



Trinity Chimes

Evangelical Reformed United Church of Christ • Frederick, Maryland USA

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.

What is Interim Ministry?

Three words are associated with the interim period in a congregation: change, transition, and transformation

By Dr. Morgan, Intentional Interim Senior Pastor

CHANGE can be defined as the inevitable movement of life's forces. Inevitable means it will happen, and movement means we will become different. This is true for churches as well as individuals. In fact, for a faith community, the interim period between senior clergy is when change becomes most obvious. We can choose to resist it, fight it, be angry about it, or even deny it, but change will occur; we will become different as life progresses. It is natural for a congregation to find themselves grappling with the concept of change – especially during the interim time.

TRANSITION is the process by which individuals and congregations deal with change. The late William Bridges, a leading professional on transition, states, "When change happens without people going through a transition, it is just a rearrangement of the chairs." So, we find ourselves asking, "What are the options?" "What can be done to create the best opportunity to handle change healthily?"

Another way of understanding the relationship between change and transition is that change is situational, but transition is psychological. So, it is not change that we resist. We resist the losses and endings that come with transition. With every change, a piece of somebody's world is being lost.

TRANSFORMATION is the new shape that grows out of this time of transition. Transformation results from individuals and congregations managing change and transition and dealing with the losses and endings. Transformation gives the church new life, possibilities, and energy as the people claim their place and purpose in God's Kingdom.

The presence of these three elements – change, transition, transformation – is why the interim time in a church is often called a "wilderness journey." Three biblical characters come to mind when thinking about the wilderness journey.

The Exodus story is about what happened during the 40 years the people of Israel wandered in the wilderness. The story is about transitioning from the end of one experience (slavery) to the



The Rev. Freeman Palmer, Conference Minister, Central Atlantic Conference UCC; The Rev. Dr. Marvin L. Morgan; The Rev. Stephen W. Camp, UCC Conference and National Staff Executive (Retired); and The Rev. Sheresa Simpson-Rice, Associate Conference Minister, Central Atlantic Conference UCC gather in the narthex following the Service of Blessing for Our Interim Journey on January 28, 2024.

beginning of another experience/setting (freedom). In the process of going from Egypt to the Promise Land, the people are seeking, discovering, and clarifying God's will, direction, and movement in

continued on next page

What is Interim Ministry continued from page 1

their lives. During the journey, they often move off course. This is where Moses makes his major contribution — he continues to redirect them and challenge them to refocus their energy on God's glory.

John the Baptist is the second biblical character that comes to mind when thinking about a wilderness journey. In the Gospel of Matthew, we are told that this individual came to prepare the way for Jesus. John has a purpose. He believes God has given him the responsibility of pointing people to Jesus. He moves about in the wilderness with a consistent and urgent message. Others try to redirect him, and Jesus even confuses him by asking John to baptize him. Nevertheless, throughout the journey, John continues seeking, discovering, and clarifying God's will, direction, and movement.



Pastor Kirstin and Dr. Morgan following the Service of Blessing for Our Interim Journey.

The third person who comes to mind is Jesus himself. Also, in the Gospel of Matthew, we learn that Jesus is led off into the wilderness early in his ministry. He spends 40 days and 40 nights in prayer and fasting. He is earnestly seeking, discovering, and clarifying God's will, direction, and movement. This is not a simple task and does not come without challenge and pain. Jesus is confronted by Satan and tempted to go in a direction other than that ordained by God. Jesus emerges from the wilderness, but not before he has clarity about what God calls him to be and do.

Notice that Moses dealt with change and transition but not transformation. He led the people through the process of dealing with those inevitable movements of life's forces, but he did not get to see the new shape that takes place. Moses did not enter into the Promise Land. It would not be incorrect to say that "Moses was the interim leader." He helped the people become clear about their purpose. He helped them to rethink their relationship with God and how that would impact their future. It was after his work was completed that the permanent leader emerged.

John the Baptist announced the change that was going to take place and introduced the transition that would have to happen for transformation to occur. Before the transformation really took hold, however, John was put to death. Those who objected to his message of change fought against him. They wanted to keep things the way they were. They were afraid of what would happen to their traditions. They were comfortable with who they were and heard John's messages as a threat. Like Moses, "John was also an interim leader." His purpose was to encourage the transition that was required in order to transform the world. He was not the light; he only pointed to the light.

Jesus, on the other hand, dealt with change. He dealt with transition. And Jesus also dealt with transformation. Yet, the transformation also cost him his life.

You (the members and friends of ERUCC) can only transition through change and experience transformation if you give up the old and take on the new. In Matthew 9:17, Jesus is credited with saying, "Neither is new wine put into old wineskins; otherwise, the skins burst, and the wine is spilled, and the skins are destroyed; but new wine is put into fresh wineskins, and so both are preserved."

This time period called the "interim" provides congregations an opportunity to put new wine into the fresh wineskins. It gives a faith community the chance to leave behind the behaviors and attitudes that keep them focused on the past instead of the present and the future. It is a time when the people can objectively decide what meaningful parts of their history, tradition and practice will continue to be carried with them and what will be left behind.

Interim ministry also is about seeking effective ways to organize for ministry and recruit, train and develop new leadership. It involves assessing the way decisions are made in the church and determining if there are more inclusive ways to handle these tasks. This is a time to look at how the members of the congregation relate to one another, the surrounding neighborhood, and the wider church. Finally, this is a time for a congregation to discover their identity apart from the pastor of the church. This is an opportunity to develop a vision that will help meet the spiritual needs of members and enhance their ministry beyond themselves. With this kind of clarity, the congregation can find a new leader who will help them to follow what THEY believe to be God's will, direction and purpose.

You will hear more and I will say a lot more about **The Five Focus Points:**

HERITAGE, MISSION, LEADERSHIP, CONNECTIONS and FUTURE

¹We are indebted to Warren Schulz for introducing us to the distinction of these three words. (Nicholson, Roger S. *Temporary Shepherds: A Congregational Handbook for Interim Ministry*. Alban, 1998, p. 121.)

NOTE: Content for the above article is used with permission, and adapted from Interim Ministry Course teaching resources, edited by Les B. Robinson, PhD, a faculty consultant, and co-instructor with Marvin L. Morgan, D. Min., The Center for Congregational Health, Division of FaithHealth, Wake Forest University, Baptist Medical Center.

FEBRUARY WORSHIP NOTES

February 4 - Fifth Sunday after Epiphany
Isaiah 40:21-31 | Mark 1:29-39

The readings today affirm the importance of prayer in keeping our focus for ministry. Restored by God's transforming love, we are reshaped as messengers of good news. In our Gospel lesson, Mark 1:29-39, as Jesus is seeking rest at the home of Simon and Andrew, he is called upon to heal Simon's mother-in-law. Crowds begin to press in around the house, demanding more words and deeds of power from Jesus. Isaiah 40:21-31 calls God's people to remember that God – who created the universe and rules everything within it – is their source of strength.

We will share in Communion this morning. The Senior Choir will be singing.

February 11 - Transfiguration Sunday
2 Kings 2:1-12 | Mark 9:2-9

The Season after the Epiphany ends with the story of Jesus' transfiguration in Mark 9:2-9. This revealing of Jesus' glory is a turning point, marking the end of Jesus' ministry in Galilee and the beginning of the journey towards Jerusalem and the fate that awaits Jesus there. Just before today's reading, Peter declares that Jesus is the Messiah. But Peter does not understand Jesus' teaching about the kind of Messiah Jesus has come to be.

It is in the seeing and understanding that God's messenger is known. In 2 Kings 2:1-12, the prophet Elijah is carried up to heaven, and Elisha glimpses the sacred and comes to a fuller understanding of who Elijah is. Elisha receives a double portion of the spirit of Elijah, and is thus known as a prophet in the true succession.

Spirit will be sharing in music leadership this morning.



Lent

This Lent, we are focusing on the life and faith of one of Jesus' most famous disciples. In Peter, we see a person who is both steadfast and unsteady, a dear friend and a betrayer, a follower and a wanderer. In Peter, we often see ourselves. By following Peter's journey, we watch the story of Jesus unfold through

the eyes of a very normal human trying to figure it all out—just like us.

Like many of us, Peter has a wandering heart. His journey is not polished, or linear, or perfect, but he is always tethered to the love of God. When you look closely at Peter's story, you find Jesus at each step along the way—offering him abundance, catching him when he begins to sink, challenging him when he stands in the way, washing his feet, predicting his betrayal, and offering him agapē love. This Lent we're joining Peter in figuring out faith. We're not idolizing or vilifying him; instead, we're hoping to wander alongside him, open to what we might learn about Jesus (and ourselves) by stepping in his shoes.

In this series, we want to affirm that faith is a constant journey of steadfast pursuit, one that ebbs and flows. We want to affirm that wandering is exploration, not necessarily distance from God. We want to affirm the ways Peter keeps going: he drops his nets, he walks on water, he runs to the empty tomb, he swims to the shore to meet the risen Christ. He keeps searching and yearning and loving, even after missteps or mistakes. Ultimately, in Peter's story, we are reminded that God loves imperfect people—in fact, time and again, that's precisely who God claims and calls.

This Lent we will look for ourselves in the stepping stones of Peter's story. We will reflect on the stages of our own faith journeys as well as who and what has shaped us along the way. As we wander, let us tune our hearts to sing God's grace. May we rest in streams of mercy, never ceasing.



Wandering Heart

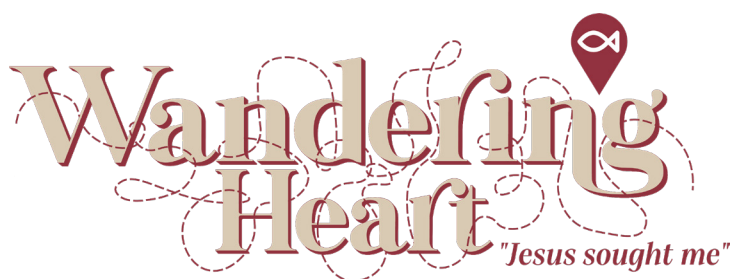
"Tune my heart"

February 14 - Ash Wednesday
"Tune my heart"

Psalm 51:1-17

12:00 PM ~ Service will include the Imposition of Ashes. A time of fellowship and lunch will follow the service.

7:30 PM ~ Service will include the Imposition of Ashes.



Wandering Heart

"Jesus sought me"

February 18 - First Sunday in Lent
"Jesus sought me"

Psalm 25:1-10 | Luke 5:1-11

Jesus doesn't seek out trained rabbis and priests to be his disciples; instead, he calls a few Galilean fishermen to follow him and join his ministry. In this story, Jesus tells Simon Peter to drop his nets one more time, even though they've been fishing all night long and have caught nothing. To their surprise, they haul in nets bursting with fish. In response to this abundant miracle, Peter says, "Go away from me, Lord!" And yet, Peter and his partners drop their nets and follow Jesus. What is the beginning of your faith story? When has God sought you out? Have you ever felt like your calling was pursuing—or chasing—you? Did you resist? Did you follow?

The Senior Choir will be singing.



Wandering Heart

"Here's my heart"

February 25 - Second Sunday in Lent
"Here's my heart"

Psalm 22:23-31 | Matthew 14:22-33

As a new disciple, perhaps Peter wants to prove himself. Boldly, in the middle of a storm, Peter steps out of the boat to join Jesus who is walking on top of the waves. He, too, walks on water until the wind shakes his trust and he begins to sink. Many of us know what it feels like to be thrown off balance, to feel as if we're sinking. Maybe this looks like doubt, unexpected change, too-busy seasons of life, devastating grief, or distance from God. In this story, we empathize with the desperation Peter feels as he cries out, and we pray for God to save us when we sink.

The Senior Choir will be singing.

Scripture notes for February 4 and 11 from Season of the Spirit and Pulpit Resource.

Lenten Liturgy by Rev. Sarah A. Speed and Graphic Design by Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman | Background painting and photography by Rev. Lisle Gwynn Garrity | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.

Let's Study the Bible ~ Sunday Morning

with The Revs. John and Rebecca Shillingburg

Sundays North Room / Zoom 9:00 – 10:15 AM

Zoom: 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.

In February we will be skipping lightly through 1 & 2 Kings, focusing on Solomon, the prophets Elijah, Elisha, and Jeremiah, as well as the stories of the destruction of the Northern and Southern Kingdoms. What happened to the 10 Lost Tribes of Israel?

Let's Study the Bible ~ Wednesday Evening

with The Rev. John Shillingburg

Wednesdays North Room / Zoom 7:00 PM

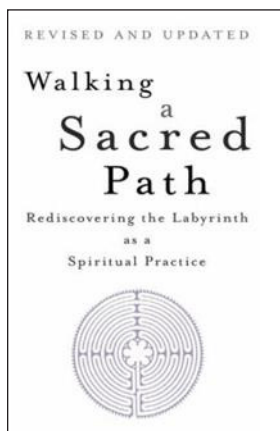
Zoom: bit.ly/ERwedstudy

Meeting ID: 892 1764 4500 Passcode: 848933

Like the Sunday morning class, this 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.

In February we are reading the stories of the matriarchs and patriarchs in Genesis: Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, Jacob and Rachel, and Joseph. Just how exemplary were these heroes and heroines of the Hebrew Scriptures? Do they provide good models for us today?

Tuesday Morning Bible Study ~ with The Rev. Rebecca Shillingburg



Walking a Sacred Path: Rediscovering the Labyrinth as a Spiritual Tool

by Lauren Artress

Tuesdays through March 19

North Room / Zoom 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Zoom: bit.ly/3TdUnOy

Meeting ID: 875 1423 3398 Passcode: 973365

‘Walking the Labyrinth’ has reemerged today as a metaphor for the spiritual journey and a powerful tool for transformation. This walking meditation is an archetype, a mystical ritual found in all religious traditions. It quiets the mind and opens the soul. .

Reading Schedule

Date	Chapter	Title
Feb. 6, 2024	2	New Pilgrims, New Paths
Feb. 13, 2024	3	The Labyrinth: Sacred Pattern, Sacred Path
Feb. 20, 2024	4	Walking the Labyrinth: The Process
Feb. 27, 2024	5	The Seeds of Spiritual Hunger
Mar. 5, 2024	6	Rediscovering the Divine Within
Mar. 12, 2024	7	The Labyrinth: Blueprint for Transformation
Mar. 19, 2024	8	The Birth of a Vision

Mid-Week Lenten Service and Soup Lunch



We will have a brief service in the sanctuary at 12:00 PM each Wednesday from February 21 – March 27 followed by time for a soup lunch and reflection in the Community Room.

**thank
you**

Frederick's 37th Annual Candlelight Tour of Historic Houses of Worship

was a great success here at ERUCC. Thank you for continuing to be a welcoming congregation that makes it possible to greet 2200 visitors in our main building the day after Christmas! This is only possible because of the more than forty church volunteers willing to help provide hospitality ... thank you!

We received many comments and compliments about the friendliness and kindness of our volunteers, with many noting how great it was to see youth actively helping and leading. We are a special congregation and blessed to be a family.

We look forward to reopening Trinity Chapel after restoration work is complete, and I welcome anyone who is interested in leading or volunteering at this event to join me in 2024!

With love,
Julie Clark



February Birthdays

Please Note: Specific birthdates will not be published for privacy. If you would like to see a certain month's birthdays, please contact the church office.

Quynn Adkins • Eli Baker
 Mary Ellen Baker
 Chuck Baldree
 Barbara Barry
 Veronica Beadle
 Peter Brehm • Jim Brittain
 Mark Brown
 Justin Chappell
 Julie Clark
 Quinn Coffey • David Cooney
 Isabella Fisher
 Cathy Gannon
 Patricia Garst
 Colin Gohegan • Kenneth Grim
 Matt Hueting
 Kendall Johnson
 Kathy Johnston
 Jeanellen Kallevang
 Susan Kulp
 Maria Lagrotteria • Aiofé Lynch
 Suzanne Marsh
 Adam McCarty
 Kate McDermott
 Alec Pain • Thomasa Pomeroy
 Michael Poole
 Mary Remsberg
 Barbara Rhoads • Phil Selby
 Emily Spear
 Mark Ulrich
 Natalie Vetter • Jim Weitz



A Note from Lancaster Theological Seminary:

Thank you very much for your commitment to student scholarships at Lancaster Theological Seminary! As our seminarians answer God's call to serve, they are often forced to make great personal and professional sacrifices. By supporting student scholarships, you are investing in their success and reducing the financial burden they may experience while pursuing a theological education. Thank you for making a transformational difference in their lives! On behalf of our students, we are so grateful for your steadfast support.

Your generosity is shaping the future of ministry and supporting the next generation of compassionate leaders who will profoundly impact our world!

ERUCC holds a pastor's scholarship fund at Lancaster Theological Seminary. This year, a grant from that fund was awarded to Master of Divinity student Jenna Duranko.

Dear Friends,

I want to express my gratitude for your generosity. Because of you, I can attend Lancaster Theological Seminary without the burden of financial stress. As a second-year Divinity student, I enjoy my classes, worshiping, interacting, and learning from my professors and classmates. At the end of this school year, I will travel to the Mexican border with my cohort as part of our Cross-Cultural experience. I get to have all these experiences because of your support. For that, I am truly grateful. In the future, I plan to use my degree to help others journey in their faith through music and ministry.

With great thanks,
Jenna Duranko

Thank you from Record Street Home

On Behalf of Record Street Home, I want to thank you and your carolers for a wonderful, inclusive presentation on December 20. I guarantee a great time was had by all who attended.

I look forward to the possibility of a future collaboration with your group.

Best Wishes for a happy, healthy 2024.

Tracy McGuire,
Director of Resident Services, Record Street Home



Dear Leaders and Members of ERUCC,
Thank you for your generous donation of \$950 on November 28, 2023, to Steadfast, Standing Firm Against Youth Homelessness.

Your partnership with our organization is so appreciated and welcomed. ERUCC is very dear to my heart. Your support helps to keep our doors open to provide safe, stable housing, life skills, and job skills training, and other opportunities for the male youths who have made our house their home.

Thank you for your love, your support, and for all you do in our community.

Warmly,
Cindy Morgan, Executive Director



THE RELIGIOUS COALITION

For Emergency Human Needs

We want to express our heartfelt gratitude for your generous donation of \$21,914.00 made on 12/15/2023. With your investment, we can take significant steps towards addressing homelessness and poverty in our community. Your support provides shelter and essential tools to help our fellow citizens achieve self-sufficiency and regain their footing in society.

Your kindness and generosity have a remarkable impact on the lives of those we serve, providing comfort and relief in times of crisis.

Our organization offers various services that aim to support those in need, including:

- The Alan P. Linton, Jr. Emergency Shelter, and the Emergency Family Shelter
- Financial assistance for security deposits, emergency rental assistance, and utilities
- Emergency Financial Assistance for prescription assistance for life-sustaining medication and dental procedures
- Case Management Services, which connect clients to all eligible resources and services

Thank you again for your kindness, generosity, and support.

Meg Kula, Director of Philanthropy

Children, Youth *and* Family Ministry

Junior Church

is a space where children ages 5-5th grade participate in creative spiritual formation activities that explore Biblical and theological themes, all while creating friendships, a sense of belonging as a part of our church community, and a love for Jesus set in an intentionally fun and engaging environment. Junior church meets most Sundays, excluding the 1st Sunday of the Month and other Sundays when we encourage families to join in worship together.

FEBRUARY 11 string hearts

Discuss about love, who you love, who loves you, God's love for everyone, and different love languages.

FEBRUARY 18 making foam sandals

Discuss about stepping into other people's shoes or going on a journey using scripture passages Mark 12: 21 and Matthew 37:37-39

FEBRUARY 25 creation notice board

**Learn about the organizations that help care for our planet.
We'll use scripture passage Psalm 8.**

Thank you to the youth and adults who have assisted with the Junior Church and for helping our children have a sense of belonging to the church community.

KidVentures *Elementary-age children*

Snow Tubing ~ Sunday, February 4

Meet at 4:30 PM at Snow Riders just off 340 in West Virginia, headed towards Harpers Ferry. This is a partnership with Harpers Ferry River Riders. Our meetup time allows us to tube from 5-6:30 PM. Hot chocolate and small snacks are available for purchase from a food truck. Parents who want to come and watch can also sit by a campfire at the top of the hill. Cost \$20.

Splatter Art! ~ Friday, March 1

Meet at Dream Free Art (1341 Hughes Ford Rd, Frederick, MD 21701) to make splatter t-shirts! These will say ERUCC and then become your own original piece of art as you enter the splatter room and play with your creative senses to add color! Join the group for pizza as well. Our event will be 5-6 PM. Cost \$15 (Covers Splatter Paint, T-shirt, and Pizza)





God's Kids' Club

Pre-K - 5th Grade;
Youth helpers welcome

Monday, February 19

We will merge Mardi Gras fun with games centered around drama and acting, including making short video creations to play at the end of the day. We'll also take part in acolyte and scripture reading practice as we talk about parts of worship. Each person will have a chance to carry the light. In addition to making videos, we may bake some New Orleans favorite pastries, too!

Save the Dates for Parish Life Events

- Sunday, March 10 *Chili Cook-off* during Fellowship Sunday
- Saturday, April 13 *Church Workday*, including lunch 
- Saturday, May 4 *Everybody's Birthday*, 5-7PM
- June 7-9 *Family Camp Weekend!* Location TBD 
- Sunday, June 30 *Church Picnic* with our German guests, details TBD

YOUTH GROUP

Middle and High School-age youth

Sub Sandwich Making

February 10, 1-3 PM

You've sold the products, now come help get them ready!



Snow Tubing

February 11, 2-4 PM

Youth Group Meeting

February 25, 5 - 7 PM

We'll discuss Caring for God's Creation by looking at ageism, racism, and poverty relating to our trip to Franklinton Center at Bricks. We'll plan our work with Chris Spear and Ben to prepare a dinner with homeless youth (SHIP) and/or adults. We held this date for the meal, and while that will come in the future, tonight, we will make a snack of our own and either cook it on the fire or in the oven, depending on the weather. Look for a Signup Genius to choose a food item to bring!

Calendar Reminders:

- April 3-6, Bethany Beach Youth Retreat
Cost \$25
- April 28, Youth Sunday

Youth Group **SUB SALE**



The infamous ERUCC Youth Group Sub Sale is underway! This special fundraising event is a long-time favorite. Our ERUCC Youth Group will lovingly make these delicious 8" submarine sandwiches just in time for the Super Bowl!

Proceeds from this fundraiser will help offset costs for the youth group's planned mission and service-related projects throughout the year.

Sandwiches will be available for pick up on Saturday, February 10, at 3 PM or Sunday, February 11, after each worship service.

Our youth will have paper order forms which may be used to place your order or you may do so online using the digital form available here:



Scan me

**Sandwiches are \$9.00 each
and orders are due by
FEBRUARY 4, 2024!**

*The Youth Group thanks you for
your continued support!*

"YOUNGER" ADULTS *Post-high school to ~35 years old*

Dinner

Friday, February 9, 5:30 PM

Reach out to Pastor Kirstin to be included in the invitation! We hope to help some of our young adults make connections with others who may be sharing similar life stages and circumstances in ways that strengthen their sense of community and ability to support one another.



tacklehunger.org

SOUPER BOWL OF CARING

Sunday, February 11

ERUCC Youth will join a nationwide youth movement to collect resources to tackle hunger on Sunday, February 11. Our youth will collect monetary gifts in big soup pots following worship.

Share in God's love for our neighbors in need and give generously on Souper Bowl Sunday. All monetary gifts and food donations collected will go directly to the Frederick Food Bank, operated by the Frederick Community Action Agency.



Visit from our German Partners in June/July 2024!

Our friends from Germany will be with us from June 23 – July 6, and you are invited to participate in various ways.

First, we invite youth and young adults to join us in Bethany Beach for a beach day, campfire, kayaking, and more! We will depart Tuesday, June 25, and return Saturday, June 29. Adults may also sign up, with priority given to parents of youth or adults who have already undergone the Safe Sanctuary training. We have 20 available spots.

Second, we plan to visit the White House and other places in DC on Friday, July 5. Please sign up if you are interested so we can share your name with David Trone's office as a part of the group request.

Third, we are looking for commitments to be a host family. We will hold another information session on Sunday, February 25, after our 10:30 AM worship service. Please let Marc Kline or Pastor Kirstin know if you can host and how many people you can accommodate.

If you cannot host this time, there are other ways you can help! We will need drivers, meal hosts/helpers, and more!

ERUCC Hosting Essentials

You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.
Leviticus 19:34

Offering a place to sleep, eat, and have conversation is a great way to offer hospitality to another. Below are some highlights and best practices for an enjoyable experience for you and your guests.

Room/Board and Transportation:

- Provide separate rooms where possible or separate beds if sharing a room.
- Offer shampoo, soap, and other toiletries they may need. Provide clean towels and wash clothes.
- Clean out closet space so your guests have room to hang clothes or store luggage.
- Food and drinks will be provided by the host family including a packed lunch on some day trips unless other arrangements are made (e.g. group dinners at church).
- Provide transportation to and from church or meeting places unless prior arrangements are made.

Family Days:

For most of their stay, your guest(s) will be attending activities and programs organized by the planning team, but there are some days and partial days for the host family to spend with their guests. You do not need to set up expensive days out or long trips. Your hosting time could be as simple as shopping at the local mall, hiking in a nearby local, state, or federal park, or simply touring around Frederick County. Your guest(s) may need rest time, too, so plan accordingly and ask what they may want to do for the day. Simply hanging around the house, taking a walk or bike ride together, or participating in your family routines such as visiting family, a bowling night, etc. are all great options!

Other best practices:

- Traditionally, a host family will provide a small gift for their guests, such as a local favorite food, spice or candy or an item with Maryland or Frederick County logos like shirts, coffee mugs, socks, hats etc.
- Language barriers can exist, but don't be afraid to try! Google Translate is an excellent tool for those hard-to-translate words or phrases.

ERUCC Congregational Meeting

December 10, 2023

1. Consecration Sunday Results as of December 10

- a. Stewardship Generosity Committee member Tyler York reported:
 - i. 93 households or individuals completed Estimate of Giving cards
 - ii. 61 households or individuals increased their financial commitment above last year
 - iii. The total anticipated income from all sources for our general operating for the next twelve months is \$783,793, a 6.4% increase in anticipated giving above last year

2. Mission Spending Plan

- a. 2023 Mission Spending YTD
 - i. Finance Chair Will Duncan reported:

2023 Year to Date Income Spending Plan vs. Actuals

	Actual	Budget	Over (Under)
Offering	\$487,216	\$552,400	\$(65,184)
Plate	\$1,092	\$2,000	\$(908)
Designated Funds	\$92,805	\$67,000	\$25,805
Facility Rentals	\$20,359	\$22,000	\$(1,641)
Release from Restrictions (Investments)	\$187,927	\$226,940	\$(39,013)
Missions (direct)	\$10,127	\$0	\$10,127
Direct support of specific projects	\$59,702	\$0	\$59,702
Brouillet Estate	\$100,435	\$0	\$100,435
Misc. & Uncategorized income	\$9,907	\$0	\$9,907
Totals	\$969,570	\$870,340	\$99,230
Totals (without Brouillet Estate)	\$869,135	\$870,340	\$(1,205)

Year to Date as of 12/07/2023

Year to Date Expenses Budget vs Actuals

	Actual	Budget	Over (Under)
Total Expenses (Salaries & Benefits, Mission, Christian Ed, Worship, Property, Mortgage etc.)	\$979,246	\$1,025,589	\$(46,343)

Net Income (Loss)

	Actual	Budget	Over (Under)
	\$(9,676)	\$(155,249)	\$(145,573)

Year to Date as of 12/07/2023

- a. 2024 Mission Spending Proposal
 - i. Finance Chair Will Duncal reported:

2024 Operating Fund		
Income	Comments	Amounts
Envelopes and offerings	Matches 2023	\$552,400
Plate	Projected for 2024	\$1,200
Building Use	Loss of Chapel rentals & fewer Community room events	\$10,000
<i>Offerings & Misc. Income Total</i>		\$563,400
Designated & Direct Income	Mortgage Assistance + Specific/direct donations	\$67,560
Release from Restrictions (Investment Income)	FY 2023= \$226,940	\$215,823
Total Income		\$846,983
Expense	Comments	Amounts
Committee budgets, mortgage payments, salaries, .etc.	Excludes Trinity Chapel project	\$998,643
Net Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	FY 2023 = \$(155,249)	\$(151,660)

- ii. Finance Committee will provide quarterly reports to the congregation. We will continue to seek funds for paying down the Fisher Fund loan, paying down the mortgage, and other special projects. As a congregation we should reflect on increasing our estimate of giving for FY 2024 as well to cover our mission spending goals.
- iii. The Finance Committee approved and recommended this plan. There was no discussion. The congregational vote was unanimous in favor.

3. 1848 Sanctuary Changes

- a. Peter Brehm reported that two pews in the front right of the 1848 Sanctuary were removed and stored in the sanctuary balcony for at least Advent and into the new year in order to accommodate several objectives:
 - i. Allowing the bell choir tables to remain in place, making use the bells easier since set up/ removal would not be required. Placing the tables in the sanctuary balcony is not an option because this space is not accessible (though might be if chair lifts were installed), and there is not enough space in the rear of the sanctuary under the balcony, which would also muffle the bell sounds if played under the balcony.
 - ii. Allowing bell choir practice to take place in the sanctuary, freeing up the Flora Room for meetings by ERUCC and non-ERUCC groups. Meeting space is at a premium after Sunday School classes moved to the 1848 Church building.
 - iii. Maintain space for “wobble room” for children who are attending 10:30 services that is able to be seen by parents. Placing this area in the rear of church would not allow parents to see their children.

4. Historic Clock Tower and Congregation Vote

- a. Owen York and Peter Brehm reviewed this project's history and current state.
- b. The quoted costs of \$1.3 million to address dry rot / structural damage to the clock tower.
- c. ERUCC has engaged the City and National Park service for support, including looking at a CDBG.
- d. The Ausherman Foundation has granted \$50K for the last \$50K being spent on this project.
- e. ERUCC will explore other grants, including revisiting Preservation Maryland and MHT grant opportunities.
- f. ERUCC will, if the congregation agrees to retain the structure, transfer \$25K in Delaplaine grant for the clock tower project to a CFFC fund devoted to tower preservation.
- g. ERUCC met with Historic Frederick to begin exploring interest by that organization in using all or part of the building for Heritage Frederick purposes. Initial meetings were very positive though no agreements have been proposed or made.
- h. If ERUCC retains the clock tower, it was noted that ~ \$450K has been raised (including the Brouillet Estate) to cover the 1/3 down payment but that we need to raise or borrow the balance. David Cooney agreed to head up preservation efforts.
- i. The congregation was presented with a choice to vote on, which included:
 - i. Sell Clock Tower as is
 - ii. Begin clock tower repairs, start fund raising, and in parallel develop a business plan regarding Trinity Chapel's internal configuration and longer term maintenance funding. Selling the building remain on the table after this analysis is undertaken.
- j. Carolyn Roberts made a motion to retain the Chapel. Rob Peters seconded this. During discussion, and after ballots were distributed, Michelle Beadle noted the ballot did not reflect the motion. Jack Day amended the motion to reflect the ballot. Carolyn Roberts agreed to this amendment.
- k. The congregation marked ballots. Tallied results were:
 - i. Approval to begin repairs/raise funds/undertake a business plan: 63
 - ii. Approval to sell the building as is: 4
 - iii. Abstain: 4

5. Columbarium

- a. Glenn Wallace Weitz updated the congregation on the columbarium, noting that:
 - i. City approval for the structure has been secured
 - ii. Construction plans are being bid out
 - iii. Anyone interested in a niche should make the commitment soon since the building cannot move forward is there not sufficient interest.

6. The meeting was adjourned

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

SUNDAY MORNING

ERUCC prefers not to cancel worship services because of the weather. We advise you to use your own good judgment about whether conditions where you live are too treacherous for you to make it to services safely.

If conditions are such that the ERUCC needs to cancel services, we will make that decision no less than one and a half hours ahead of the time each worship service begins. Activities such as children and adult Christian Education classes and Nursery Care may be cancelled even if worship services continue as scheduled.

Notification: If services are cancelled, we notify people via email, our Facebook page(s) and the website at www.erucc.org

WEEKDAYS AND SATURDAYS

Church classes, groups, meetings, and other activities may be canceled or held virtually when possible and appropriate if weather conditions are hazardous or are predicted to become hazardous. If you have a question about whether or not your specific event is cancelled, please contact the coordinator/leader of the event.

The church office is generally governed by the Frederick County Public Schools (FCPS) inclement weather plan. In the event inclement weather requires FCPS to close, delay opening, or dismiss early, the church office will similarly delay opening or be closed and ERUCC activities will also be cancelled or may be held virtually when possible and appropriate.

Notification: If the church office is closed or will delay opening, we will post a notification on our Facebook page(s) and the website at www.erucc.org.

ARCHITECTURE AS MISSION



The steeple atop Trinity Chapel is in dire need of repair. It has been well-maintained over the years, with needed repairs made along the way, but age always eventually has its way — and now more significant repairs are necessary. This is no small matter. While final pricing is still being secured, we know it will cost more than one million

dollars to return the structure to a stable condition. At the December 10 annual meeting, the congregation voted to move ahead with the project while simultaneously determining how we will use the building. Options range from remodeling for new and creative ministries and partnerships, to using it essentially as we have been using it or, if unable to fund it, to sell it to “save” it. Decisions about what options to pursue await another congregational meeting when more detailed information is available.

Two questions have informed the discussion about next steps. Is investing in such a major repair good stewardship of the church’s resources? Is Trinity Chapel integral to our mission? These are good questions to ponder. Indeed, stewardship and mission questions are good guides for all aspects of a church’s life and ministry. I want to reflect a bit on the mission question in this article.

When I think mission, I tend to think in terms of function — how is the building being used? Past usages do match our mission. Trinity Chapel has served as home for several twelve-step programs and has provided worship space for two congregations needing a place to worship. This matches our calling to provide a safe gathering place for those in our community. Additionally, it provides space for Christian education, spiritual development, and youth ministry — also all core to our purpose.

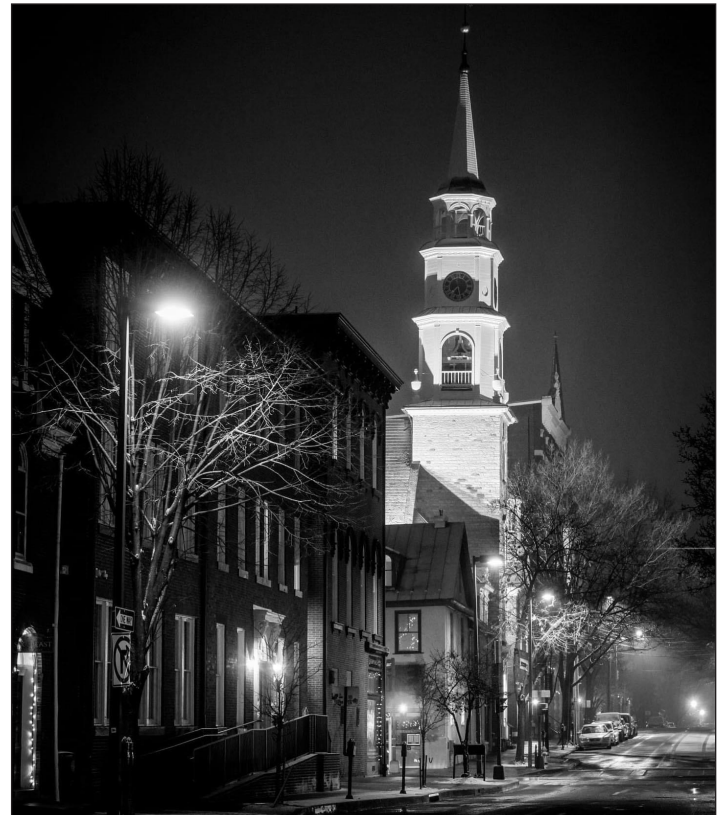
Of course, none of these functions require a steeple. Perhaps removing the steeple and capping off the roof would be a better stewardship option, while still providing for mission opportunities. Ultimately, the cost may prove not to be much different, since the same level of expen-

sive scaffolding would be needed (plus the costs of removal and capping.) Still, it is an option to explore. After all, we want to be responsive to God’s calling AND be good stewards of our resources. Why spend a substantial sum repairing a steeple that is not needed to meet our mission?

Unless it is needed. While walking along the street and gazing at the steeple, it occurred to me that the steeple may, in fact, contribute to the mission in nonfunctional ways. So, I did some reading about church steeples and why they are so pervasive worldwide. Here are some things that jumped out for me.

Steeple is symbolic. They suggest a divine presence, pointing toward the heavens, symbolizing a connection between earthly existence and the celestial realm. In addition, the verticality of steeples helps to create a sense of grandeur. In a nitpicking world, grandeur inspires our souls. Walk through any of the great cathedrals, indisputably impractical buildings, and you will feel your soul tingling. Grandeur also reminds us that God is God, and we are not. The value of grandeur should not be discounted.

I liked a quotation from urban planner Samuel Johnson. “Church steeples offer a comforting reference point in an ever-changing urban landscape, making cities feel familiar and connected to history.” The Whittier poem immortalizing the clustered spires of Frederick comes to



mind. There is a comforting sense of permanence in an other-wise changing landscape. If our steeple brings comfort to people — even subconsciously — then architecture becomes an act of grace.

Philip Kosloski, writing for the Roman Catholic publication *Aleteia*, adds this. “Steeple were also used to remind a local community to remain focused on God. Other secular buildings were usually built lower than the church steeple, making the local church the highest and most important building of the town. You could not go anywhere in town without seeing the steeple and as a result be reminded about your duty to God.” Duty is literally a four-letter word and, for many, a four-letter word in the pejorative sense. Maybe, for better or worse, it is now an old-fashioned word. Nevertheless, at ERUCC we talk about it being our responsibility as believers to speak out against injustice, and to welcome the stranger and care for the downtrodden. It is part of our calling, our mission, our duty, if you will. We will never know how many people looking at our steeple have been moved in some small way to consider their responsibility to God; to be less self-centered and more God-centered. Perhaps the steeple has served as an invitation to visit a church and check in with God. If that is true, then the steeple is evangelistic.

The last bit that caught my attention was an observation by Christopher Garon that steeples are prominent focal points helping persons to orient themselves. Garon was speaking geographically. The preacher in me interpreted his observation theologically. We know what it is to be disoriented geographically and how a prominent landmark can help us to get our bearings. We can also be disoriented in life. Damaged relationships, unfulfilling work, family dysfunction, economic challenges, political unrest,

poor health, loneliness and so much more can leave us totally confused about where we are, which direction we need to go, and which path to take. Is it possible that the grandeur of a steeple, the comfort of a reference to the permanent, the prominence of the highest point, can be the metaphorical map, the metaphorical north star, the metaphorical beacon that enables us to get our bearings, to know that the path to take is the path that leads to God with the steeple showing the way? If so, then the steeple does help us to fulfill our mission. Its role is not functional. It is ethereal. It is mission as architecture and architecture as mission.

The future of Trinity Chapel is not for me to decide. That decision belongs to the congregation. What I do know is that it is not cost-free to repair and use it. The costs are high. Steps have already been taken, and more are to come, seeking help from the community at large. This is a project that belongs to more than just us. Ultimately, though, it is our responsibility. Many of you have already contributed gifts to help with this project. In the coming months, you will be asked again to help. Some large, lead gifts are essential. Pray about whether you are one of those lead donors. Know this: Those outside of the church will want to know what those of us inside the church are willing to do before they commit their resources.

The steeple as we know it has watched over Frederick since 1807, silently contributing to the mission of the church. Imagine if we enable the steeple to keep watch for another 200 years.

Rev. David Cooney, Ph.D.



Monday, February 19
The ERUCC Office will be closed in observance of President's Day



If you are interested in sponsoring the yellow rose, please contact the church office at (301) 662-2762 or erucc@erucc.org.



Come see our ice sculpture!

FIRE IN ICE
Saturday, February 3
11AM-9PM

TRINITY CHAPEL STEEPLE
FREDERICK'S FIRST SPIRE

EVANGELICAL REFORMED UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

We were “floored” at Franklinton Center 2024

These are the words that Pastor Kirstin printed on small pieces of vinyl flooring scraps for each Franklinton Center at Bricks work trip participant. At first glance, it is an obvious ribbing about how much flooring we could put in place at the center this year (we replaced the flooring in two hallways and the new director’s office). It was the task that we had to come back to most often. It is also something that each person learned, that each person helped to put into place, so it connected us as a collective group, as a body.

However, the idea of “being floored” has many layers, figuratively, not literally.

Being “floored” carries the essence of being awed or astonished. And things about the trip this year were awesome and astonishing.

Our group of youth was awesome! They found each other during downtime and consistently played together. The group looked out for each other, welcomed one another, organized themselves, and cheered for each other! They were also incredibly welcoming to the two young grandchildren of Wayne White, who, as the Facility Manager, had given direction to our work projects and cooked dinner on Sunday night. Yes, there were a few small bumps in navigating a comment or two to ensure that feelings were okay, but our group did this work

easily and not with grudges. They might be most proud of seeing their projects completed and the frying pan toss awards, but I am proud of the Christian love they presented each other day in and day out.

Awe! We were also in awe of our welcome! Yes, we have heard “Welcome Home!” before as we entered the administration center or the dining hall at Franklinton Center, but this year, a couple of things added to that. We were first welcomed by Minnie White, who organized our reservation, and by Rev. Dr. Doug Wooten, who was in his first weeks as the new executive director and one of the new members of the board of directors. Rev. Mother Yvonne Delk, another board member and one of the Board of Elders who pray deeply for the site and the threads that weave through the past and through the present, from the ancestors to those yet to come, also welcomed us. She welcomed each person by name, which was incredibly intentional in its purpose to be connective, welcoming us in a way that says we are both here now and we are already here. As a congregation and as individual beloveds, we are welcomed home. We are a part of not only the floor but of the grounds, of the spirit, and of the story.

We walked the floor...we learned about the rhythm and

continued on next page



purpose of the Center from a different voice this year, in a different way through Mother Yvonne's encouraging and challenging interactive discussion as she shared how for her Franklinton Center at Bricks helped to do the work that Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. envisioned. As a young African American child, she knew at home there were limitations, there were laws and expectations of what she could and couldn't do, who she could and couldn't be. As a summer camper at the Center, she learned a different narrative. This is a narrative of love, respect, judging character and content, and hope. It is the very community that breathed life into her and made her who she is today. She encouraged us to change the narrative, to live into justice, kindness, mercy, and love! She gave us a personal example of the basic purpose of the Center and invited us to continue doing the same work as people who matter, whose faith matters, whose family matters, to help others know that they matter too.

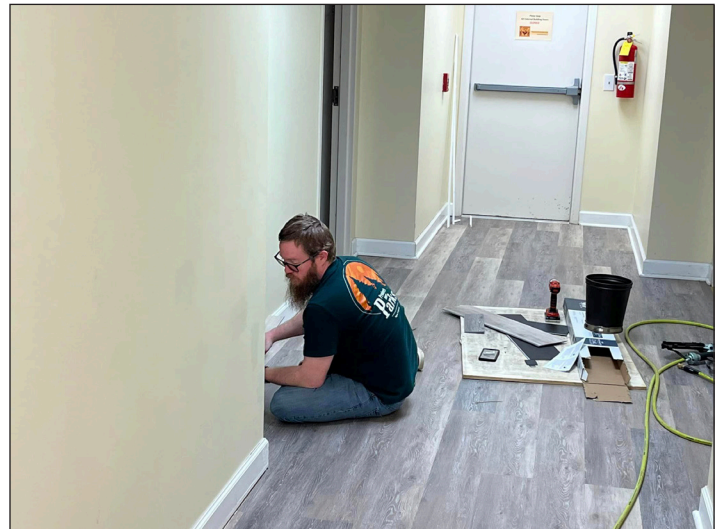
We were walking with the new director and new board

from the ground up! As we continued our weekend, it was clear that new things were afoot for the Board of Directors. Their four pillars program continued to give them a living legacy in their community and others far from there regionally. And yet, there was investment in their meetings with late hours and with shared visions. They still had time to share a dinner and to meet with many of our group as well as to give us a very special certificate of thanks from Board Chair Rev. Henry Simmons, stating that we are the longest connected group, doing great service with great love. We are excited for Dr. Wooten and the board and can't wait to see where God leads next!

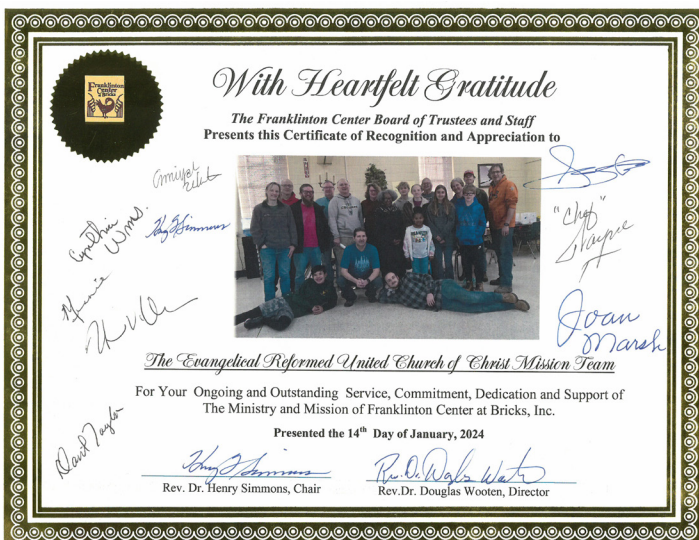
And so, feeling floored is not just a simple, funny thing. It is deep. It is soulful. And it is good. Thank you all for the investments that you have made since 2004, when we first began this journey together. Thank you for your prayers and your investments in our young people's ministry and the work and mission of Franklinton Center at Bricks.



Wes Bowen and Jen Powell



Matt Pomeroy



Jeff Schaeberle

Generosity Multiplied

Poverty, homelessness, and despair are all around us. So, too, are beauty, prosperity, and hope. This was clear as I traveled to San Francisco this week for a work trip. Unfortunately, the state of downtown San Francisco is every bit as tough as it looks on the news. The contrast is inescapable — outside a Tiffany store is a homeless encampment. People struggling with addiction pass businessmen and women in suits on the sidewalk. This contrast makes it hard to ignore the inequalities we have grown so accustomed to.

What are we to do amid all this suffering? There are no easy solutions. The problems of San Francisco — and Chicago, New York, Baltimore, and yes, even Frederick — are too big for any “silver bullet” solution. Changing cities requires changing people’s hearts and lives, offering a hand-up and sustained support, especially for those who may never fully recover. It is too much for any single institution, even one as large and mighty as the Government. But there is good news. We serve a God of hope, love, and peace — one who can take a few loaves and fish and feed thousands.

This is where the church comes in, doing God’s work here on earth. When we support the church, we may not always know where every dollar goes, but we know that God will honor and multiply the sacrifice.

Poverty will always be with us, but there is hope. I’m grateful to be a part of a church that does so much good. This week, I pray that God will use all of our resources in ways we cannot even imagine. For as Jesus said, *“With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”*

Justin Coen,
Stewardship / Generosity Committee member



Sunday Morning Schedule

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



**Evangelical Reformed
United Church of Christ**
15 West Church Street
Frederick, MD 21701

301-662-2762
www.erucc.org

ERUCC CHURCH STAFF

The Rev. Dr. Marvin L. Morgan ~ *Intentional Interim Senior Pastor* ~ mmorgan@erucc.org

The Rev. Kirstin Shrom-Rhoads ~ *Associate for Faith Formation and Parish Life* ~ ksrhoads@erucc.org

Alison E. Shafer ~ *Director of Music* ~ alisonshafermusic@yahoo.com

Tyler L. York ~ *Office Administrator* ~ tyork@erucc.org

Jaci Clayton ~ *Facilities Manager* ~ jclayton@erucc.org

Tricia Coffey ~ *Head Chimer & Children & Youth Choir Director* ~ trishcoffey1195@gmail.com

Kelly Esslinger ~ *Assistant Director for Bell Choirs & Children's Music* ~ kellbell.erucc@gmail.com

Jenna Duranko ~ *Social Media Assistant* ~ plutojd@msn.com

Ashley Murphy ~ *Nursery Attendant*

Angela Brittain ~ *Designer, Trinity Chimes* ~ angela3cats@yahoo.com

John Shillingburg ~ *Proofreader, Trinity Chimes* ~ jdshilli@gmail.com

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

The Rev. Frederick Wenner ~ *Pastor Emeritus*