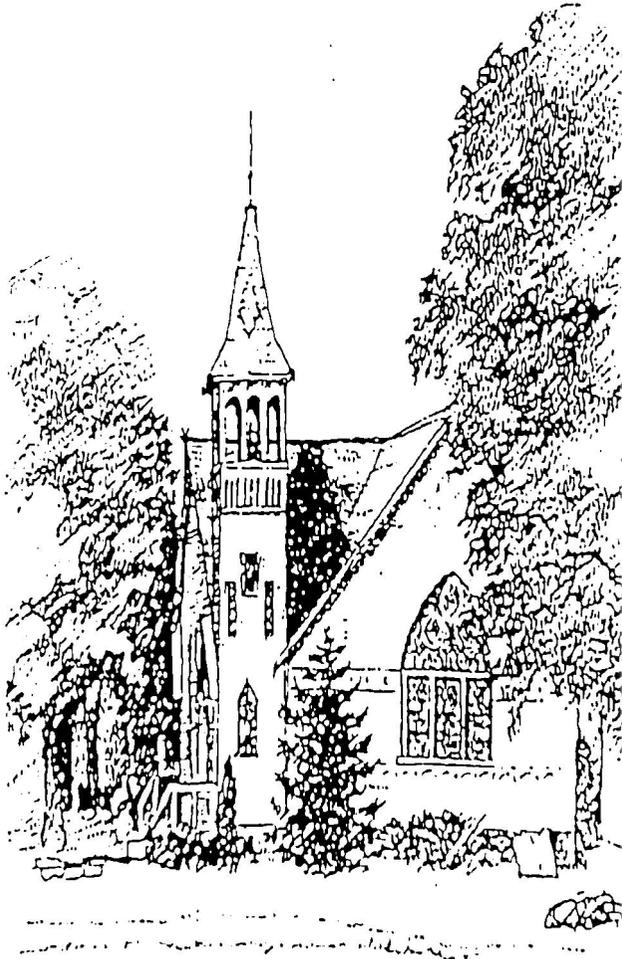


Historic Amity Reformed Church

Established in 1802



335 Riverview Road
in
Vischer Ferry, New York

Our Roots

In the small colonial town of New Amsterdam, on a Sunday in 1628, about fifty people gathered around a crude table in a mill loft. Their celebration of the Lord's Supper marks the birth date of the Reformed Church in America. The congregation they founded still continues today as the Collegiate Reformed Church in New York City, the oldest evangelical church in North America with a continuous ministry.

The Reformed branch of Protestantism is rooted in the Reformation of the 1500's. It's primary leader was John Calvin of Switzerland, whose reform movement spread to Scotland, where it became the Presbyterian Church, and the Netherlands, where it became the Dutch Reformed Church.

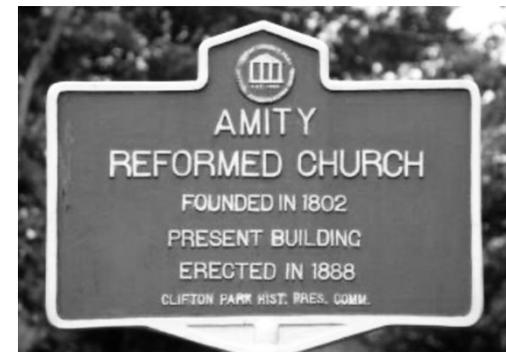
In the 1600's, congregations of the Dutch Reformed Church in North America spread and expanded, even after the English took control of the region from the Dutch. The church sent its ministers to Holland to be ordained and did not hold services in the English language until 1764. When America became independent, the Dutch-founded church also cut its ties to its European mother country.

Throughout the first half of the 1800's, the church's Dutch beginnings shifted from an everyday reality to a remembered heritage as Dutch language worship began to fade. The church, incorporated in the United States in 1819 as the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church, and changed its name in 1867 to Reformed Church in America.

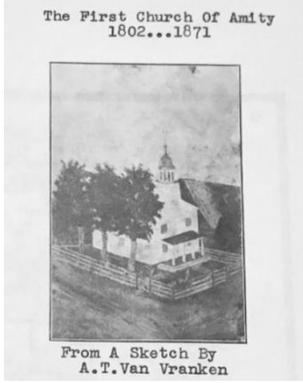
"Family Tree"

Schenectady's first settlers were Dutch colonists who started the First Reformed Church of Schenectady around 1680. In 1750, the Congregation of the Reformed Church in Niskayuna was formed. In

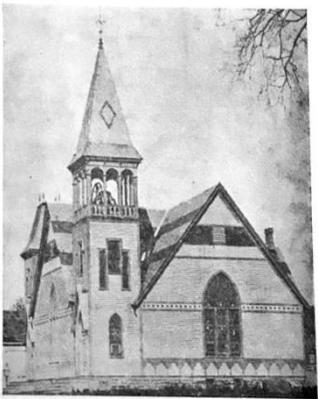
1760 they completed a new church building at the corner of Rosendale and Troy Road. In 1790 when Eldert Vischer opened a rope ferry across the river the hamlet became know as Vischer Ferry and the people used the ferry to access the Niskayuna church. However, winter crossings were difficult so residents decided to form their own church on the north side of the river, establishing Amity Reformed Church in 1802. The land on which the church was built was donated in 1802 by Revolutionary War soldier and Church Elder Christopher Miller and his wife Eve.



Amity has had three church buildings in its 220+ year history. The first building was used from 1802-1871. This building faced east and was eventually outgrown. When the building was disassembled to build a larger church, wood from the original church was salvaged and used in the construction of Chapel Hall.



The second church building facing south stood for just 15 years as it was destroyed by fire due to a faulty stove pipe in December of 1886. The current church building was erected in 1888. The unique semi-circle pew arrangement, arched stained glass windows, chandelier and bell tower are highlights of this historic "little white country church".

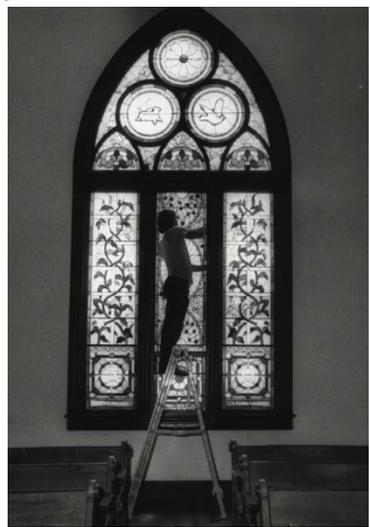


(Left) Photo of Amity Church c. 1905
(Below) Historic Designation Plaque



Fun Facts and Features Timeline

- 1888 - Present church erected with a total cost of \$6,288.63.
- 1931 - Chapel Hall first wired for electricity
- 1937 - Temporary wiring installed in sanctuary to replace the kerosene lamps which needed to be cleaned and filled regularly
- 1947 - Permanent electric wiring installed in sanctuary
- 1954 - Parsonage destroyed by fire
- 1956 - New kitchen and hallway added to connect the sanctuary to Chapel Hall
- 1957 - Ground broken on new parsonage
- 1960 - Winds from a tornado that cut a path just north of Vischer Ferry damaged the front stained glass window



- 1962 - Parsonage garage constructed
- 1962 - Oil fired furnace installed with a chimney in the courtyard where the Chapel Hall wall and hall to the sanctuary intersect
- 1975 - Addition of the Sunday School Wing
- 1985 - Oil fired furnace removed and a heat exchanger using hot water from the existing boiler was connected with ducts to the existing registers
- 1986 - Magnolia Tree planted on east side of church
- 1988 - Sold "organ keys" to purchase new Allen Organ
- 1990 - Restoration of the Bell Tower
- 1998 - Extension to east end of parking lot
- 1999 - Sunday School Wing roof replaced
- 2002 - Sanctuary carpeting and vestibule carpeting replaced
- 2022 - Following the removal of the parsonage a pavilion and memorial garden were constructed on the grounds

