

JACOB'S WELL

DECEMBER 2025

JANUARY 2026



December 7th

Second Sunday of Advent

Greeter: Bridget Critelli

Liturgist: Anne Mitchell

Usher: Cindy Brockman

Counters: Cindy Brockman, Bridget Critelli

Communion Setup: Bridget Critelli

Communion Servers: Cindy Brockman,

Bridget Critelli, Pastor Susan

Communion Cleanup: Jim Brockman

December 14th

Third Sunday of Advent

Greeter: Anne Mitchell

Liturgist: Paula Sheely

Usher: Richard Behrens

Counters: Anne Mitchell, Chris Garney

December 21st

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Greeter: Cindy Brockman

Liturgist: Chris Garney

Usher: Bridget Critelli

Counters: Anne Mitchell, Cindy Brockman

December 28th

First Sunday after Christmas Day

Greeter: Janice Cornell

Liturgist: Richard Behrens

Usher: Bridget Critelli

Counters: Bridget Critelli, Bruce Guerineau

Liturgy Readings

December 7th

Readings: Isaiah 11:1-10
Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19
Romans 15:4-13
Matthew 3:1-12

December 14th

Readings: Isaiah 35:1-10
Psalm 146:5-10
or
Luke 1:46b-55
James 5:7-10
Matthew 11:2-11

December 21st

Readings: Isaiah 7:10-16
Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
Romans 1:1-7
Matthew 1:18-25

December 28th

Readings: Isaiah 63:7-9
Psalm 148
Hebrews 2:10-18
Matthew 2:13-23

JANUARY WORSHIP SERVERS*

January 4th

Second Sunday after Christmas Day

Greeter: Anne Mitchell

Liturgist: Chris Garney

Usher: Paula Sheely

Counters:

Communion Setup:

Communion Servers:

Communion Cleanup: Anne Mitchell

January 11th

Baptism of the Lord – First Sunday after Epiphany

Greeter: Janice Cornell

Liturgist: Anne Mitchell

Usher: Bridget Critelli

Counters:

January 18th

Second Sunday after Epiphany

Greeter: Bridget Critelli

Liturgist: Paula Sheely

Usher: Anne Mitchell

Counters:

January 25th

Third Sunday after Epiphany

Greeter: Paula Sheely

Liturgist: Chris Garney

Usher: Bridget Critelli

Counters:

Liturgy Readings

January 4th

Readings: Jeremiah 31:7-14 or
Sirach 24:1-12
Psalm 147:12-20 or
Wisdom of Solomon 10:15-21
Ephesians 1:3-14
John 1:(1-9), 10-18

January 11th

Readings: Isaiah 42:1-9
Psalm 29
Acts 10:34-43
Matthew 3:13-17

January 18th

Readings: Isaiah 49:1-7
Psalm 40:1-11
1 Corinthians 1:1-9
John 1:29-42

January 25th

Readings: Isaiah 9:1-4
Psalm 27:1, 4-9
1 Corinthians 1:10-18
Matthew 4:12-23

**A note from the office: Worship Server schedules for 2026 have not been finished yet, but I have filled out the month of January based on the volunteer slips I have received thus far.*



THE RESULTS OF THE CONSISTORY ELECTIONS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

Anne Mitchell was reelected for a second term as an Elder.

Bridget Critelli was reelected for a third term as a Deacon.

Paula Sheely has agreed to serve a first term as an Elder.

THE NEW CONSISTORY OF OLD SARATOGA:

Elders: Anne Mitchell (vice pres.), Bill Olmert, Paula Sheely

Deacons: Bruce Guerineau, Cindy Brockman (Financial Secretary), Bridget Critelli (Clerk)

The Consistory will be installed on Sunday, January 11th.



December/January 2025 - 2026

Friends and Members of Old Saratoga,

It's the season of swirling: swirling leaves, swirling plans for the holidays, swirling budget numbers for the end of the year and into the next, swirling dreams, swirling thoughts, swirling Spirit, even swirling snow!

Recently I've been looking through old family photos, both at home and at the church. What a different life – what a different church – it has been in decades past! How times and lives have changed! What hasn't changed is the foundational building blocks of living that remain constant, and that we recall during Advent: the importance of hearing words of Hope, seeking Peace, assurances of God's eternal Love, and the Joy of re-creation in the gift of Jesus Christ.

In many ways, 2025 has been a difficult year for many, but also a year filled with blessings. And I trust that just as God knows my life, God has a plan for Old Saratoga's future. I wonder what thoughts are swirling in your head about the part you might take to help make God's plans for your life and your church a reality? Have you looked at your budgets of time, experience, interests, and use of finances lately? Might you do better?

There are so many things to be thankful for this time of year, thoughts swirling between the challenges and joys: wonderful occasions of fellowship and friendship experienced and shared, new ministries to be envisioned and launched, the hope of having multiple generations once again coming together at Old Saratoga under the roof of God's house, prayers that we each live faithfully into Jesus's Way of loving care and praising God. I'm available to hear from you about any of that... and to listen and pray together.

There is a new month, and a new year coming up. I pray for you all to have a Happy New Year! I'm looking forward with thanks and hope to all that God has in store for the family of Old Saratoga in 2026, and I give thanks and pray for each of you, every day.

Yours in faith, *Pastor Susan*



Hymns of Our Faith

Analysis and thoughts from Richard Behrens

“Sing to the Lord, ye saints of God. (Psalm 30:4)

“Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne”

**“Thou didst leave thy throne and thy kingly crown
When thou camest to earth for me;
But in Bethlehem’s home was there found no room
For thy holy nativity.”**

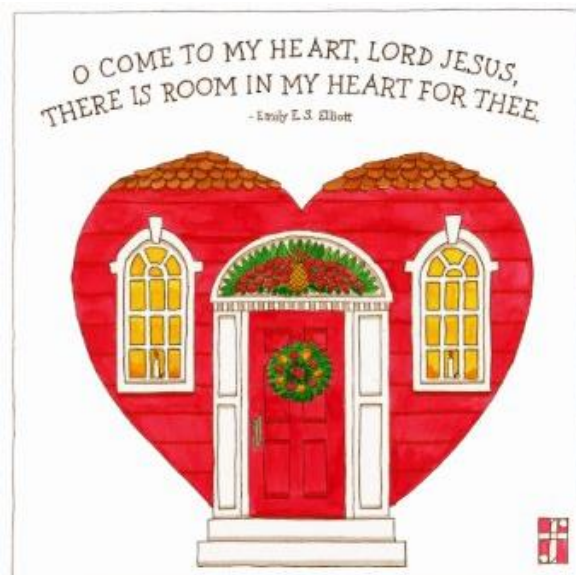
There are essentially two reasons for writing a hymn – praise and instruction.

“Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne” was written as instruction for school children by Emily E.S. Elliot. The hymn story traces the life of Christ from his birth, through time spent in the desert, his trial before Roman authorities, and the road to Calvary. Each of the first four stanzas begins with a note of acceptance but ends with the notion of rejection that Jesus knew throughout his time on earth. The last stanza (v.5) closes extolling the day of Christ’s return to gather his saints. Two refrains are attached to the hymn. The first is sung following the first four stanzas. It is the singer’s prayer of acceptance – the singer’s personal invitation for Jesus to make his or her heart his dwelling place. The second refrain, following the tone of verse 5, speaks of the joy to be experienced when our Lord returns.

Little is known about Emily Elliot, and it may be that this was the only hymn that she wrote or that survives in the hymnary of our day. We do know more about the composer of the tune that is applied to Elliot’s prose. Timothy R. Matthews was an Anglican clergyman who wrote over 100 hymn tunes. Carrying through on a particular request for tunes for a children’s hymnal, it is said that Matthews completed six tunes in one day.

It is unfortunate that this hymn is largely reserved for the Christmas season. The hymn is for all seasons and is applicable to Christmas, Holy Week, Ascension, and when addressing Jesus’ earthly ministry.

At times, consistent with the frailty of our human nature, we are prone to reject Jesus’s entrance into our lives, perhaps passively, but exclusion none the less. We fail to fully accept the magnitude of the love of God and the fact that we are such an important part of sharing his love with others. May our desire and endless prayer ever be:



Financial Update

Old Saratoga Reformed Church: Designated Funds (As of 10/31/25)					
		Missions			
Organization	Budget	Carryover	Received	Paid	Balance
Albany Synod Mission	\$100.00				\$0.00
Quarterly Ministries	\$800.00		\$420.00	\$605.00	\$0.00
ADK Save a Stray	\$100.00		\$85.00	\$100.00	\$0.00
Wellspring	\$110.00		\$68.00	\$110.00	\$0.00
Camperships	\$300.00			\$300.00	\$0.00
Gateway House of Peace	\$110.00		\$68.00	\$110.00	\$0.00
Bottles/Cans Ministries	\$600.00	\$3,021.93	\$344.75	\$410.00	\$584.68
Things of My Very Own	\$110.00		\$110.00	\$110.00	\$0.00
Community Hospice	\$110.00		\$78.00	\$110.00	\$0.00
Disaster Relief	\$200.00				\$0.00
SAIL	\$100.00		December		
Rebuilding Together	\$150.00		\$63.00	\$150.00	\$0.00
Prospect Hill	\$30.00			\$280.00	\$0.00
Caring & Sharing	\$115.00		\$85.00	\$115.00	\$0.00
Schuyler Hose	\$125.00		\$150.00		\$150.00
Saratoga Bridges	\$110.00		\$55.00	\$110.00	\$0.00
Habitat for Humanity	\$100.00		\$58.00	\$100.00	\$0.00
Shelters of Saratoga	\$100.00		November		
Giving Circle(Teacher)	\$312.00			\$312.00	\$0.00
General Missions			\$360.00		\$360.00
Deacons' Disc. Fund	\$100.00		\$650.00	\$1,600.00	\$0.00
Total Missions	\$3,782.00	\$3,021.93	\$2,594.75	\$4,522.00	\$1,094.68
Pastor's Disc. Fund	\$1,000.00	\$522.04		\$480.35	\$41.69
Capital Improv.		\$2,849.87	\$150.00		\$2,999.87
Memorial Fund			\$1,820.00		\$1,820.00
Total Designated Funds					\$5,956.24

Deacons' Fund by Month			
Jan. \$78	Apr. \$58	Jul. \$110	Oct. \$150
Feb. \$85	May \$55	Aug. \$68	Nov. \$
Mar. \$85	Jun. \$68	Sept. \$63	Dec. \$
Quarterly Missions			
Drilling for Hope	Fowler	World Mission	Giving Circle
\$205.00	2: \$110	3: \$105	4: \$

Old Saratoga Reformed Church: 2025 Fund Raisers (As of 10/31/25)				
	Income	Expenses	Profit	Profit
2024 Pecans	\$24.00		\$24.00	NA
Souper Supper	\$698.00	\$118.64	\$579.36	83.00%
Lasagna Dinner	\$2,489.50	\$540.86	\$1,948.64	78.27%
Yard Sale	\$2,706.50		\$2,706.50	100.00%
Harvest Soup Supper				
Holiday Sale	\$45.55			
Blue Box	\$1,232.25		\$1,232.25	100.00%
Total	\$7,195.80	\$659.50	\$6,490.75	

December Giving

Mission of the 1st Quarter: Drilling for Hope

Drilling for Hope helps to provide clean, accessible water wells to villages with an overwhelming poverty problem. Since 2005, Drilling for Hope has established over 130 wells and water systems around the world. Donations not only help fund the drilling of water wells, but also provides the gift of self-reliance and sustainability by: providing livestock and greenhouses; sponsoring education to those who could not otherwise afford it; providing medical supplies; and funding operations.

December Deacon's Mission: Southern Adirondack Independent Living (SAIL)

SAIL is a cross-disability, non-residential independent living center. They strive to promote the independence, equality and dignity of people with disabilities in all aspects of personal and community life. They provide ILC information and referral, peer services, independent living skills, advocacy for individuals, and help with life transitions. They serve individuals of all ages with any physical or mental disabilities that are living in their own home, a supported living arrangement, institutional settings, or elsewhere. They serve the parents, spouses, siblings, and other people that are important in the life of a person with disabilities, as well as school personnel, businesses/employers, local government agencies, human service organizations, volunteer organizations, hospitals and health/medical organizations, etc.

January Deacon's Mission: Community Hospice of Saratoga

The Community Hospice is a nonprofit providing hospice services to eight counties in Upstate New York: Albany, Schenectady, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Columbia, Greene, Montgomery, and Washington. They are part of St. Peter's Health Partners, and work with every hospital in the region to serve over 4,300 seriously ill patients and their families each year through the process of dying and grieving. Their mission is to enhance quality of life with comprehensive, compassionate services that respect the dignity of those they serve.

MISSIONS FOR 2026

Monthly Missions

January: Community Hospice of Saratoga

February: Caring and Sharing

March: Adirondack Save a Stray

April: Shelters of Saratoga

May: Saratoga Bridges

June: Gateway House of Peace

July: Things of My Very Own

August: Wellspring

September: Rebuilding Together

October: Schuyler Hose Company

November: Guardian House

December: Southern Adirondack Independent Living (SAIL)

Quarterly Missions

1. Drilling for Hope

2. Fowler Ministries

3. RCA World Missions

4. The Giving Circle

Other Missions

Albany Synod Mission

Prospect Hill Cemetery

The Giving Circle: Support a Teacher

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Reminder! Alternate street parking begins in the village of Schuylerville on December 1st and lasts through March 31st. The parking regulations for Pearl Street are as follows.

M, W, F: Park on the odd numbered side of the street (across for the church)

T, Th, Sat, Sun: Park on the even numbered side of the street (the side the church is on)

Worship server schedules are in the works and should be out soon. Don't forget to submit a volunteer slip if you would like to serve in worship – even if you are already serving this year! (And thank you to all who have already turned them in!)

The profit from the Harvest Soup Supper was \$471. Thank you to all who participated!

UPCOMING EVENTS

December 1-24: Here For You Advent Open Sanctuary (details on the next page)

December 6th, 8am-2pm: Holiday Sale at OSRC

December 7th, 3pm: Community Christmas Concert at OSRC

December 20th, 8am-12pm: Red Cross Blood Drive at OSRC – visit redcrossblood.org or call 1-800-733-2767 to schedule an appointment to donate

December 24th, 7pm: Christmas Eve Service

January 11th, 2026: Installation and Rededication of the Consistory

January 31st, 2026, 3-6pm: Souper Supper

February 14th, 2026: Red Cross Blood Drive at OSRC





Community Christmas Concert

December 7th, 2025

3:00pm

*Join us for a Christmas concert featuring local
choirs and musical groups.*

*Free will donation to benefit the Schuylerville
Caring and Sharing program.*

Refreshments and fellowship to follow.

All are welcome!



**Old Saratoga Reformed Church
HERE FOR YOU, A SACRED SPACE.
Visit THROUGHOUT DECEMBER--
The Sanctuary is Open.**

Mondays & Fridays 6 - 8 p.m.

Saturdays 2 - 4 p.m.

Reset ♦ Refresh ♦ Renew

CHURCH FAMILY

December Birthdays

12/15: Andrew Perti
12/17: Sue Usher
12/17: Doug Mitchell
12/29: Jennifer Bruneau
12/31: Stephen Alexanian

January Birthdays

1/1: Patrick Woomer
1/1: Donna Mellen
1/4: Kara Woomer
1/13: Donna-Ella Marie Brooks
1/17: Chris Cox
1/21: Cindy Barber
1/22: Morgan Wilbur
1/25: Christopher Tucker
1/27: Julia Pooler
1/29: Alicia Lewie

THE CONSISTORY OF OLD SARATOGA

ELDERS:

Anne Mitchell, Bill Olmert

DEACONS:

Bruce Guerineau, Cindy Brockman,
Bridget Critelli

MINISTER:

Rev. Susan Kerr
518-366-3648

revskerr@gmail.com

(Pastor Susan is off Mondays & Tuesdays)

GRATITUDE CORNER

Thank you to Bridget Critelli for all her work in organizing this year's Harvest Soup Supper.

Thank you to all who made soups and contributed desserts and other items grocery to the dinner; those who helped with the setup, service and cleanup; and those who came out to eat with us!

A special thank you to all the members of the congregation that step up and contribute to the functioning of this church, in ways big and small. Your work does not go unnoticed or unappreciated!

OUR CONDOLENCES

*To the families, friends, and loved ones of
Mark Booth and Carolyn Markwith
on their recent passings.*

IN OUR PRAYERS

Florence Sherman	Gerry Barber
Claire Houston	Sue Usher
Sheryl Norton	Richard Behrens
Karl Thayer	Barb Elcox

All who are traveling and those in mourning

Please continue to uplift in your prayers those with on-going life challenges, whether spiritual, physical, or emotional, and commend them to God's care

OSRC STATEMENT OF INCLUSION:

Led by the love of Jesus Christ, we the people of OSRC in Schuylerville, faithfully declare that we are a Welcoming and Affirming congregation. We welcome into the full life of our congregation all persons whom God calls to us and affirm their gifts to the glory of God.

Sacrament of Holy Communion: December 7th

Stay for Coffee Hour Fellowship every Sunday following worship!



Old Saratoga Reformed Church

48 Pearl Street, Schuylerville NY 12871

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Sunday Worship: 10:00 am

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