



Make Ready

Welcome to Evangelical Reformed United Church of Christ

Thank you for worshiping with us at Evangelical Reformed United Church of Christ (ERUCC) this morning. We extend a special welcome to our guests.

If you are a guest, please visit us at the Welcome Table in the sanctuary lobby. We would love to meet and learn more about you and are available to answer your questions about ERUCC. Please also feel free to reach out to someone sitting near you and ask them questions about the service or church. We encourage you to join us for in the Community Room for Fellowship after the worship service for casual conversation and connection over light refreshments.

ERUCC is an Open and Affirming Church of the United Church of Christ. We welcome into the full life and ministry persons of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions.

For Children: We have trained nursery staff for ages 0-4. A deacon or greeter can guide you to the nursery. 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 and a children's table is available for quiet activities at the front of the sanctuary.

We 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.

Restrooms, accessible and equipped with changing stations, are located on the 2nd floor, below the sanctuary, and on the 1st floor, outside the Community Room. Single-occupant, all-gender, accessible restrooms are located outside the North and Flora Rooms on the 2nd floor.

There is more information about our church in this bulletin and on our website: www.erucc.org.

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.

15 WEST CHURCH STREET, FREDERICK, MD 21701
(301) 662-2762 • erucc@erucc.org • www.erucc.org



EVANGELICAL REFORMED
United Church of Christ
— An Open and Affirming Congregation —



December 8, 2024

Second Sunday of Advent

10:30 AM



WE CAN'T GO ALONE

The numbered hymns are from
The New Century Hymnal
*All who are able may stand

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Kirstin Shrom-Rhoads

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

CHORAL PRELUDE

You'll Come

Spirit
— B. Fraser

THRESHOLD MOMENT

When Will You Be Back?

Rebecca Shillingburg
— Rev. Sarah Speed

Yesterday I visited an old man in the hospital.
I was not the only one. We talked on the elevator ride down—
Has he gained any weight? Will he stay in that room?
Does he like the food? Has he called?
All the man wanted to know was, *When will you be back?*

We ask that question in a thousand different ways
every single day,
our hearts leaning over themselves,
bending to get closer to love.
We say, *Text me when you're home.*
Call me when you're free.
One more kiss!
I love you all the time.
When will you be back?
What we really mean is—
I can't go through life alone.
Please don't let me go through life alone.

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

In a world that is lonely,
we will save a seat for you.

In a world that is anxious,
we will light candles against the gloom.

In a world that is weary,
we will sing songs of joy and truth.

I am not alone.

We are not alone.

For here in this place, God is weaving us together.

Light the candles! Sing with joy!

We are a three-cord strand, not easily broken.

***OPENING PRAYER**

Holy God, the words of this world whip around us like a mighty wind. We are caught up in news reports, in text messages, in emails and notifications. We are drowning in updates from the media, caught off guard by the constant hum of it all. But here on this bright morning we remember: you too are speaking. Still the voices around us. Calm our minds and center our hearts so that we can hear your words above the wind. We are leaning closer. We are at the edge of our chairs. We are beginning again. Speak to us, as only you can. Amen.

***LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE OF PEACE**

Emi, Zaydan

In a weary and worn world, how do we begin again?

Where do we start?

Let us begin together.

Let us begin arm in arm.

**Let us begin by holding each other up,
instead of tearing each other down.**

Let us begin with words of peace b .

Yes, let us begin with peace.

Today we light the candles of hope and peace.

May these lights remind us of what could be.

May these lights mark a new beginning.

May peace flow like a river, and may it start with us.

Arm in arm, hand in hand, side by side. May we begin again.

Amen.

***OPENING HYMN**

Give Us Your Peace

– J. Manibusan

**Refrain: Give us your peace, O God;
give us your peace, your peace.
Give us your peace, O God;
give us your peace, your peace.**

***CALL TO CONFESSION**

Family of faith, one of the beautiful things about the prayer of confession is it is often a prayer we say together. There are times when we close our eyes, bow our heads, and exchange private words with our Creator. But there are other times when praying out loud as a community allows us to right our relationship with God and with one another as well.

This is one of those moments.

So as a community, please join me in our prayer of confession.

Join me in speaking the truth of our lives. Join me in practicing grace.

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

I have tried to make my own way.

I have tried to lace my own shoes, to build my own house, to kindle my own faith. I have said a thousand times, “turn back,” as if I am fine on my own.

But the days are long and I am forgetful.

I need your help. Can you remind me?

We will remind you of this everlasting truth:

You are not alone.

Where you go, God goes.

You are held in grace.

Trust in this good news.

Thanks be to God! I remember. I believe.

Now we need your help.

We, too, have tried to make our own way.

We have tried to lace our own shoes, to build our own houses, to kindle our own faiths.

We have said a thousand times, “turn back,” as if we are fine on our own.

But the days are long and we are forgetful.

We need your help. Can you remind us?

I will remind you of this everlasting truth:
You are not alone.
Where you go, God goes.
You are held in grace.
Trust in this good news.

**Thanks be to God! We remember. We believe.
Alleluia! Amen.**

ANTHEM

Come on Ring Those Bells

Children's Music and Movement
– A. Culverwell

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.
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

*Children aged 5 through 5th grade who wish to participate in **Junior Church** may meet leaders
at the back of the sanctuary and proceed to the Thomas Room.*

*Youth participating in the **Young Spirit Choir** are dismissed at this time for an additional
rehearsal in the Marj Menchey Berkheimer Music Suite.*

Children and Youth will return to their families in worship by 11:30 AM.

THE SCRIPTURES

Rebecca Shillingburg

Ruth 1 OT page 241
Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 OT page 616

Reader: May God bless the reading of this word.

All: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

Rev. Dr. Marvin L. Morgan

MORNING PRAYERS

– RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS –

INVITATION

Pastor: We invite to come forward those who wish to affirm their baptism by uniting with us in this household of faith.

Friends in Christ, we all are received into the church through the sacrament of baptism. These people have found nurture and support in the midst of the family of Christ. Through prayer and study they have been led by the Holy Spirit to affirm their baptism and to claim in our presence their covenantal relationship with Christ and the members of the church. They are here for service to Jesus Christ, using the gifts which the Holy Spirit bestows.

SENTENCES

Pastor: Hear the words of Jesus: I am the vine, you are the branches. Anyone who abides in me, and I in that person, is the one who bears much fruit. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

QUESTIONS OF THE CANDIDATES

Pastor: *Name(s)*, do you desire to affirm your baptism into the faith and family of Jesus Christ?

Candidates: I do.

Pastor: Do you renounce the powers of evil and desire the freedom of new life in Christ?

Candidates: I do.

Pastor: Do you profess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior?

Candidates: I do.

Pastor: Do you promise, by the grace of God, to be Christ's disciple, to follow in the way of our Savior, to resist oppression and evil, to show love and justice, and to witness to the work and word of Jesus Christ as best you are able?

Candidates: I promise, with the help of God.

Pastor: Do you promise, according to the grace given you, to grow in the Christian faith and to be a faithful member of the church of Jesus Christ, celebrating Christ's presence and furthering Christ's mission in all the world?

Candidates: I promise, with the help of God.

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

Pastor: Let us unite with the church in all times and places in confessing our faith in the triune God.

Do you believe in God?

People: I believe in God.

Pastor: Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

People: I believe in Jesus Christ.

Pastor: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

People: I believe in the Holy Spirit.

The congregation may be seated.

ADDRESS

Pastor: By your baptism you were made one with us in the body of Christ, the church. Today, we rejoice in your pilgrimage of faith which has brought you to this time and place. We give thanks for every community of faith that has been your spiritual home, and we celebrate your presence *with us here at Evangelical Reformed United Church of Christ.*

QUESTION ABOUT PARTICIPATION

Pastor: Do you promise to participate in the life and mission of this family of God's people, sharing regularly in the worship of God and enlisting in the work of this local church as it serves this community and the world?

Candidates: I promise, with the help of God.

***WELCOME AND RECEPTION**

Leader: Evangelical Reformed United Church of Christ, let us express our welcome and affirm our mutual ministry in Christ.

People: We welcome you with joy in the common life of this church. We promise you our friendship and prayers as we share the hopes and labors of the church of Jesus Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit may we continue to grow together in God's knowledge and love and be witnesses of our risen Savior. Thanks be to God!

The congregation may be seated.

GREETING OF CHRISTIAN LOVE

Leader: In the name of Jesus Christ, and on behalf of Evangelical Reformed United Church of Christ, we extend to you the hand of Christian love, welcoming you into the company of this church.

PRAYER

Pastor: Let us pray.

Eternal God, we praise you for calling us to be your servant people and for gathering us into the body of Christ. We thank you for sending to us these believers that we may work together in serving the needs of others. Confirm in us the power of your covenant that we may live in your Spirit, share regularly in worship, and so love each other that we may have among us the same mind which was in Christ Jesus, to whom be all honor and glory.

All: Amen.

BENEDICTION

Pastor: Go in the peace of Christ.

All: Thanks be to God.

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

As we share in God's grace, we seek ways to share our gratitude with God and our neighbors. Through prayer and pondering, we discover new ways to give our offerings of talents, treasures, and time with a joyful spirit.

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 to our church's ministries and programs. We also use this time to ask God how we might use the gifts of our hands and hearts to share God's love. If you are visiting, there is no obligation to give a financial gift. We are just glad you are worshiping with us.

If you wish to give, you can give online at www.erucc.org, by placing your gift in the offering plates in the rear of the sanctuary before or after the service, or by scanning the QR code to give from your phone.



OFFERTORY

Light of the World

Spirit
– L. Daigin

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

God of All Joy, we give thanks each time we remember your gifts in our lives. Our gratitude extends to the ways we can use our gifts of time, talent, and treasures. May your boundless wisdom compel us to use our energies in ways that will share the most love in our world. Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN**

Soon and Very Soon

– A. Crouch

**Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,
Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,
Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,
Hallelujah, Hallelujah, we are goin' to see the King!**

**No more cryin' there we are goin' to see the King,
No more cryin' there we are goin' to see the King,
No more cryin' there we are goin' to see the King,
Hallelujah, Hallelujah, we are goin' to see the King!**

**No more dyin' there we are goin' to see the King,
No more dyin' there we are goin' to see the King,
No more dyin' there we are goin' to see the King,
Hallelujah, Hallelujah, we are goin' to see the King!**

**Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,
Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,
Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,
Hallelujah, Hallelujah, we're are goin' to see the King!
Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah.**

***BENEDICTION**

As you leave this place,
may you have the wisdom to lean on one another.
May you have the courage to hold onto hope,
the compassion to do the good that is yours to do,
and the confidence to trust that God sees you as a blessing.
For in a world full of dead ends,
Advent invites us to begin again.
Start here. Start now.
Start with love and begin again.
In the name of Christ, our new beginning, go in peace. **Amen.**

POSTLUDE *Please remain seated*



We thank Laura Walling and Joe Baker for sharing their gifts with us in worship today!

Worship Notes: Liturgy by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org. Offering prayers written by the Rev. Michelle L. Torigian, senior pastor of St. Paul United Church of Christ, Belleville, Illinois.

Please join us for **Fellowship** with light refreshments and time for casual conversation after worship in our Community Room (1st Floor).

The flowers on the altar are in memory of loved ones by John Stush and Audrey Rayfield.

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

Attendance Last Sunday: 11 at 8:30 AM, 135 at 10:30 AM, and 42 online (11/24: 45 online)



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

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

Serving Today: December 8

Deacons: Robin A. Brady-Slifer
Robin L. Brady-Slifer
Elder: Ave Barr
Scripture Reader: Nancy Jones
Acolyte: Emi
Greeters: Cathie Duncan, Susan Kulp
Robin Cooney, David Cooney
Welcome Table: David Howard, Sue Pinner
Lobby Attendant: Rob Smith
Audio/Visual: Larry Martin, Jeff Baker
Jeff Schaeberle
Nursery: Maria Lagrotteria
Fellowship: Ave Barr, Cliff Bar, Jen Powell
Joan Maples, Allen Maples
Pat Condo, Bud Rossig

Serving Next Week: December 15

Harrison Fisher, Kyle Miller
Jeanellen Kallevang
Tyler L. York
Laurel
Robert Manthey, Nancy Manthey
Niel Jefferson, Kathleen Jefferson
Jeanellen Kallevang
Andrew Beadle
Rodney Martin, Jeff Schaeberle
Kelly Esslinger
Stephanie Fisher, Kate Fromknecht
Karen Justice, Marj Berkheimer
Peter Brehm, Felecia Bishop
Rob McGuire, Alex Martinez

Next Sunday: December 15 – Third Sunday of Advent

Do the Good That is Yours to Do

Isaiah 58:9b-12 | Luke 3:7-16

As John the Baptist teaches about bearing good fruit, the crowds, tax collectors, and soldiers ask him, “What, then, should we do?” His answer to each group is slightly different but ultimately the same: “Do the good that is yours to do.” We can each bear good fruit through acts of justice and righteousness. We can all be what Isaiah calls “repairers of the breach” by satisfying the needs of the afflicted.

The Rev. Kirstin Shrom-Rhoads will be preaching. The Senior Choir will be sharing a cantata this morning and Young Spirit will share special music.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PASTORAL CARE

Evangelical Reformed UCC wants to be there for you when you're experiencing an illness, hospitalization, or other life event for which you, or someone you love, may need a visit.

Members who are in nursing homes and those who currently reside in their homes but are unable to come to regular Sunday morning services will receive visits (and communion) from Rev. Dr. Morgan. Our Faithful Friends Team also makes visits, calls, and sends care cards.

If emergency pastoral care is needed in the case of crisis, death, or severe illness, please contact the church office at (301) 662-2762 or erucc@erucc.org.

PRAYER LIST

We always ask permission before adding a name to 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:

Charlene Perry
Greg Alley
Dave Alley
Sue Stevens (friend of Susan Kulp)
Kitty Bradley
Beanie Cornell
Raymond Slifer (father of Robin A. Brady-Slifer)
The Black Family
Susan Bonhag (friend of the Mercier family)
Milt Crutchley
Father of Sherry Murray
Craig, Carrie, Aaron, Chase and Maddy Percopo (friends of Lois Gaul)
Kat Weedon (friend of Jean Fish & Barb Biser)
Tom Frazier
Kayla Merry (niece of Kim Sexton)
Carol Spera (mother of Mark Ulrich)

Pauline Marendt
Haley Duff
Sherry Murray
Charlotte Blue and Family (friends of Jean Fish & Barb Biser)
Emogene Wyand
Bob Pinner
Delmar Speak
Donna Hill (mother of Collen Baldree)
Philip Hill (father of Colleen Baldree)
Tanya Pearre (sister of Colleen Baldree)
Jim Baldree (father of Chuck Baldree)
Anne Gallagher (friend of Milt and Bettie Joe Crutchley)
Lee Thomas
Joan Thomas (mother of Dan Smith's friend)
Autumn Crutchley
Jason Rhoads
Nathan Cable

Greg Rhoads
Marcia Eisenstein
Derek C. Hupp (grandson of Beanie & Gaylon Cornell)
Wayne Kolb (friend of Stefan and Judi Mach and Tony and Linda LaFianza)
Jeannette Johnson
Jackie Keyser (sister-in-law of Betsy and Phil Selby)
Barbara Lee Crutchley (sister of Milt Crutchley)
Marcy Channell (daughter of Jo Ann Fritz)
Paige Coffey
Fran Wenner
Bonnie Devilbiss
Tina Prescott (daughter-in-law of Barbara & Bill Prescott)
Heleen (sister of Karin Mens)
Kathy Blue Shores (friend of Jean Fish & Barb Biser)
Gretchen Manuel (niece of Audrey Rayfield)

Cards invited: Kitty Bradley
3990 Farm Lane
Frederick, MD 21770

Adult Christian Education Opportunities

BIBLE STUDIES for ADULTS

SUNDAY MORNING LET'S STUDY THE BIBLE

with Revs. John and Rebecca Shillingburg
North Room / Zoom, 9:00 – 10:15 AM

Zoom: bit.ly/ERSunstudy
Meeting ID: 893 8670 5888
Passcode: 327128

TUESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

with Rev. Rebecca Shillingburg
North Room / Zoom, 11:00 AM

Zoom: bit.ly/ERTuesday
Meeting ID: 875 1423 3398
Passcode: 973365

Join the Tuesday Morning Bible Study series anytime!

The First Paul: Reclaiming the Radical Visionary Behind the Church's Conservative Icon
by Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan.

World-renowned New Testament scholars Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan use the best of biblical and historical scholarship to show the emerging church hierarchy attempting to make sense of Paul's more radical teachings in ways that make them more acceptable to the Romans. Crossan and Borg take a close look at the way Paul has been perceived and reinvented by the church. They go to great lengths to show Paul as he truly was and how he should be represented in modern Christianity.

Books are available for \$6 through the church office or in class.

WEDNESDAY EVENING LET'S STUDY THE BIBLE

with Rev. John Shillingburg
North Room / Zoom, 7:00 PM

Zoom: bit.ly/ERWedstudy
Meeting ID: 892 1764 4500
Passcode: 848933



LET'S TALK

Let's Talk is an adult educational opportunity that focuses on how we can live out our faith and share our knowledge and expertise. Contact Linda Coyle, lkcoyle@yahoo.com with questions or ideas for a presentation.

A SPIRITUAL RESET FOR ADVENT ... CONTINUED

Discussion led by Richard Leslie

Sunday, December 8

Flora Room, 9:30 AM – 10:15 AM

Let's continue the conversation! On December 1, during *Let's Talk*, we watched a video by philosopher Jonathan Rowson on living in the time between worlds, in a time that he calls the metacrisis. In this time of rapid change across so many realms, we cannot comprehend the magnitude of what is happening, yet we sense that things are changing profoundly. How do we live in this moment faithfully and spiritually? Where do we find hope and courage?

In the follow-up discussion, we only had enough time to scratch the surface in responding to the video, so let's continue the conversation. We will be back in the Flora Room and starting at 9:30 AM.

If you want to watch the video, "Living in the Metacrisis with Jonathan Rowson" again (or for the first time), it is available on **YouTube**: bit.ly/4inE5iS.

Ways to Give to Evangelical Reformed UCC

WEBSITE

www.erucc.org/give



one time or recurring gifts

GIVE THE NEW WAY



We're moving to a better way of giving.
Scan to try it for yourself!

CASH OR CHECK

made payable to
Evangelical Reformed UCC
15 W. Church St,
Frederick MD 21701



offering plates
are available in the
rear of the sanctuary
before and after worship

Activities and Events at ERUCC

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Sunday, December 8
Community Room / Zoom, ~ 12:00 PM

Zoom: bit.ly/24congmtg
Meeting ID: 894 8029 1148
Passcode: 908195

Mark your calendar for Sunday, December 8, immediately following the 10:30 AM service. This is a vital opportunity for us to gather as a community, share updates, and make important decisions for our church's future.

Agenda Highlights:

- Progress on the Historic Clock Tower project
- Response to Consecration Sunday
- Study Group plans for our Congregation Name
- Transition Team updates
- Review and approval of the proposed 2025 Mission Spending Plan

We Are the Church! Your voice matters, and your participation is essential.

A light lunch will be provided, and we invite you to bring a dessert to share. Let's come together to celebrate, plan, and grow as a church family!

EVENING ADVENT VIDEO DEVOTIONS

This Advent season, join us each evening for *Words for the Beginning: Advent Reminders for New Seasons*, a special series of video reflections inspired by our worship liturgy from Sanctified Art. These devotions invite us to reflect on the words Mary might have whispered to her newborn, filled with hope and the promise that God is making all things new.

These 3–5 minute reflections, shared by members of our congregation, will be shared nightly on our YouTube channel. Each video offers music, poetry, art, or personal testimony inspired by a meaningful word for this Advent season.



Watch the videos and journey with us through Advent by visiting our YouTube playlist: bit.ly/adventwords24

CALL FOR CONGREGATIONAL NAME SUGGESTIONS

On Sunday, October 13, 2024 the congregation voted in favor of a motion *“to consider changing its name from 'Evangelical Reformed' to another name, to be voted on at a later date. The new name will retain 'United Church of Christ,' with the understanding that the congregation may also choose to retain 'Evangelical Reformed' as the name.”*

Submit names you wish to be considered for the congregation in a digital suggestion box at bit.ly/3Y7nPcd or the designated suggestion box in the Sanctuary Lobby.



GENTLE YOGA

Tuesdays

Trinity Chapel, 7:00 PM

Experience tranquility and wellness in this Gentle Yoga Class. Led by experienced Yogamour instructors, this nurturing practice focuses on gentle postures, mindful breathing, and deep relaxation techniques. Participants of all levels are welcome.

Each drop-in class is \$10. Questions? Contact Renae, rdkline15@gmail.com.

To access the yoga classroom in Trinity Chapel, walk through the gate to the left of the building, down the walkway to the side door, and into the hallway leading to the classroom.

MID-WEEK ADVENT SERIES: EMBODIED LIGHT

Wednesdays, December 11, 18

Sanctuary/Community Room, 12:00 PM

This Advent season, we invite you to a journey of reflection, worship, and connection inspired by *Embodied Light* by Melissa Tidwell. *Embodied Light* is a thoughtful exploration of the Christian concept of incarnation—God taking on human form in the person of Jesus. The book focuses on how our bodies, as well as the material world, are sacred and central to our faith journeys.

Weekly Gatherings:

- **Worship:** Brief, meaningful 20-minute services in the Sanctuary led by Pastor Kirstin.
- **Fellowship:** Services will be followed by a cozy soup lunch in the Community Room.
- **Themes:**
 - Week 2: *Activities that Relate to the Incarnate Body*
 - Week 3: *Song and Breath*

Come, let us embrace the beauty of our incarnate lives and prepare our hearts together for the mystery of Christmas.

KRIS KRINGLE PARADE – HOT COCOA OUTREACH

Friday, December 13

6:00 – 8:00 PM

Youth and young adults (of all ages) are invited to come together to spread some holiday cheer at the Kris Kringle Parade on Friday, December 13, by helping us serve hot cocoa and candy canes to our neighbors in downtown Frederick! This is a fun and festive way to engage with the community and bring warmth to the holiday season.

We'll first prepare cups, then serve cocoa and treats to parade-goers during the 30 minutes before the parade and after the parade ends.

Let us know if you can come! (RSVP encouraged but not required): bit.ly/40Vdrr1



Contact: Pastor Kirstin, ksrhoads@erucc.org.

INTERGENERATIONAL CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

Sunday, December 15

Sanctuary, 6:30 PM

Join us for a joyful and heartwarming Christmas Pageant on Sunday, December 15 at 6:30 PM! This year, we're bringing the story of Jesus' birth to life with a rehearsal-free, interactive, and family-friendly program that includes humor, music, and plenty of opportunities for everyone to participate. As you arrive, you'll be invited to select costumes—whether as an angel, shepherd, or even a barn animal—and help bring the Christmas story to life. Together, we will sing carols, create a live nativity, and celebrate the true meaning of Christmas. Whether you enjoy singing, acting out the nativity scenes, or simply watching the Christmas story unfold, this pageant is sure to fill your heart with the spirit of the season. It's a perfect way to gather as a church family and celebrate the true meaning of Christmas together!

Following the pageant, we invite everyone to stay for a brief time of fellowship, where we'll share cookies, enjoy each other's company, and reflect on the joy this season brings. The Pageant is open to all ages, so bring along your friends, family, and neighbors for a festive evening full of laughter, love, and the warmth of our church community. We can't wait to see you there as we enter the Christmas season with joy and celebration!

Contact: Trish Coffey, trishcoffey1195@gmail.com or (240) 815-9118.

CAROLING NIGHT: A FESTIVE EVENING FOR ADULTS

Wednesday, December 18

Community Room, 7:00 – 9:00 PM

Get ready for a memorable night of caroling, food, and fun—just for ERUCC adults! Join us for a special evening filled with holiday cheer, music, and community. It's the perfect way to celebrate the season with your church family!

What's Happening:

- **Caroling:** Raise your voice and spread the holiday spirit with our church community.
- **Food & Drinks:** Enjoy delicious food and a festive drink selection, including beer and non-alcoholic options.
- **Suggested Donation:** \$10 at the door gets you food and one drink. Additional drinks are available to purchase by donation.

This event is for ERUCC adults (ages 21 and older)—so bring your holiday spirit, your best caroling voice, and your friends! We can't wait to sing, feast, and celebrate the season with you.



God is still speaking,
**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**

CANDLELIGHT TOUR OF HISTORIC HOUSES OF WORSHIP

Thursday, December 26

3:00 – 8:00 PM

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 Thursday, December 26, from 3:00 – 8:00 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 open our main building at 15 West Church Street to thousands of visitors! We will be offering refreshments and our wonderful hospitality.

We need your help to share our radical hospitality!

Interested in volunteering? Sign up: bit.ly/cndltour24



Contact: Julie Clark, Jclarkad@yahoo.com.

FRANKLINTON CENTER TRIP PREP MEETING

Sunday, January 5

Community Room, 11:45 AM – 12:15 PM

Adults, youth and their parents who will be attending the work trip to Franklinton Center at Bricks should attend. We will discuss expectations, work assignments, travel, packing, and food menu.

FRANKLINTON CENTER WORK TRIP

Open to adults and youth (6th – 12th grade)

January 18 – 20

Please let Pastor Kirstin know if you are interested in going on the work trip to The Franklinton Center at Bricks, 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 1950s formed Franklinton Center at Bricks. The Center is related to the UCC.

Our group has the longest partnership as volunteers who upgrade and maintain facilities to help Franklinton Center at Bricks better lead education and programs and meet their community's basic needs.

The work trip costs \$80 per person (includes housing and meals). The trip is subsidized by budgeted funds for mission trips.

WINTER GIVING OPPORTUNITIES AT ERUCC!

Giving Tree in Sanctuary Lobby

Looking for ways you or your family can give to those in our community this winter? The ERUCC Giving Tree is a great place to start! The Giving Tree in the Sanctuary Lobby is decorated with ornaments listing needed items for various organizations sponsored by ERUCC's Mission, Evangelism, & Social Justice Committee (MESJ) and Youth Group.

You are invited to take one or more ornaments from the Giving Tree and then bring the donation items to the designated collection box. Read below about the amazing community organizations we are supporting this season and the items that can make a big difference!

SHIP (STUDENT HOMELESSNESS INITIATIVE PARTNERSHIP)

Donate November 24 – January 5

Contact: Shelley Weakly, MESJ Chair

SHIP provides critical resources and urgent services to the hundreds of Frederick County youth experiencing homelessness each year. Lend SHIP a helping hand by donating critically needed, NEW, FULL-SIZED hygiene supplies.

BEYOND SHELTER FREDERICK

Donate November 24 – January 5

Contact: Shelley Weakly, MESJ Chair

The mission of Beyond Shelter Frederick (formerly the Religious Coalition for Emergency Human Needs) is to prevent and alleviate the effects of poverty on the residents of Frederick County. They operate the Alan P. Linton, Jr. Emergency Shelter for adults and an Emergency Family Shelter. Help Beyond Shelter Frederick stock the shelters this winter with donations of items for clients and use in the shelters.

FOSTER FAMILIES – ENTERTAINMENT GIFT CARD PROGRAM

Donate November 24 – December 22

Contact: Pastor Kirstin Shrom-Rhoads or Youth Group members

ERUCC's **Youth Group** has set a goal to collect 32 gift cards for the Frederick County Department of Social Services' Foster Families Program. This program asks for gift cards for locations like MeLand, Warehouse Cinemas, AdventureLand USA, Fourth Dimension Fun Center, Chuck E Cheese, Hot Fired Arts and other similar places. Gift cards are used by families for family visits with birthparents and recreation time as foster families.

Our **Children's Sunday School** classes will also learn about and participate in giving! Look for more details soon from our Pre-K – 2nd grade class, who will be collecting juice boxes for the Frederick Community Fridge and Tide pods for Frederick County Department of Social Services, and our 3rd – 5th grade class, who will collect items to support the Animal Welfare League of Frederick County. These classes will be collecting those donations from December 1 – 22.

Children, Youth, & Families

ADVENT “MAKE IT, TAKE IT” KITS FOR FAMILIES

Community Room, during Fellowship

Gather supplies for your family Advent kit! Each kit includes a fun, meaningful weekly activity for your family to enjoy at home. Pastor Kirstin will share weekly inspiration and encouragement on Facebook—don't forget to check it out and share your own family's Advent moments!

HELP NEEDED IN THE NURSERY

We're looking for a regular volunteer to assist our Nursery Assistant, Ashley Murphy, on Sunday mornings from 9:00 – 10:00 AM. Many of our usual helpers are busy with Sunday School during this time, so we need someone who can step in and lend a hand with our youngest members.

If you're interested in helping and sharing your care, please let Pastor Kirstin know!

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

Children should be checked in by one of their grown-ups at the Check-In Station in the Kieffer Lobby before class.

Pre-K – 2nd Grade

Liz Coffey Room, 9:15 – 10:00 AM

3rd – 5th Grade

Thomas Room, 9:15 – 10:00 AM

CHILDREN'S MUSIC AND MOVEMENT

Liz Coffey Room, 10:00 – 10:20 AM

This music group for children in Pre-K through 5th Grade are invited to participate in rehearsals each Sunday morning following Sunday School from 10:00–10:20 AM in the Liz Coffey Room.

YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL

Trinity Chapel, 9:15 – 10:15 AM

Youth Sunday School, with Middle and High School classes, meets in Trinity Chapel, 10 West Church Street. Enter through the side door behind the iron gate on the left side of the building. Always use the crosswalk. Youth will return as a group to the Kieffer Lobby at 10:15 AM.

JUNIOR CHURCH

2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th Sundays

dismisses from 10:30 AM worship service

Junior Church is a space to join in creative spiritual formation activities for children ages five through 5th grade. Children begin 10:30 AM worship with their families and are dismissed to Junior Church after the Thought for the Day. On the first Sunday of each month, children participate in worship and communion with their families.

Ministers, Staff, & Lay Leaders of Evangelical Reformed UCC

MINISTERS AND STAFF

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

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

Alison E. Shafer ~ *Director of Music*

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

Jaci Clayton ~ *Facilities Manager* ~ 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*

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

The Rev. Fred Wenner ~ *Pastor Emeritus*

CONSISTORY

Peter Brehm ~ *President* | Matt Hueting ~ *Vice President*

David Kehne ~ *Secretary* | Robert Morris ~ *Treasurer*

Rebecca Shillingburg ~ *Worship Chair* | Will Duncan ~ *Finance Chair*

Shelley Weakly ~ *Mission, Evangelism, and Social Justice Chair*

Julie Clark ~ *Stewardship/Generosity Chair* | Dan Ebersole ~ *Property Chair*

Vacant ~ *Christian Education Chair* / Matt Davis ~ *Head Deacon* / Larry Martin ~ *Member-at-Large*

ELDERS

Ave Barr | Peter Brehm | Robin Cooney | Matt Hueting | Jeanellen Kallevang | Eric Weakly

DEACONS

Quynn Adkins | Robin A. Brady-Slifer | Robin L. Brady-Slifer | Angela Brittain

Jim Brittain | Matt Davis | Harrison Fisher | Kyle Miller

TRANSITION TEAM

Felecia Bishop | Tommie Bradshaw | Karen Justice | Terry Logee | Allen Maples

Thomasa Pomeroy | Bud Rossig | Eliza Stitely | Katie Zander

Sunday Morning Schedule

subject to change

8:30 – 9:15 AM	Early Worship , Sanctuary
9:00 AM	Coffee and Conversation , Kieffer Lobby
9:00 AM	Let's Study the Bible , North Room
9:15 AM – 12:00 PM	Nursery Care
9:15 – 10:00 AM	Children's Sunday School <i>Pre-K – 2nd Grade</i> , Liz Coffey Room <i>3rd – 5th Grade</i> , Thomas Room
9:15 – 10:15 AM	Youth Sunday School <i>Middle School Youth</i> , Trinity Chapel <i>High School Youth</i> , Trinity Chapel
9:30 AM	Let's Talk , Flora Room
10:00 – 10:20 AM	Children's Music and Movement , Liz Coffey Room
10:30 – 11:30 AM	Worship , Sanctuary and Online at www.erucc.org Junior Church , Thomas Room <i>Participating children are dismissed from Worship (2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th Sundays)</i> Young Spirit Rehearsal , Marj Menchey Berkheimer Music Suite <i>Participating Youth are dismissed from Worship (1st and 3rd Sundays)</i>
11:30 AM	Chancel Handbell Choir Rehearsal , Sanctuary <i>Children and Youth</i>

Thursday Rehearsal Schedule

subject to change

6:15 PM	Cambridge Handbell Choir Rehearsal , Sanctuary <i>Contact: Trish Coffey and Kelly Esslinger</i>
7:00 PM	Senior Choir Rehearsal , Marj Menchey Berkheimer Music Suite <i>Contact: Alison E. Shafer</i>

Stay Informed

Subscribe to receive e-news from ERUCC at <http://eepurl.com/gDNCu5> or by scanning the QR code.



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.

Order by December 15!

Complete the form and return it with payment to the church office or offering plate or pay online at bit.ly/eruccflowers by December 15.



Scan to
Pay Online

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

Donor Name(s): _____

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

I/we have **enclosed** a payment of \$_____ (\$10 per plant).

I/we made an **online** payment of \$_____ (\$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:

In honor of:

Placed by:

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 8, 2024

Luke 3:1-6

Make Ready

Advent just wouldn't be Advent without John the Baptist emerging from the wilderness with the urgent message for all to repent. Now to our modern ears "repent" might conjure images of a street preacher shouting at passers-by. But let's not go there. Rather, hear the word "repent" as it is meant to be heard, as a call to turn back to God.

Yes, John leaves his wandering monastic existence to give us this public service announcement to get back to what really matters — loving as God loves and creating a world where that love is extended to all. John even helps us find our way back to God by giving us a list of things to do.

Another list is probably the last thing we need right now, especially as our Christmas to-do's grow longer each day. There are gifts to buy. Presents to wrap. Cookies to bake. Trees to trim. And, if you are one of the rare saints that still writes Christmas cards rather than sending an e-greeting, then there are cards to address and stamps to lick.

John, though, wants us to make ready for Christmas in ways we might never have thought of before. Echoing the very words of the prophet Isaiah, John invites us to prepare the way for the Lord by adding the following to our holiday lists:

Fill in every valley.

What can we do to reach those who are low and full despair? How can the valleys of poverty of body, mind and soul be filled by us?

Make low the mountains and hills.

What looming mountain or hill of injustice can be lowered so that the playing field for all is finally level?

Straighten crooked roads.

In what way is God asking us to find the courage to speak truth to lies?

Smooth the rough places.

What are the rough places in our own lives that need smoothing out? Does a callus heart need to soften? Does a short temper need more patience?

It is interesting to note that John's appearance in Luke's Gospel starts with an introduction of the rulers and religious authorities who were in power during his life, reminding us that often earthly rulers have their own agendas.

It is only through our hands and hearts that God's beloved community becomes a reality.

After all, if we don't prepare the way for the Lord by filling in valleys, lowering mountains and making smooth rough places, then who will?

Loving God, may our lists of things to do include more than just holiday busy work. May our lists reflect our commitment in creating beloved communities that point to Your glory, now and forever. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.



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

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