

**Welcome to Niskayuna Reformed Church
January 14, 2024
Second Sunday after Epiphany
Rev. Dr. Victoria Brooks**

The Approach to God

The Lord be with you. **And also, with you.**

Welcome and announcements

Prelude Still, Still, Still

Hobson

Introit

Votum

Joyce Anderson

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. Amen

The Call to Worship:

God spoke the good word, revealing the good news of Jesus Christ. God filled the world with divine presence and proclaimed God's joyful promises to all the nations. God will fill creation with that word again and again that we may become one living body, God's incarnate presence on earth.
AMEN.

*Hymn of Worship "God of Our Life, Through All the Circling Years"

The Hymnbook, 108

*The Salutation and People's Amen: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

Call to Confession:

We are created, called and known by God. Praise be to our maker's name. We celebrate this state of being and then mar it with our daily inattention to

its beauty. In these words of our confession, help us to still the inner critic that speaks against your divine image which shines in each of our souls.

Prayer of Confession (Unison):

Almighty Father, You are the source of every good blessing. We praise Your name for the greatest and most perfect gift: Your son, our Lord Jesus Christ. We confess to You, not only our sins of omission in failing to do what we know is right, but also our sins of commission in doing what You forbid. O Lord, we are weak, slow to confess our sins and prone to wander from the path of righteousness. Do not deal with us as our sins deserve but remove the stains of our shortfall and empower us by Your Spirit. Help us serve your divine purpose that we might become the clear image of your likeness in all that we are and all that we become. In Jesus' Name we pray, Amen.

Kyrie Eleison:

Lord, have mercy upon us; Christ, have mercy upon us; Lord, have mercy upon us.

Words of Assurance:

God's word is worthy and dependable. We can embrace the forgiveness we celebrate with certainty. In Jesus we are forgiven. AMEN

*Gloria Patri:

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Anthem

Let There be Peace on Earth

Arr. Althouse

The Word of God

Junior Sermon

Prayer for Illumination

Old Testament Reading: I Samuel 3:1-18

Reading from the Psalms Psalm 139:1-14

This is the Word of the Lord. ***Thanks be to God.***

Gospel Reading John 1:29-32

This is the Gospel of the Lord. ***Praise to you, O Christ.***

Sermon "I am Here" Viki Brooks

A Prayer for Blessing Upon the Word

*Hymn of Worship "*Just as I Am, Without One Plea*"
The Hymnbook, 272

The Response of God's People

The Offering

Offertory The Lord Bless You and Keep You Rutter

*The Doxology 544 and Prayer of Consecration

The Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

Prayers of the people and The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, 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.

*Hymn of Worship "O Jesus, I Have Promised"
The Hymnbook, 307

*The Benediction

Benediction Response

*The Postlude Cradle Song from Lyric Pieces, Op. 68

Grieg

*Please stand if you are able.

Announcements

This Sunday, January 14, we welcome guest minister Rev. Viki Brooks who will preach to us from God's Word and help lead us in prayer. Pastors Mike and Sherri will be back next Sunday. If you have a pastoral need between January 10-16, please contact the church office and one of the elders will be happy to assist you.

The office will be closed on January 15th in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

In this New Year we are offering to you a new resource entitled, "Seeking God's Face – Praying with the Bible through the year." It is a devotional book that we want to encourage you to use along with the whole congregation. Each day's reading includes a portion of a Psalm, a Bible Reading, some thoughts for dwelling in God's presence, prayers, and a parting blessing. These readings are for each day of the year, and we will use them to help shape our words for worship each Sunday. We hope this resource will help you connect more deeply with God on a regular basis and help connect us as a congregation. We have books available in the Narthex for you to please take one per family. The books are free with a suggested donation of \$20.00 for medium print, and \$37.00 for large print (limited number available) to help cover the cost if you are able. You can also obtain your own electronic copy on Kindle if you prefer at Amazon.com. If all the books we currently have are claimed, we will have a sign-up sheet to get more as needed.

A winter Discipleship small group is beginning the week of January 22! One group will meet online through Zoom at 7:00pm on Monday evenings, the other group will meet in-person on Tuesday mornings at 10:00am in the lounge. We are calling these groups “Deepening Our Discipleship, Spiritually and Emotionally.” These groups are open to all and there is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex so we can know who will join us either in person or by Zoom.

The January Mission is dedicated to the RCA Global Missionary Refugee Services directed to JJ TenClay who is the Missionary for Global Refugee Services. JJ connects churches and individuals in North America to the growing number of refugees worldwide and invites them into the sacred space of caring for people seeking refuge—locally, nationally and globally—through refugee sponsorship, advocacy, prayer, partnering with local refugee care agencies, and fundraising for carefully vetted refugee care projects worldwide. JJ also continues to build a network of international mission partners responding to humanitarian crises who care for the people displaced by these crises, and consults on individual cases of displaced people seeking humanitarian protection. Visit JJ’s missionary page at: www.rca.org/tenclay to learn more about her ministry.

2025 will be the 275th anniversary of Niskayuna Reformed Church and we want to CELEBRATE! Consistory is seeking your ideas and input to make our anniversary meaningful and memorable for the entire community. All are invited to join the first planning meeting on **Sunday January 28** at 11:00 AM. No sign-up is necessary. For questions, please contact any member of Consistory.

Friday January 26, 2024, is our next opportunity to help serve dinner at the Schenectady City Mission. **Anyone who has never served before needs to go to their website at www.citymission.com and create an account for themselves.**

Time: Arrive by 4:30 to help set up

Serve dinner from 5-6

Clean up and depart by 6:15.

Please text Michele Kopp at 518 424 3825 if you have any questions.

City Mission link for sign up is:

<http://nrc.citymissionofscheneectady.volunteerhub.com/>

Thank you.

Interested in learning about community farming in Schenectady? Come, meet SiCM farms' staff and members, and taste locally grown food. Learn about opportunities to grow food, flowers, and herbs; raise and tend to the chickens and honeybees; and see how to get the best healthy soil through composting. The Schenectady Urban Farm's Open House will be on Thursday, January 18th, from 5pm to 7pm at our food pantry, [839 Albany St.](#) For more information about the SUF Open House contact Melissa, our Farm Outreach Coordinator, at melissam@sicm.us

SiCM's Schenectady Urban Farms is delighted to host the 3rd annual Schenectady Seed Share for 2024, an in-person Seed & Gardening event. Join agricultural professionals from Cornell Cooperative Extension of Schenectady County, Schenectady City School District Farm to School program and SiCM, and community members for an afternoon sharing seeds, stories, and local gardening information! Join us on Saturday, February 3rd, from 12pm to 3pm at [837 Albany St.](#)

Scripture

I Samuel 3:1-18

The boy Samuel ministered before the LORD under Eli. In those days the word of the LORD was rare; there were not many visions.

² One night Eli, whose eyes were becoming so weak that he could barely see, was lying down in his usual place. ³ The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the house of the LORD, where the ark of God was. ⁴ Then the LORD called Samuel.

Samuel answered, "Here I am." ⁵ And he ran to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me."

But Eli said, "I did not call; go back and lie down." So he went and lay down.

⁶ Again the LORD called, "Samuel!" And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me."

“My son,” Eli said, “I did not call; go back and lie down.”

⁷ Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD: The word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him.

⁸ A third time the LORD called, “Samuel!” And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, “Here I am; you called me.”

Then Eli realized that the LORD was calling the boy. ⁹ So Eli told Samuel, “Go and lie down, and if he calls you, say, ‘Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.’” So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

¹⁰ The LORD came and stood there, calling as at the other times, “Samuel! Samuel!”

Then Samuel said, “Speak, for your servant is listening.”

¹¹ And the LORD said to Samuel: “See, I am about to do something in Israel that will make the ears of everyone who hears about it tingle. ¹² At that time I will carry out against Eli everything I spoke against his family—from beginning to end. ¹³ For I told him that I would judge his family forever because of the sin he knew about; his sons blasphemed God,^[a] and he failed to restrain them. ¹⁴ Therefore I swore to the house of Eli, ‘The guilt of Eli’s house will never be atoned for by sacrifice or offering.’”

¹⁵ Samuel lay down until morning and then opened the doors of the house of the LORD. He was afraid to tell Eli the vision, ¹⁶ but Eli called him and said, “Samuel, my son.”

Samuel answered, “Here I am.”

¹⁷ “What was it he said to you?” Eli asked. “Do not hide it from me. May God deal with you, be it ever so severely, if you hide from me anything he told you.” ¹⁸ So Samuel told him everything, hiding nothing from him. Then Eli said, “He is the LORD; let him do what is good in his eyes.”

Psalm139:1-14

You have searched me, LORD,
and you know me.

² You know when I sit and when I rise;
you perceive my thoughts from afar.
³ You discern my going out and my lying down;
you are familiar with all my ways.
⁴ Before a word is on my tongue
you, LORD, know it completely.
⁵ You hem me in behind and before,
and you lay your hand upon me.
⁶ Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,
too lofty for me to attain.
⁷ Where can I go from your Spirit?
Where can I flee from your presence?
⁸ If I go up to the heavens, you are there;
if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.
⁹ If I rise on the wings of the dawn,
if I settle on the far side of the sea,
¹⁰ even there your hand will guide me,
your right hand will hold me fast.
¹¹ If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me
and the light become night around me,"
¹² even the darkness will not be dark to you;
the night will shine like the day,
for darkness is as light to you.
¹³ For you created my inmost being;
you knit me together in my mother's womb.
¹⁴ I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
your works are wonderful,
I know that full well.

John 1:29-32

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! ³⁰ This is the one I meant when I said, 'A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' ³¹ I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel."

³² Then John gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him.

