

# The Messenger

## Newsletter of Helderberg Reformed Church

Worshipping God since 1767! Come join us Sundays at 9:30 a.m.

435 State Route 146 Guilderland Center, NY 12085 | [hrchurch.org](http://hrchurch.org) | Find us on Facebook @HelderbergReformedChurch

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### Our Church

#### Sunday Worship

9:30 am with Lord's Supper on the 1st Sunday of the month.

#### Make Contact

P.O. Box 196  
Guilderland, NY 12085  
[hrchurchoffice@gmail.com](mailto:hrchurchoffice@gmail.com)  
Church Office (518) 861-8031  
Parsonage (507) 227-6942

#### MINISTER OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

Rev. Lindsey De Kruijff

#### ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Ellen Root

#### ORGANIST

Agnes Armstrong

#### CONTACT THE MESSENGER

[HRCMESSENGER@GMAIL.COM](mailto:HRCMESSENGER@GMAIL.COM)

### From the Parsonage

## Waiting...

*Note: As Pastor Lindsey is on maternity leave, I've volunteered to write this month's column. Please excuse my lack of scholarship. Any theological inaccuracies or minor heresies are unintended. --Ed.*

"I am waiting, I am waiting

Oh yeah, oh yeah

I am waiting, I am waiting

Oh yeah, oh yeah

Waiting for someone to come out of somewhere

Waiting for someone to come out of somewhere"

-- The Rolling Stones, "I am waiting"

I've had that downtempo Rolling Stones song going through my head for the past several days as Lindsey and I approach our baby's due date. It's an apt song for this time in our lives, and perhaps an apt song for Advent.

It seems to amuse people--especially parents--to ask me the following question: "So, are you ready?" This is a trick question. Yes, my "go bag" is packed. The car seat is installed. I've taken the birth classes.

But ready for fatherhood? Of course I'm not ready. How could I be?

As shy and quiet person, I've always felt a kinship with Joseph, and never moreso than now as an expectant father. The "silent man of the Gospel," is not quoted anywhere in the Bible, but he still bears a silent witness to the Christian life. I admire Joseph's faith, duty and love. He obeyed God by marrying Mary after angels had told him she would bear a child not his own. This speaks volumes.

I wonder... in that first Advent season, what did Joseph tell friends and neighbors who asked if he was "ready" not knowing, as he did, that his wife's child was conceived by the Holy Spirit?

**Around Midnight**

Steve Dukenski

*Note: I wrote this Christmas poem to be a riddle. The solution is in the final stanza, which I've put here upside-down to obscure it a bit. Merry Christmas!*

I was making a wish around midnight  
When I saw an old sign by the moonlight  
Like a star made of snow  
With a tail like a heavenly ray  
Guide the way, Christmas Day!

I was strolling the park around midnight  
When I saw two young fools in the moonlight  
Where an arrow had struck  
They were making a public display  
P.D.A., Christmas Day!

I was stopping by woods around midnight  
When I saw a red tail in the moonlight  
She had no time for words  
In the distance we heard the hounds bay  
Let's give chase, Christmas Day!

I was shopping the shops around midnight  
When I saw a man run through the moonlight  
He was carrying gifts  
Moving swifter than swift, no delay  
Don't be late, Christmas Day!

I was watching the skies around midnight  
When a thunderhead blocked out the moonlight  
Sending bolts through the sky  
In a thunder and lightening array  
Sturm und drang, Christmas Day!

I was wassailing on around midnight  
When I saw a boy skipping through moonlight  
He was lighter than air  
He was reveling, merry and gay  
Hip-hooray, Christmas Day!

I was watching a play around midnight  
When I saw a girl twirling in moonlight  
Her cheeks rosy with blush  
For that holiday Russian ballet  
On the stage, Christmas Day!

I saw Comet, and Cupid, and Vixen,  
Dasher and Donner, and Blitzen,  
Francer and Dancer,  
Jingle bells decking their reins  
Dash away, Christmas Day!

Could Joseph have been ready to raise a boy who was not his own? Could he have been ready to have angels announce the child's birth? Could Joseph have been ready to host wise men from faraway lands bearing outrageous gifts and proclaiming the boy to be a King? Could he have been ready to pick up stakes and flee with his wife and the child to Egypt? Of course not.

Sometimes there is no getting ready, no being prepared, and all we can do is wait.

None of us were ready for the toll 2020 would take on us. Wait to see what this Christmas season and 2021 will bring. We wait for a vaccine, wait to embrace each other and raise our voices in song, wait for normality to return. Perhaps like Joseph, we feel we've been caught up in events far bigger than anything we planned for, bigger than anything we could ready ourselves for.

What more can we do than wait?

Joseph may not have been able to prepare for Jesus, but we can see how he was able to respond. He obeyed the angels by marrying Mary and naming the boy Jesus.

Later in the Gospels we get a clue to another of his responses. Years after that first Advent, when Jesus began his ministry and word spread, people from his hometown would scoff at him and say "isn't this the carpenter's son?" (Matthew 13). This shows us that one of Joseph's responses to the wild circumstances God had placed him in, circumstances he could not have been ready for, was to love Jesus as if the boy was his very own.

While we wait for whatever this Christmas holds, are we ready to love Jesus as our own?

We are waiting, we are waiting  
Oh yeah, oh yeah

Many Christmas Blessings,

Steve

# Events and Notes

## Pulpit Supply

### December:

- 6 Rev. John Paarlberg, retired minister in Albany Classis (Communion Sunday)
- 13 Lucas Grove, seminary student and Director of Faith Formation at Lynnwood Reformed Church
- 20 Preaching Elder Lou Smith, Lynnwood Reformed Church
- 24 Lucas Grove, seminary student and Director of Faith Formation at Lynnwood Reformed Church
- 27 Lucas Grove, seminary student and Director of Faith Formation at Lynnwood Reformed Church

### January

- 3 Rev. Kent Busman, director of Camp Fowler (Communion Sunday and Installation and Ordination of Elders and Deacons)
- 10 Lucas Grove, seminary student and Director of Faith Formation at Lynnwood Reformed Church
- 17 Preaching Elder Lou Smith, Lynnwood Reformed Church
- 24 Lucas Grove, seminary student and Director of Faith Formation at Lynnwood Reformed Church
- 31 Preaching Elder Kitt Jackson, Altamont Reformed Church

### February

- 7 TBD (Communion Sunday)
- 14 Lucas Grove, seminary student and Director of Faith Formation at Lynnwood Reformed Church
- 21 Pastor Lindsey returns

## Contacting Pastor Lindsey

Pastor Lindsey no longer has a home phone line. If you need to reach her by phone, please use her cell number 507-227-6942.

(Note: previous issue of The Messenger had a typo. The above number is the correct phone number.)

Texting this number is also okay, or email at [lindsey.dekruif@gmail.com](mailto:lindsey.dekruif@gmail.com).



# Events and Notes

## Property Help Needed

If anyone is able to help, look around the church grounds, playground toy area or building to see if there is anything you can do. Any help with whatever needs to be done would be greatly appreciated!

Some of the many opportunities available to serve the church:

- Pick up sticks throughout yard.
- Rake and weed playgrounds.
- Clean around playground toys
- Weed gardens
- Trim

Thank you,

The Property Committee



Have pictures, news or poems to submit to The Messenger?

Send them to:

[hrcmessenger@gmail.com](mailto:hrcmessenger@gmail.com)

Submissions to The Messenger should be sent by the last Sunday of the month to appear the first Sunday of the next month. Please include photo credits. -Ed.



## Stay Informed with HRC!

Pastor Lindsey has been using the HRC email prayer chain to send daily dispatches and updates. If you are not subscribed to the HRC prayer chain, there's never been a better time. Just email [hchurchprayer@gmail.com](mailto:hchurchprayer@gmail.com) and let us know you want to receive emails.

## How to Give to HRC

During this crisis, it's important to remember to continue contributing your offering to HRC. Now there are two ways you can send your offering:

1. One way is to visit our website [hchurch.org](http://hchurch.org) and follow the big blue and white link that says "Helderberg Reformed Church - Online Church Giving Link". This will take you to a service we've set up called Tithely. Simply enter your amount, payment info, and (if you so choose) check the Cover Fees checkbox to help us cover the fee for this amazing service.
2. You may also send a check to:  
Helderberg Reformed Church  
P.O. Box 196  
Guilderland Center, NY 12085

## **Helderberg Reformed Church (HRC)**

### **Policies for Worshipping in the Church Building**

**Overview** - The seating capacity for Helderberg's sanctuary is 184 people. With the Capital Region being in Phase 4 we are allowed to fill up to 33% of those spaces' capacity. Meaning we are able to host 60 people in the sanctuary

**Reserving Your Spot** - If you would like to attend worship you can reserve your spot each week in one of two ways. First, you can fill out the registration form online. The registration form will be sent from the prayer chain weekly. Or, second, you can call the office at 518-861-8031 between the hours of 9:00 and 11:30 AM and register with an office volunteer. This log of RSVPs will be used and also provided to health agencies for the purpose of contact tracing. Please rsvp by noon on Friday. \*\*\*When you RSVP you will be asked five [COVID-19 screening questions](#) that you will answer on behalf of yourself and your party. If you are sick, stay home and do not come to church! If you answer 'yes' to any of the screening questions or develop symptoms between the time you rsvp and when you show up on Sunday you are to not join in worship. If you don't feel comfortable attending a service in person please know that we will be streaming live every Sunday via Zoom. The link and the telephone number for the Zoom room will be provided along with the bulletin via email the Saturday prior to the service. If you didn't RSVP you can still show up to the church building on Sunday. However, we may not be able to accommodate you if we have reached our limit of 60 people.

**Entering the Building** - We would like to encourage you to show up at least 15 minutes early in order to navigate the check in process. As you arrive we ask that you use the main entrance of the building rather than the door closest to the parking lot. As you get out of your car and make your way toward the main entrance please wait outside until an usher checks you in. When you get to the front of the line the greeter will check you in. The greeter will ask you if there are any changes to the answers you gave to our COVID-19 screening questions. After that the usher will take you to a seat in the sanctuary based on the number of people in your party.

**Once You Are Inside** - Here are some notes for you when you are inside the building: Face masks are required at all times, even when seated. We recognize that this is not the case in restaurants and other commons space, but we feel that this is an important precaution in spaces that get very little air circulation. Hand sanitizer will be available at all doorways and we encourage you to use them. Please bring your own disinfectant wipes to wipe down the area you occupy in the pews as needed and when you leave. We recognize that it will be exciting to see other people, but we ask that you remain seated and visit with people (while socially distanced) before you enter the building or after you exit. Bathrooms will be open, but only one person is allowed in any of the restrooms at one time. No people should wander around the church building. We ask that you stay in the narthex (main entrance), Helderberg Room or the Sanctuary and refrain from going into the Fellowship Hall, choir room, kitchen and classrooms.

**Worship Changes** - Here are some of the changes to worship: The biggest change is that there will be no singing. At this time corporate singing is too much of a risk. However, the service will not be devoid of music. At this time there will be pre-recorded music and a plan to provide instrumental music is in the works. On Sundays when we celebrate communion we will provide individual packages with a wafer on top of a small cup of juice. Offering plates will be placed on stools at exit for you to put your offering into. When leaving the worship space you will be directed to exit in a specific manner to decrease the risk of

bidirectional flow of traffic. At this time there will be no Sunday School or nursery available during the service. Children are welcome to join their families for worship in the sanctuary. The Christian Education Committee is working on other options for Sunday School.

**Ongoing Process** - I want to say on behalf of the leadership of Helderberg Reformed Church that we appreciate your patience and flexibility over the past 7 months. The re-opening task force and Consistory will continue to reflect on our guidelines in order to adapt to changes and challenges that arise. As of right now we are safely within range of the amount of people we can have in the sanctuary and we do hope that can be maintained, but that will only happen as we work together to control the spread of infection in our community. We look forward to worshipping with you! Pastor Lindsey, Elders, Deacons, and the Re-Opening task force.

Guidelines are in compliance with NYS Forward. Check out this website for more information: <https://forward.ny.gov/religiousand-funeral-services-ny-forward-guidelines>



## CONSISTORY NOTES

Date November 17, 2020 Time 7:32 p.m.

### **SCRIPTURE READING**

Opening Prayer and Scripture Reading (Psalm 9)

### **IN ATTENDANCE**

Pastor Lindsey

Pamela Colino

Joan Healey

Daniel Putnam

Linda Schlutow

Nancy Lawton

Sue Brooks

Linda Livingston

Kevin Root

Frank Scully

### **MINUTES**

A motion was made by Joan Healey, seconded by Pam Colino to approve the minutes of October 20, 2020.

With nine voting yes, zero noes, the motion passed 9-0.

### **AGENDA**

A motion was made by Sue Brooks, seconded by Kevin Root to approve the November 17, 2020 Consistory Agenda.

With nine voting yes, zero noes, the motion passed 9-0.

### **PASTOR'S REPORT:**

Pastor Lindsey shared with the elders any pastoral care she has given and asked to please contact her should there be anyone in need before she leaves on maternity. During her maternity leave each Elder will take a week to assist in pastoral care. In the event of a funeral, either of the two local ministers will assist.

Joan Healey has organized the Pulpit supply, but is in need of volunteers to contact and assist the person filling the pulpit on Sunday mornings. A schedule and duties will be sent.

### **CHECK IN ON MEETING PREFERENCE (ONLINE/IN-PERSON)**

It was decided Consistory will continue to meet online through at least February 2021. Sue Brooks will set up the virtual meeting links.

### **CONGREGATIONAL MEETING/REPORT FROM THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

Kevin Root's term as a Deacon has been completed, Jamie Ellwood will be nominated. Linda Schultow's term as an Elder has been completed, Jackie Tice will be nominated to fill the seat. Sue Brooks will assume the role as clerk for the congregational meeting.

### **CONSISTORIAL REPORT FORM AND CONSTITUTIONAL INQUIRY**

The Consistorial Report Form and Constitutional Inquiry was reviewed and answered. It was agreed the main challenges are COVID-19 and maternity leave.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

Rev Lindsey shared a letter from the executive committee of the Schenectady Classis

### **ELDERS' REPORT:**

- A count for Communion members on 11/1/20 was not completed. December 1, 2020 is the next Communion.
- No funerals, marriages, births or baptisms.

### **DEACONS' REPORT:**

- The Deacon's treasury balance as of October 31, 2020 is \$2,352.45.
- The Deacons approved a Deacon's offering of \$300 to be given to the Helderberg Reformed Church

Pre-school to assist in the October and November tuition for a parent in need.

- One perk will be sent.
- A discussion ensued about the appointment of the Senior Deacon. Frank Scully will assume the role.

## **COMMITTEES:**

### **PROPERTY & FINANCE**

- The monthly report was given by Nancy Lawton.

A motion was made by Pam Colino, seconded by Frank Scully, to approve the schedule of bills. With nine voting yes, zero noes, the motion passed 9-0.

- The draft budget was reviewed and discussed.

A motion was made by Joan Healy, seconded by Linda Livingston, to approve the following hours for the administrative assistant after the pandemic has passed, pending discussion with staff member:

15 hours weekly September 1 – June 30

10 hours weekly July 1 – August 31

With nine voting yes, zero noes, the motion passed 9-0.

A motion was made by Frank Scully, seconded by Sue Brooks, to present the draft budget for approval at the November 22 Congregation meeting.

With nine voting yes, zero noes, the motion passed 9-0.

- Dan Putnam explained smoke detectors and fire suppression systems have all been inspected and have passed. The wiring for the phone in the paster's study needs to be replaced. It was agreed a new phone and base will be purchased for the her office and the kitchen. A plumber has been contacted for the leak in the basement at the paster's home.
- The tree for the Tree of Lights has been planted! The tree lighting ceremony will be held on November 29 at 5:00 p.m.
- The next Brooks BBQ will be chaired by Brian Ellwood. He will be sending out information and requests for volunteers. Ellen and Kevin Root will chair the March 4 and April 8 Brooks BBQ. It was decided to book one more date. Nancy Lawton will see if any of the following dates are still available:
  - Thursday, August 12, 2021 (1<sup>st</sup> choice)
  - Friday, July 23, 2021 (2<sup>nd</sup> choice)
  - Friday, August 6, 2020 (3<sup>rd</sup> choice)
  - Friday, August 13, 2020 (4<sup>th</sup> choice)

### **CHRISTIAN ED COMMITTEE**

- Kevin Root said there is concern the youth are not submitting their finished projects,
- First Sunday of the month the youths from Reformed Churches of Altamont, Lynnwood and Guilderland Center are continuing to meet,
- Considering have a virtual Sunday School,
- Depending on the pandemic, Reverend Lindsay will have weekly visits with the preschool children after her maternity leave,



- Looking into the group watches of Disney movies,
- There will not be a christmas pageant this year,
- The kids will each do an advent reading,
- Working on having the pen pal program via computer.
- The neet meeting is scheduled for November 18, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

### **WORSHIP COMMITTEE**

- Pam Colinowill be setting up the manager scene in front of the church.
- Each Sunday, one of the dchildren will each do an advent.
- A review of the in-person worship and the metrics for returning to full online worship was discussed.

Reverend Garrett from Lynnwood church will help give guidance to the Elders if needed.

A motion was made by Joan Healy, seconded by Sue Brooks, to approve the COVID-19 guidelines.

With nine voting yes, zero noes, the motion passed 9-0.

- Registration link for in person worship on Christmas Eve has been set up. The church has room for 50 -60 people, the Heldeberg room can be opened if extra space is needed. Due to COVID-19, it was decided not to have individual candles for each person present.
- The tree lighting ceremony is scheduled for November 29 at 5:00 p.m. It will begin with a short prayer service.

### **PRE-SCHOOL**

- Technology will be offered to the teachers in the event school will need to go remote.

### **NEXT MEETING**

- Monday, December 14, 2020
- Monday, January 11, 2021
- Tuesday, February 3, 2021

### **ROUND TABLE OF THANKS**

- To Jim and Joan for helping picking up the conference table, chairs and podium from the Library.
- To Barb Horan for help with music,
- To Bev Harrington, John Brooks, and Val Jackson for being the hosts for the in-person worship,
- To Bryan for decorating the tree,
- To Bob Marr and the crew!

### **Adjournment**

A motion was made by Kevin Root, seconded by Frank Scully, to adjourn the meeting.

With nine voting yes, zero noes, the motion passed 9-0. The meetitng was adjourned at 9:18 p.m.



# Gade Farm Christmas Poinsettia Order Form



Print, complete, and return this form by **Sunday, December 13** for your Christmas poinsettias Checks to be made out to Helderberg Reformed Church. Deliver this form along with check to Nancy Lawton, or mail to:

Helderberg Reformed Church  
P.O. Box 196  
Guilderland, NY 12085

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor/Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ = \$10 x \_\_\_\_\_ poinsettias

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