

Where  
Are  
You,  
God?

Thank you for worshipping with us this morning. We extend a special welcome to our guests.

**F**or Children: We have trained nursery staff (paid nursery attendant as well as adult volunteers) for ages 0-4. The nursery is located on the first floor outside of the Community Room (accessible by the stairs from the Church Street entrance or via the elevator). Children ages 5 and above are invited to stay and worship with their families. Children's programs, books, and crayons are in the rear of the sanctuary near the welcome table.

**H**ymn selections can be found in the black hymnals in the pew racks or printed in the bulletin. If you are visiting and did not stop at the welcome desk, please stop by after the service they would love to meet you or, please feel free to reach out to someone sitting near you and ask them questions about the service or church. Many of our visitors ask us about the time of offering. This is a time in our service when we respond to God's gifts of love by offering the gifts of our lives. For many of us, this is when we make a financial gift towards the ministries and programs of our church. We also use this time to ask God how we might use the gifts of our hands and hearts in sharing God's love. If you are visiting, there is no obligation to give a financial gift. We are just glad you are worshipping with us. Plates for offering are placed at the doors as you exit the sanctuary. Thank you.

**W**e ask that you please silence your cell phones during our worship service. We also ask that you refrain from applause after our choirs sing and allow the music to resonate in the quiet of the sanctuary and in your hearts. Our musicians are playing and singing for the glory of God. They know you appreciate their efforts and their gift.

Rest rooms (equipped with changing stations) are located on the first floor of the church building and outside the Community Room and the Nursery.

**T**here is much information about the church in this bulletin and our website: [www.erucc.org](http://www.erucc.org).

Donate online by scanning this code:  
or download the **GivePlus Church** application and  
make your donation via the app. Thank you.



**Ministers and Staff of Evangelical Reformed United Church of Christ**

The Rev. Kirstin Shrom-Rhoads ~ *Associate Pastor for Faith Formation & Parish Life* ~ [ksrhoads@erucc.org](mailto:ksrhoads@erucc.org)

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Jaci Clayton ~ *Facilities Manager* ~ [jclayton@erucc.org](mailto:jclayton@erucc.org)

Tricia Coffey ~ *Head Chimer & Children & Youth Choir Director*

Kelly Esslinger ~ *Assistant Director for Bell Choirs & Children's Music*

Jenna Duranko ~ *Social Media Assistant* | Ashley Murphy ~ *Nursery Attendant*

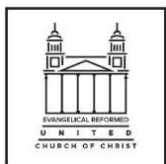
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The Rev. Dr. Barbara Kershner Daniel ~ *Pastor Emerita*

The Rev. Fred Wenner ~ *Pastor Emeritus*

**Elders of Evangelical Reformed United Church of Christ**

Marc Kline | Peter Brehm | Robin Cooney | Eric Weakly | Ave Barr | Matt Hueting



**EVANGELICAL REFORMED**  
**United Church of Christ**  
– An Open and Affirming Congregation –



December 3, 2023

First Sunday of Advent

10:30 AM



How does a  
weary world  
rejoice? We acknowledge  
our weariness

The numbered hymns are from  
The New Century Hymnal

\*All who are able may stand

## GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### CONGREGATION CENTERING PRAYER

Harrison and Stephanie Fisher

**As we journey through this time of transition, remembering our past and welcoming our future, we, the members of this congregation, seek to celebrate in word and deed the gospel of Jesus Christ by:**

- **Nurturing spiritual growth through worship, study, and prayer;**
- **Caring for one another as God cares for us; and**
- **Proclaiming God's love for all people as we work to help our neighbors near and far.**

**We commit ourselves to develop and implement specific programs to fulfill our missions, remembering the work of our ancestors, actively participating in our congregation's life, and laying a foundation for our generations to follow. In Christ's name, we pray. Amen.**

## LIGHTING OF THE CENTERING CANDLE

**PRELUDE** *While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks*

– arr. Sandra Eithun

### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

In God's house, we can be joyful.

**We can be grateful. We can be hopeful.**

In God's house, we can be weary.

**We can be anxious. We can be grieving.**

In God's house, we can be honest—

**inspired or tired, delighted or doubtful,**

**connected or curious, and everything in between.**

This is God's house. You are welcome exactly as you are.

**Let us worship our loving God.**

**\*LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE OF HOPE**

How does a weary world hope?

**By telling stories of hope, by lighting candles in the night,  
and planting seeds in the winter that will bloom in the spring.**

By praying for children as they grow, and picking up trash on the sidewalk.

**By insisting that small acts can make a difference.**

There are a million ways to practice hope.

So today we light the candle of hope as a reminder and a charge.

**With God's help, may we bring hope into a weary world. Amen.**

**\*OPENING PRAYER**

**We believe in you, O God, who hears our prayers,  
who knows the shape and form of our weariness.**

**We believe in you, O God, who wants joy and delight for us,  
not just survival and existence.**

**We believe in you, O God who looks ahead,  
who is not done dreaming for the world—  
a God who sends hope in the form of people and change,  
movements and Spirit.**

**And so we return to this space.**

**We bring our joy and our weariness  
like two sides of the same coin,  
and we trust that you, O God, are already at work.**

**Yes, we believe in you, O God, who hears our prayers.**

**Thanks be to you, O God, for a love like that. Amen.**

**\*OPENING HYMN** *Come, O Long-Expected Jesus*

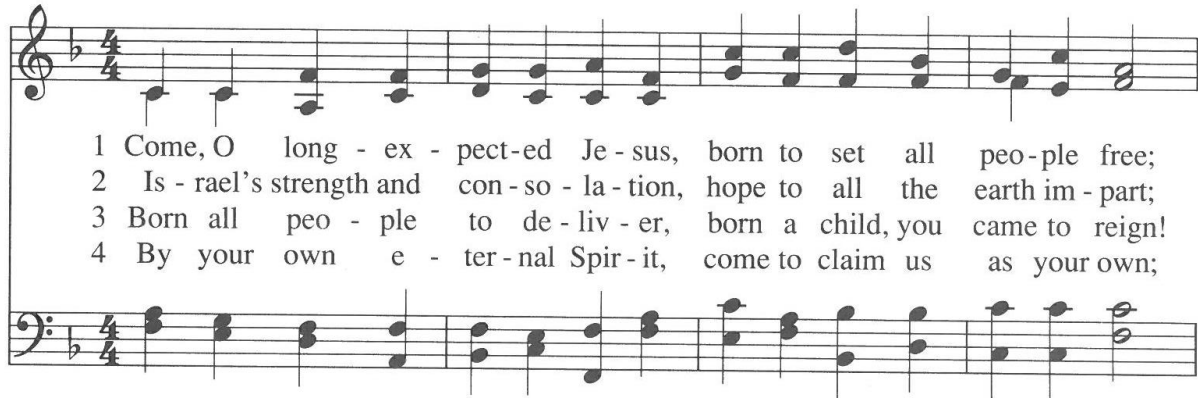
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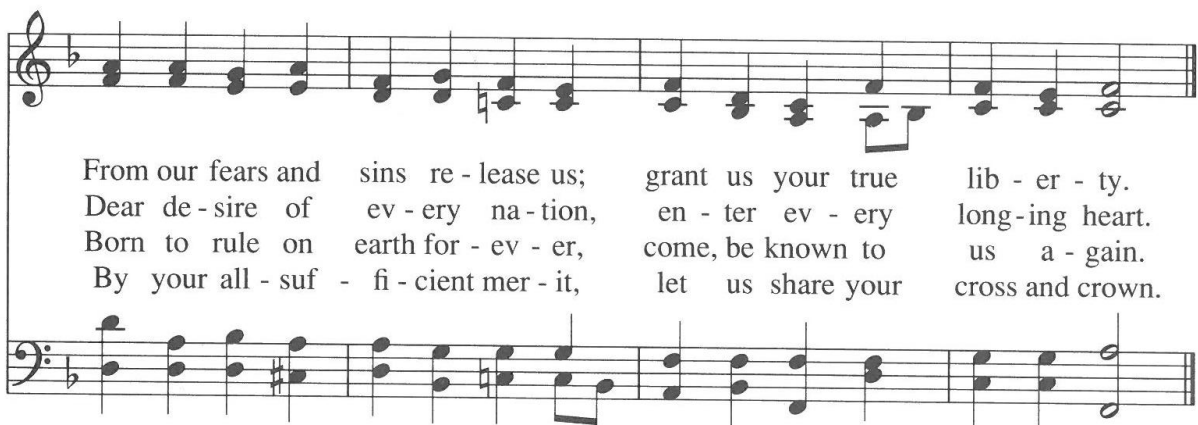
# Come, O Long-Expected Jesus

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Charles Wesley, 1744; alt.



1 Come, O long - ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set all peo - ple free;  
2 Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope to all the earth im - part;  
3 Born all peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child, you came to reign!  
4 By your own e - ter - nal Spir - it, come to claim us as your own;



From our fears and sins re - lease us; grant us your true lib - er - ty.  
Dear de - sire of ev - ery na - tion, en - ter ev - ery long - ing heart.  
Born to rule on earth for - ev - er, come, be known to us a - gain.  
By your all - suf - fi - cient mer - it, let us share your cross and crown.

## \*CALL TO CONFESSION

### \*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Gracious God, we are weary.

For weary bodies that ache and cry out, we pray:

**Forgive us for pushing ourselves too hard.**

**Reminds us that we deserve Sabbath rest.**

For weary minds that feel overwhelmed and saturated with news, we pray:

**Forgive us for creating so many distractions.**

**Remind us that in the quiet, we can hear you.**

For weary hearts that long to feel the joy of this season, we pray:

**Forgive us for being impatient with ourselves.**

**Remind us that healing takes time, and that joy and grief can coexist.**

For the weary edges of our faith that struggle to hold onto hope, we pray:

**Forgive us. Remind us of Zechariah and Elizabeth.**

**Remind us that your good news knows no bounds. Amen.**

## **\*ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

Family of faith,

no matter how many times we wear ourselves thin,

no matter how many times we lose ourselves to distractions,

no matter how many times we ask ourselves, "How can this be?"

God's love keeps showing up for us.

So let us say together:

**We are loved. We are claimed. We are forgiven.**

**Thanks be to God. Amen.**

## **THOUGHT FOR THE DAY**

### **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, for ever. Amen.**

*Children of all ages are invited to participate in the service today, including in the Sacrament of Communion. A book nook with children's programs, books, crayons, and activities is in the rear of the sanctuary near the welcome table and a wiggle space is available in the front of the sanctuary near the baptismal font.*

*Junior Church for children ages 5 through 5th grade will resume next week.*

### **THE SCRIPTURES**

Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

OT page 540

Luke 1:5-23

NT page 56

Reader: The Word of God for the people of God.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

### **SERMON**

The Rev. John Shillingburg

### **MORNING PRAYERS**

### **OFFERING OF TITHES, GIFTS AND LIVES TO CHRIST'S SERVICE**

**\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

**In our weariness, O God, it's easy to believe what society tells us: "There is not enough." Remind us that you take these gifts we offer, and with them you make all things possible. We are grateful that you do not grow weary or discouraged; Lift up these gifts and amaze us with the blessings you can make from them. In gratitude we pray. Amen.**

**– SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION –**

**INVITATION**

Jesus was born into a world that loves to turn people away—a world with shut doors and closed hearts. A world that loves to say, "There's no room for you."

Friends, that will not happen to you here, because Jesus spent his life making room. He made room for tax collectors and children. He made room for 5,000 people to sit down and eat together. He made room for Samaritan women, Jews and Gentiles. He made room for the sick, for the outcast, for the unclean.

Jesus was always pulling up a seat, saving space, making room for people, and he has made room for you.

So come to this Table.

Come with your faith and your doubt.

Come with your questions and your hopes.

Come with your weariness and fatigue.

Just come, because there is room for you here.

This is Christ's table. All are welcome.

**COMMUNION PRAYER**

Holy God, we say thank you for the things in our lives that spark joy:

Thank you for infusing this season with practices of generosity.

Thank you for the children who squeal with joy,  
and the neighbors who drop off cookies.

Thank you for every ounce of beauty that marks this season.

However, God, even in the face of remarkable joy, we still bring weary and worried hearts to you.

So in between our joy and our weariness, God, we ask that you would make room. Pour yourself into the cracks of our hearts. Bind yourself to our good days and our bad days. Carve out space for your love in the center of our beings, so that no matter where we go, we might trust the angels' song when they say, "Be not afraid," and, "Joy to the world!"

### **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

Gathered with his friends, Jesus took bread, broke it, and said:

"This is my body, broken for you. Take and eat."

And pouring the wine:

"This is the cup of my covenant. Do this in remembrance of me."

Come, the table is ready.

### **SHARING OF THE BREAD AND CUP**

*All who desire the Sacrament, including children, are invited to come forward to the chancel rail at the direction of the deacons. You may kneel or stand to receive the elements. Consume the bread and drink from the cup as it is given to you, and hand your empty cup to one of the ushers.*

### **\*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

**Holy God, when we gather around this Table,  
we remember the ways that you always make room for us.**

**At your dinner party, no one gets turned away.**

**Help us to carry that inclusive spirit into the rest of our lives,  
for we know that love like that is what turns weariness into joy.**

**With grateful hearts we pray, Amen.**

**\*CLOSING HYMN** *I Come with Joy*

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see next page

**\*BENEDICTION**

**\*SEVENFOLD AMEN**

#814

**POSTLUDE**

*Please be seated.*



Worship Notes: Today's liturgy was written by: rev. sarah speed | sanctifiedart.org.



**The flowers on the altar** are in loving memory of my daughter, Janice Durante-Cowan, on the anniversary of her passing.

**The yellow rose bud** is presented in honor of veterans by Peter Brehm and Jack Day.

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**Attendance Last Sunday:** The attendance numbers from Sunday, November 26 will be reported in next week's bulletin.



**Watch worship live every Sunday at 10:30 AM or on-demand:**

<https://sundaystreams.com/go/ERUCC>

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**Serving Today: December 3**

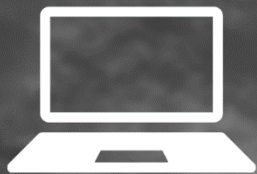
Scripture Reader: Patti Patterson  
Deacons: Mark Ulrich, Darryl Glick  
  
Elder: Eric Weakly  
Greeters: Anne Hoffmann, Ave Barr  
Danielle Carbone  
Welcome: Julie Clark, Marj Berkheimer  
Audio/Visual: Larry Martin, Kelly Esslinger  
Jeff Baker  
Fellowship: Green Team

**Serving Next Week: December 10**

Peg Stahler  
Robin A. Brady-Slifer  
Robin L. Brady-Slifer  
Robin Cooney  
Nancy and Bob Manthey  
Cathie Duncan  
Jeanellen Kallevang  
Jeff Schaeberle, Jeff Baker  
Kelly Esslinger  
Luncheon for Congregational Meeting  
with Desert Potluck

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**Ways to Give to Evangelical Reformed UCC**



**ONLINE**

Go to [erucc.org/give](https://erucc.org/give)  
or Scan this Code



**ENVELOPE**

Cash and  
Checks made out to  
Evangelical Reformed UCC

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Worship Next Week: Second Sunday of Advent – We find joy in connection

Isaiah 40:1-11 | Luke 1:24-45

In community, our joy expands. When we can't rejoice, we can carry each other's joy. That is what Elizabeth and Mary do for each other. The good news begins to take shape in Elizabeth's womb, but scripture tells us that she stays secluded, hiding her pregnancy from others—that is, until Mary arrives at her door, also pregnant. Perhaps Mary's arrival is the inbreaking that changes everything for Elizabeth, for in that moment, her child leaps in her womb and she is filled with the Spirit. She can't help but rejoice. Her joy is contagious and wraps around Mary like a hug. Through the prophet Isaiah, we hear God speak tender words of comfort; this is the comfort we can give to and receive from each other during this season.

*The Rev. David Cooney will be preaching. Spirit will be sharing in music leadership this morning.*

### PRAYER LIST

*We always ask permission before adding a name to be included in the prayer list or in the verbal announcements on a Sunday morning. There are many for whom we pray and visit whose names are not listed in the bulletin by their request.*

### Please remember the following people in your prayers:

Kathy Gourlie  
Katharine Alley  
Claire Kershner  
Anne Gallagher (friend of  
Milt and Bettie Joe Crutchley)  
Lee Thomas  
Joan Thomas (mother of Dan  
Smith's friend)  
Lucy Patterson Cox (friend  
of Kathleen Jefferson)  
Shannon Baxter (daughter of  
Kathy Gelles-Baxter)  
Milt Crutchley  
Sandra Trout  
Audrey Rayfield  
Autumn Crutchley  
Leandra Caughy  
Christiane Armitage (sister-  
in-law of Linda Coyle)  
June Brehm  
Jason Rhoads

Nathan Cable  
Hillal Eastburn  
Barbara Rhoads  
Pat Condo  
Cathy Crome (sister of Nancy  
Jones)  
Greg Rhoads  
Holly Davis  
Marcia Eisenstein  
Joyce Kallevang (sister-in-law  
of Jeanellen Kallevang)  
Derek C. Hupp (grandson of  
Beanie & Gaylon Cornell)  
Wayne Kolb (friend of Stefan  
and Judi Mach and Tony and  
Linda LaFianza)  
Conway Barnes (brother-in-  
law of George & Linda Kline)  
Pat Hevner  
Jeannette Johnson

Jackie Keyser (sister-in-law of  
Betsy and Phil Selby)  
Tamara Tamas  
Barbara Lee Crutchley (sister  
of Milt Crutchley)  
Marcy Channell (daughter of  
JoAnn Fritz)  
Paige Coffey  
Jane Doll  
Fran Wenner  
Bonnie Devilbiss  
The McCarty family  
Tina Prescott (daughter-in-law  
of Barbara & Bill Prescott)  
Mary Remsberg  
Heleen (sister of Karin Mens)  
Kathy Blue Shores (friend of  
Jean Fish & Barb Biser)  
Gretchen Manuel (niece of  
Audrey Rayfield)

## Today at ERUCC

### **LET'S STUDY THE BIBLE with Revs. John and Rebecca Shillingburg**

**Sundays**

**North Room / Zoom**

**9:00 – 10:15 AM**

Zoom: [bit.ly/ERSunstudy](https://bit.ly/ERSunstudy)

Meeting ID: 893 8670 5888

Passcode: 327128

We are studying the foundational stories of the Old Testament, the big stories in the order they occurred. No prior experience needed; just bring your Bible.

We are now in the stories about David, Israel's ideal king. Except for an ideal king, David was pretty ruthless at times and a not-very-good parent. What's with that?

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### **SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

**9:30 – 10:10 AM**

We have two classrooms for **Children's Sunday School**. Our Pre-K – 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade class meets in the Liz Coffey Room and our 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade class meets in the Thomas Room.

Our **Youth Sunday School** class for 6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade meets in the Clapp Conference Room in the Parish House Church Offices from 9:30 – 10:20 AM.

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### **LET'S TALK – EXPLORING ADVENT THROUGH THE LENS OF MATTHEW**

**Sundays, December 3, 10, and 17 Community Room**

**9:30 – 10:15 AM**



Long before the genealogical resources of 23andme, myheritage, and ancestry.com, the Gospel According to Matthew lays out a genealogical theology. Just as the Bible's theological history lays foundations for the stories of Abraham and Sarah, Moses, David, and the prophets, Matthew's genealogical theology lays foundations for the story of Jesus. But what does this genealogy say to us? Join Carolyn Roberts as we explore one of the least-read texts of the Advent season: the genealogy of Jesus as found in Matthew 1.1-17.

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### **3<sup>rd</sup> ANNUAL COOKIE SWAP**

**Sunday, December 3**

**North Room**

**12:00 PM**

Celebrate the sweet treats of the season at ERUCC's 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Cookie Swap! Bring 5 dozen cookies and an extra container to take your cookies home in. Children and their cookie creations are welcome. We will also be taking cookies to our members who are homebound.

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## **SAFE CHURCH TRAININGS**

**Sunday, December 3**                      **Thomas Room**                      **12:00 – 2:00 PM**

**Monday, December 4**                      **Zoom**                      **7:00 PM**

Zoom: [bit.ly/safe1204](https://bit.ly/safe1204)                      Meeting ID: 825 7552 9900                      Passcode: 302452

It is that time of year to offer our Safe Church trainings. If you are setting a goal for yourself to volunteer with our children or youth headed into 2024, then this training is for you! Choose Sunday, December 3 in the Thomas Room (feel free to bring a lunch!) or join us for the same training on Monday, December 4 on Zoom. Volunteers will need to complete an application and a background check in addition to attending the training. Training is renewed every 2 years and background checks are renewed every 3 years. Anyone attending Franklinton must have a background check completed.

## **This Week at ERUCC**

### **TUESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY with Rev. Rebecca Shillingburg**

*Reading the Bible Again for the First Time*

**Tuesdays through December 19**                      **North Room / Zoom**                      **11:00 AM**

Zoom: [bit.ly/3TdUnOy](https://bit.ly/3TdUnOy)                      Meeting ID: 875 1423 3398                      Passcode: 973365

One of the vital challenges facing Christians today is how to read the Bible faithfully without abandoning our sense of truth and history. *Reading the Bible Again for the First Time* provides a much-needed solution to the problem of how to have a fully authentic yet contemporary understanding of the scriptures.

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### **WEDNESDAY EVENING LET'S STUDY THE BIBLE with Rev. John Shillingburg**

**Wednesdays through December 20**                      **North Room / Zoom**                      **7:00 PM**

Zoom: [bit.ly/ERwedstudy](https://bit.ly/ERwedstudy)                      Meeting ID: 892 1764 4500                      Passcode: 848933

Like the Sunday morning class, this new evening class offers an opportunity to read and discuss the scriptures, looking at them in their original context, considering when and by whom they were written, and how they have been interpreted through the centuries. All you need is a Bible; no prior knowledge is necessary.

We are currently studying the Prologue in Genesis (ch. 1-11), the origin stories of the Hebrew Scriptures—creation, Adam and Eve in Garden, Noah and the flood, and the Tower of Babel.

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## **CHIMES LEARNING AND SERVICE GROUP**

**Thursday, December 7**                      **Red Horse Inn**                      **11:30 AM**

The Chimes Learning and Service Group will meet for lunch on December 7 at 11:30 AM at the Red Horse Inn on the Golden Mile. Reservations are required, please email Sue Pinner, [pinbenco@gmail.com](mailto:pinbenco@gmail.com), no later than December 4.

## **COCOA OUTREACH AT KRIS KRINGLE PROCESSION**

**Friday, December 8**

**6:00 – 9:00 PM**

As we prepare for our 2<sup>nd</sup> annual cocoa hospitality and outreach before and after the Kris Kringle Procession, we could use your help! Donations are needed for this fun evening.

**Sign up to donate:** [bit.ly/cocoa1208](http://bit.ly/cocoa1208).

As our children invite neighbors for a cup of hot chocolate, adult helpers make sure hot water is full, cocoa is in cups, and invitations are shared to our Christmas Eve services and the Historic Houses of Worship Candlelight Tour. Guiding our young people as they share welcome is a fun and important task of its own. We will walk down to the corner to see the parade and then come back to clean up for the night!

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## **LATE NIGHT DESSERTS**

**Friday, December 8**

**Brewer's Alley**

**9:00 PM**

We are hosting a “Younger” Adult gathering post-Kris Kringle Parade. Whether or not you are able to volunteer serving Cocoa earlier that night, join us at Brewers Alley at 9 PM! Buy your own food and drinks, but enjoy dessert gifted from ERUCC with the hopes of helping us form small group community! RSVP to Pastor Kirstin, [ksrhoads@erucc.org](mailto:ksrhoads@erucc.org).

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## **LEND SHIP A HELPING HAND THIS SEASON**

**November 26 – December 31**

SHIP, the Student Homelessness Initiative Partnership, provides critical resources and urgent services to the hundreds of Frederick County youth experiencing homelessness each year. This season, the Mission & Social Action Committee invites everyone to lend SHIP a helping hand by dropping off critically needed, new, FULL-SIZED hygiene supplies in the bin located in the upper lobby (4th floor).

Bathing Items: Shampoo, Conditioner, Body Wash, Face Wash, Shaving Cream

Hair Care Items: Hair Brushes, Hair Ties, Hair Accessories, Ethnic Hair Care Products

Dental Items: Toothbrushes, Toothpaste, Mouthwash, Dental Floss, Chapstick

Other: Deodorant, Lotion, Face Wipes, Pod Laundry Detergent, Feminine Hygiene Products, Toilet Paper, Q-Tips, Band-Aids, First-Aid Items

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## **COLLECTING FOR THE MITTEN PROJECT**

**November 26 – December 31**

In 2017, Federated Charities launched The Mitten Project by inviting the community to participate in a small action to reach out in kindness during the cold, winter months. Thousands of pairs of mittens (plus scarves, gloves, jackets and socks) have been made available to anyone who needs them in the time since.

Bring your donations of NEW mittens, gloves, scarves, warm socks, and coats to the donation box located in our upper lobby to contribute to our community.

## Upcoming at ERUCC

### **CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

**Sunday, December 10**

**Community Room/Zoom after 10:30 AM service**

Zoom: [bit.ly/er23congmtg](https://bit.ly/er23congmtg)

Meeting ID: 863 7509 0179

Passcode: 318206

The Consistory invites you to attend ERUCC's annual congregational meeting on Sunday, December 10, following the 10:30 AM service. Agenda items will include reports on Consecration Sunday outcomes, voting on a path forward for Trinity Chapel, and sharing and approval of the proposed 2024 ERUCC mission spending plan. We are the church, and everyone's participation is encouraged.

A light lunch will be served. You are invited to bring a dessert to share.

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### **PARENT'S NIGHT OUT**

**Friday, December 15**

**Community Room**

**5:00 – 9:00 PM**

Enjoy a night out while members of the ERUCC Youth Group care for your children! Donations toward Youth mission trips and retreat are welcome. Our time will include a meal, Pageant practice, games, crafts, and a Christmas Dance Party! Feel free to wear your Christmas pjs! We will stay inside for the evening. Please RSVP by emailing Pastor Kirstin or signing up at Fellowship.

Parents/guardians must complete an annual registration so that we have emergency contacts, allergies, etc. available. Email Pastor Kirstin, [ksrhoads@erucc.org](mailto:ksrhoads@erucc.org), or the church office, [erucc@erucc.org](mailto:erucc@erucc.org), for a copy to complete.

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### **FRANKLINTON CENTER WORK TRIP**

**January 13 – 15, 2024**

**Open to adults and youth (6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade)**



Please let Pastor Kirstin know if you are interested in going on our annual work trip to Franklinton Center at Bricks over the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. weekend! We will leave early on Saturday, January 13 and return later in the day on Monday, January 15 (time to be determined as we choose projects).

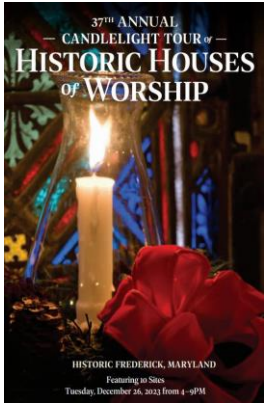
**To learn more, attend an interest meeting in the Community Room on Sunday, December 17 at 9 AM or immediately following the 10:30 AM worship service.**

The Franklinton Center at Bricks is a conference, retreat, and educational facility in eastern North Carolina with a focus on justice advocacy and leadership development. Franklinton Center is an historic center of transformation where issues affecting the marginalized, the oppressed, and the poor are addressed. A former plantation, Franklinton Center traces its beginnings to the founding of Franklinton Christian College in 1871 and the Congregationalist Bricks School in 1895. A merger of those two schools in the 1950's formed Franklinton Center at Bricks. The Center is related to the United Church of Christ and is managed by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries.

# CANDLELIGHT TOUR OF HISTORIC HOUSES OF WORSHIP

Tuesday, December 26

Volunteers needed at various times



The beloved Candlelight Tour of Historic Houses of Worship returns this holiday season in Downtown Frederick. This special open house celebrates Frederick's tradition of religious diversity, local history, and the holiday season on Tuesday, December 26, 2023 from 4 PM-9 PM. This is Frederick's most popular church tour and is a great opportunity to step inside some of its most beautiful buildings.

We will be opening our main building at 15 West Church Street to the public for this Candlelight Tour. We will be offering refreshments and our wonderful hospitality.

Interested in volunteering at this event? Sign up at [bit.ly/ertour1226](https://bit.ly/ertour1226).

Questions? Contact Julie Clark, [Jclarkad@yahoo.com](mailto:Jclarkad@yahoo.com).

## Children and Youth Ministry

### JUNIOR CHURCH

Junior Church, a space to join in creative spiritual formation activities, meets most Sundays, except the first Sunday of each month when we observe Communion. Children aged 5 – 5th grade may go to Junior Church in the Thomas Room after the Thought for the Day in the worship service. Parents should pick up children from Junior Church following service.

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### CHILDREN AND YOUTH CHRISTMAS PAGEANT REHEARSALS

Our Christmas Pageant, *A Very Special Child*, is inspired by the stories in Luke 1-3. We need 11 characters and singers as well as some helpers with props. Rehearsals will take place Sundays after worship in the Sanctuary on December 3 and December 10. We will also practice on Friday, December 15 during the Youth Babysitting Night.

Pageant participants will gather on Sunday, December 17 at 5:00 PM for dinner in the Community Room, will perform in the Sanctuary at 6:00 PM, and celebrate afterward with a cookie and milk reception. Contact Ms. Trish or Ms. Kelly with questions or for more information.

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### YOUTH GROUP

Sunday, December 3

Community Room

5:30 – 7:00 PM

Dress-up dinner!

Friday, December 15

Community Room

5:00 – 9:00 PM

Babysitting for Parent's Night Out. This is a fundraiser for youth mission trips and retreat.

## Advent and Christmastide at ERUCC

### HOW DOES A WEARY WORLD REJOICE?



## How does a weary world rejoice?

An Advent series in  
Luke's Gospel

Christ was born into a weary world. King Herod ruled the land with a legacy of ruthlessness. The Romans treated the people of Israel with contempt, imposing harsh taxes and land seizures that forced many into

subsistence farming. Poverty and destitution were pervasive. And yet, Christ was born, bringing good news of great joy for all people.

As Advent comes again to a weary world, we ask, “How does a weary world rejoice?” From the opening chapters of Luke’s Gospel, we have found a few answers: we acknowledge our weariness, we find joy in connection, we allow ourselves to be amazed, we sing stories of hope, we make room, we root ourselves in ritual, and most importantly, we trust our belovedness. In the parallel birth stories of Jesus and John, joy arrives—despite trepidation, fear, or grief. In these stories, we find rhythms for rejoicing. As we move through our series, we hope to create space for acknowledging the weariness of our world while celebrating God’s closeness with great joy.

And so, we will hold space for our weariness and our joy. We will seek a “thrill of hope” in our hurting world. We will welcome joy—even if, like the prophet Isaiah, we cry out for comfort (Isaiah 40:1). In this weary world, may we find many ways to rejoice.

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### ADVENT DEVOTIONAL BOOKLET

Beginning with the first week of Advent, this daily devotional is designed to help you practice joy in a weary world. Each week offers art, reflections, poetry, and hymns. Journey through these pages at your own pace. The devotional is available in the rear of the Main Sanctuary or request a copy through the church office at [erucc@erucc.org](mailto:erucc@erucc.org).

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### MID-WEEK ADVENT SERVICES AND SOUP LUNCHEON

Wednesdays, December 6, 13, 20    Sanctuary

12:00 PM

Join us in a brief mid-week Advent service as we reflect on the themes of *An Unlikely Advent* by Rachel Billups, which takes a deeper dive into contemplating the extraordinary people of the Christmas Story. Then we will make a cozy journey to the Community Room to share a meal of soup and bread and reflect on some of our worship themes.





## Sunday Morning Schedule

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| 8:30 – 9:15 AM     | <b>Early Worship Service</b> , Sanctuary  |
| 9:00 AM            | <b>Coffee and Conversation</b> , Kieffer Lobby, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor   |
| 9:00 – 10:15 AM    | <b>Let's Study the Bible</b> , North Room, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor  |
| 9:30 – 10:15 AM    | <b>Let's Talk</b> , Community Room, 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor   |
| 9:30 AM – 12:00 PM | <b>Nursery Care</b> , 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor   |
| 9:30 – 10:10 AM    | <b>Sunday School</b><br><i>Pre-K – 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade</i> , Liz Coffey Room, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor<br><i>3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade</i> , Thomas Room, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor<br><i>Youth (6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade)</i> , Clapp Conference Room, Church Office |
| 10:10 – 10:25 AM   | <b>Children's Music and Movement</b> , Liz Coffey Room, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor   |
| 10:30 – 11:30 AM   | <b>Worship</b> , Sanctuary and Online at <a href="http://www.erucc.org">www.erucc.org</a><br><b>Junior Church</b> , Thomas Room, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor<br><i>Children are dismissed from the sanctuary after Thought for the Day during Worship</i>                                       |
| 11:30 AM           | <b>Fellowship</b> , Community Room, 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor<br><b>Christmas Pageant Rehearsal</b> , Sanctuary   |

## Stay Informed

### NOVEMBER TRINITY CHIMES

Read the ERUCC monthly newsletter, *Trinity Chimes*, in the back of the sanctuary or online by scanning the QR code or going to [bit.ly/nov23chimes](http://bit.ly/nov23chimes).



### WEEKLY THURSDAY THOUGHTS EMAIL

Subscribe to receive our weekly email newsletter at <http://eepurl.com/gDNCu5> or by scanning the QR code!



## Mission Statement of Evangelical Reformed United Church of Christ

We, the members of this congregation, seek to celebrate in word and deed the gospel of Jesus Christ, by nurturing spiritual growth through worship, study and prayer; by caring for one another as God cares for us; and by proclaiming God's love for all people as we work to help our neighbors near and far. We commit ourselves to develop and implement specific programs to fulfill our mission.

Worship services and events at Evangelical Reformed UCC are sometimes photographed and videotaped to document the vibrant life of our church. If you do not wish to be included in these recordings, please notify a deacon or the church office. Always obtain permission prior to sharing images and videos that include minors on your personal social media.

# Poinsettias



We will be ordering poinsettias from Frederick High School this year. All funds will benefit the horticultural program and Frederick High FFA Chapter. Each plant will have 4-6 blooms and will cost \$10. Plants will be placed on the chancel in the Sanctuary.

**To order, please fill out the form and return with payment to the Church Office by December 10.**

Plants can be picked up after the Christmas Eve Services; however, we would appreciate having some left in our buildings for the Candlelight Historic Houses of Worship Tour on Tuesday, December 26.

**Donor Name(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to place \_\_\_\_\_ poinsettias in the church for Christmas.

Enclosed is \$\_\_\_\_\_ (\$10 per plant).

If you wish for your poinsettias to be listed in memory of, in honor of, or placed by the donor, please indicate which and PRINT the names below.

**In memory of:**

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**In honor of:**

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**Placed by:**

## FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT (YEAR B)

December 3, 2023

Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

### Where Are You, God?

This is the first Sunday of Advent, the season when we set time aside to express the human longing for God to be right here with us. There are many moods in this season. Some of us are too busy and some of us are too lonely. Some of us take joy in all that there is, some of us grieve all that is lost. Some of us find comfort in the same story told a new way each year, some of us just want to hurry along to the turning of the year. Some of us find deep peace in the rituals of this season, and some of us feel very anxious. And many of us feel all these things! On each of our Advent Sundays, we are invited to sink deeply into our spiritual lives with a time of devotion and contemplation, knowing that God meets us exactly where we are - busy and lonely, joyful and grieving, comfortable and hurried, peaceful and anxious.

*Give us life, and we will call on your name. / Restore us, O God:  
Let your face shine, that we may be saved. Psalm 80:18b-19*

First, read the focus scripture for this day.  
Read it again, more slowly, perhaps even out loud.  
Now read it a third time.

What are the questions or images that come to mind?  
Here are some to get you started. You may have others.

-With one voice, the people call for life, meaning that they have felt in some way dead or numb to the world and to God. Have you or your community ever felt far from God or God's purpose for you? What was that like? Remember that people in all times and places have had seasons of feeling far from God, but that did not stop them from seeking God's face.

-The people cry out to be restored, brought back to life. What would it look like to be restored or renewed? What is your most audacious hope for the future of yourself or your faith community? Make it your intention, in these next weeks until the coming of the Christ Child, to imagine without limits all the good that God has in store for you.

-The people ask for God's face to shine upon them. Remember now a time that you felt God's presence very close and near. Where were you? What did it look, sound, smell like? Who were you with? It might be a time and place very far away; it might be the place where you are right now. Allow yourself to bask in the warmth of God's close companionship.

-The people ask to be saved. Some traditions proclaim the idea of being "saved" more than others. Does the notion of being saved resonate with your spirituality? Why or why not? Is there another word you would use in place of this one?

End your time with this prayer: *God, sometimes we are too busy to find you. Sometimes we are lonely, and you feel far away. Wherever we are, come near to us we pray. Amen.*



8 1/2" x 14" UCC SUNDAY BULLETIN SERVICE