbons displayed her antique sewing machines and Laura Milak demonstrated felting.



In June, we had a pre-sale chicken barbeque and bake sale. Volunteers put the dinners together in the foyer where our quilts were again on display. Our traditional Trash and Treasure Sale was held in July so the proceeds could be added during our fundraising goal deadline. Drawing for the quilts was in the Middleburgh Library on July 27.

We reached our \$ 30, 000 goal by the end of July. Thank you to all those who donated in anyway and participated in the very busy fundraising schedule from January to July. Project Heat updates will be reported in a future newsletter.

Mission Update

It has always been a part of the mission of the MRC to support God's work here and around the world. For many years we have given financial support to the Rodriguez's in Peru, the Bode's in Oman and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes in our area. During our budget discussions for 2024, it became clear that the offerings coming into our church account were not enough to support these missions through our normal budget process. We will continue to support OCC, but the financial support for that has been reduced.

We are hopeful that our church family will send their individual donations to these missionaries who are doing God's work in the world. Below you will see how to find out more about these amazing people and ways you can support them.

Rodriguez Family in Peru

www.rca.org/rodriguez srodriguez@rca.org
arodriguez@rca.org

Bode Family in Oman

www.rca.org/bode
jbode@rca.org

Fellowship of Christian Athletes

www.nyfca.org
Contact Amber Johns at 518-657-9218.

Property

Our beautiful property on the corner of River Street and Middlefort Road continues to be a place

where together we worship God and serve mankind. While maintaining our building and grounds continues to be a challenge, sharing it with others is a major part of our mission in Middleburgh. The American Legion and Middleburgh Rotary hold their regular meetings in our fellowship hall. Dance and theatre classes are offered during the school year and TMP holds their June rehearsals in our building. There are requests almost every weekend from members of the community to host various social gatherings. Our expectation of those who use our building is that they will follow the guidelines we have laid out and leave it in good condition for the next group to use. We are blessed to share our building with those who have a need for the space we have and we appreciate those who make a donation for building use.

Thank You for Helping Us Reach Our Fundraising Goal!

We are thrilled to announce that, thanks to the incredible support from our community, we have successfully reached our fundraising goal of \$30,000 for new boilers in just a few months! This achievement is a testament to the generosity and dedication of everyone involved.

First, we are grateful to all who contributed to this cause through time, ideas, and donations. Your generosity has made our challenging goal possible. Our work together has brought us closer to providing a comfortable space for our worship and witness.

I would also like to publicly thank the amazing organizers who worked hard to plan and execute a variety of fundraising events. Your creativity and commitment are a blessing to us and to the community. Each event- eating dinner together, the bake sale, quilt show and quilt auction, chicken dinner and Trash and Treasure Sale- played a crucial role in reaching our goal.

We are also grateful to the many volunteers who gave their time and energy to support these events, as well. Your efforts, both behind the scenes and out front, have, perhaps most importantly, fostered the relationships that hold us together.

With the funds raised, we will be able to install new, energy-efficient boilers that will heat without trouble for many years. This will also help

us be better stewards by reducing yearly expenses and energy use.

Once again, thank you to everyone who contributed. It is encouraging to work among a generous and supportive community. We know the church is not a building but the people of God. But a church building is a very important resource in our public worship together and humble service to our community.

With heartfelt thanks,
Pastor Jeff

An Invitation

Over the next 6 months we will be setting some time aside to talk, listen and pray together about the direction of our life together. In a word: discern. God has provided for us up until this point and will continue to provide. How shall we respond? There are several presenting challenges: decreased participation in our church, our changing membership, and our relationship to our denomination, the RCA. I've labeled this "church on purpose" (CoP?). We'll eat together, talk, pray and consider God's invitation to us. I've marked three Sundays after worship for this: *October 6th, November 10th, and January 12th.*

To make things easy, lunch will be provided. But there will be some preparation in the form of reading scripture and praying beforehand. All are invited, regardless of age, interest, or membership status. All I ask is that you come ready to listen to others and wondering with others before the Lord. This will not be designed to be a time of sharing of opinions or voting for majorities. Rather, we are seeking God's face on some important matters and expect the Holy Spirit to speak as we gather. This is meant to be different, but don't let that scare you off. Hope to see you there, Pastor Jeff

Brief Financial Update, July 2024

YTD Income:	\$ 56,697.00
<u>Expenses:</u>	<u>\$ 79,584.00</u>
Net	\$ -22,888.00

This Year's Budget: \$ 137,191.98

Average monthly need to meet budget: \$11,432.67

Average monthly income: \$4,734.75

We praise God for the many talents given to the makers of the pieces in our Quilt and Fiber Art Show. We thank Him for the memory of those who have passed on and left the work of their hands as a reminder of their love.

