



The Way Forward

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 –



May 4, 2025

Third Sunday of Easter

10:30 AM

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

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Rev. Kirstin Shrom-Rhoads

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

PRELUDE

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

You'd think, by now, we would get used to Jesus showing up like this ...

inviting us to cast the net deeper and wider,

showing us the way to abundance

is leaning into new possibilities.

We are starting to open ourselves

to share what we have and watch it multiply.

We are learning to tend and nourish each other.

You'd think, by now we would get used to Jesus in our midst ...

welcoming us to the worship that is love in action,

showing us the way to transformation is mutual belovedness.

Let us worship God, because we know in our bones,

everywhere we turn, it is the Lord!

***OPENING PRAYER**

Is it you, Jesus? Are you really here?

Is the message you gave us really true?

Did the story turn out like you said?

Can we trust it is you in the distance

when the night is long and our nets empty?

Will there be more if we share?

Can we find you when we eat together?

Do we love you when we feed each other?

Amen.

***OPENING HYMN**

Jesus, Sovereign, Savior

#255

**Jesus, Sovereign, Savior, once for sinners slain,
crucified in weakness, raised in power to reign,
Dwelling now immortal, endless in your days,
unto you be glory, honor, blessing, praise.**

**Faithful ones communing towards the close of day,
Desolate and weary, met you on the way.
So, when sun is setting, come to use and show
your truth, and within us, make our hearts to glow.**

**In the upper chamber, followers, in fear,
gathered sad and troubled, there you did appear.
Christ, be present with us, bid our sorrows cease;
breathing on us, Savior, say, “I give you peace.”**

***CALL TO CONFESSION**

In a world that trains us to cling tightly, guard what we have, and believe that there is never enough, we come before God to confess the stories we've absorbed and the fears that hold us back. Trusting in God's abundant grace, let us open our hearts in honest prayer.

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

God, forgive us when we believe the lies that scarcity tells us:

if they just worked harder...

I've earned everything I have...

there won't be enough if I share...

I have to protect what's mine...

safety comes from holding on to what I have...

I can't count on anyone but myself...

Gracious Redeemer, teach us to cast our nets differently.

***ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

The Abundant Spirit opens before us the ways of flourishing:
the impulse to share is our birthright;
dignity and justice belong to us all;
there is more when we contribute to each other's wholeness;
flourishing for all is possible together.

Praise God who loves us into thriving new life! Amen.

ANTHEM

It's a Miracle

Children's Music and Movement
– W. Gaither

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

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

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

THE SCRIPTURES

Brooklyn N.

Acts 9:1-6, (7-20) NT page 127

John 21:1-19 NT page 115

Reader: May God bless the reading of this word.

All: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

The Rev. Dr. Marvin L. Morgan

MORNING PRAYERS

RECOGNITION OF OUTGOING LEADERSHIP

A Litany of Gratitude for Those Who Have Completed Terms of Service

Let us thank God for the gifts and talents of our church leaders who have faithfully served ERUCC and the wider community.

We thank God for their commitment to this and the wider community.

We thank them for their dedication, their time, and their energy.

We thank them for their willingness to say “yes!” to God’s call upon their lives.

Their leadership and guidance will be forever remembered.

And may they forever hold a special and appreciative space in our hearts.

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

We've come to a moment in our worship where we intentionally practice mutual aid – we share what we have so that we all can flourish. Scarcity teaches us to hold back, to see what we lack instead of what we have, to fear there won't be enough if we give it away. But today, let's cast our nets to the other side of the boat, where abundance lives, waiting for us to recognize it. Let's lean into the imagination of the new world we can build together if we believe in abundance. What could that world look like?

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

Guide My Feet, Lord

Senior Choir
– J. Carter

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**For dignity and belovedness, for the blessing of community,
For the abundance of love that the world cannot take away,
We dedicate ourselves and our offerings. Thanks be to God.**

– SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION –

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

God, we gather at this table representing all people in all places in our world. We bless and pass the bread and cup as Christ passed it to his friends. Please allow these elements to remind us of the good that you have done and inspire us to do the good that Christ calls us to do. May we leave this table revived and refreshed, having sipped from the cup of bold courage so that we may challenge all forms of injustice and pain. In Christ's name, we pray. Amen.

Through Christ, with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor are yours, now and forever. Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

On the night he was betrayed, the Light of the World took bread and blessed it. Then he thanked God for it and broke it, saying:

“This is my body which is broken for you. Whenever you eat it, remember me.”

And likewise at the end of the meal, Jesus took the cup, blessed it and thanked God for it. Pouring out the red wine, he said:

“This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you. When you drink this cup ever after this night, remember me.”

Now, let us come to receive the bread and the cup.

SHARING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

All who desire the Sacrament, including children, are invited to come forward at the direction of the deacons to the chancel rail, where you will be served the bread and the cup. You may kneel or stand to receive the elements. The cup contains grape juice (apple juice is provided in the center of each tray) and all bread is gluten-free. Please partake of the elements as they are given to you, then give the empty cup to the nearby steward before returning to your seat by the side aisle. If you want to receive the elements in the pew for any reason, please notify a deacon.

After all have received the bread and the cup:

Great is the mystery of faith.

Christ has died;

Christ is risen;

Christ will come again.

A BLESSING OF THE PEOPLE

May the presence of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit keep and preserve you to everlasting life. **Amen.**

*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

We have been fed, dear God, by your presence and led by your light.

May we bask in this glow now and forevermore. Amen.

*CLOSING HYMN

As We Gather at Your Table

#332

As we gather at your table, as we listen to your word,

help us know, O God, your presence;

let our hearts and minds be stirred.

Nourish us with sacred story till we claim it as our own;

teach us through this holy banquet

how to make Love's victory known.

**Turn our worship into witness
in the sacrament of life;
send us forth to love and serve you,
bringing peace where there is strife.
Give us, Christ, your great compassion
to forgive as you forgave;
may we still behold your image
in the world you died to save.**

**Gracious Spirit, help us summon
other guests to share that feast
where triumphant Love will welcome
those who had been last and least.
There no more will envy blind us
nor will pride our peace destroy,
as we join with saints and angels
to repeat the sounding joy.**

***BENEDICTION**

Beloved community,
Go forth from this place to live and love abundantly
setting a table for all in the midst of injustice
growing relationships of justice, dignity, and mutual belovedness
sharing what you have so that all may flourish.
Thanks be to our risen and rising up God! Amen.

***SEVENFOLD AMEN**

#814

During the postlude, please remain seated, letting the music flow over you as a closing blessing.

POSTLUDE



Worship Notes: Today's liturgy is adapted from *Building Up a New World – Cast the Net: Service Prayers for Easter 3C* was written by Dr. Sharon R. Fennema, who serves as Join the Movement toward Racial Justice Curator with UCC National Ministries.

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 this morning are dedicated to the praise and glory of God.

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

Attendance Last Sunday: 16 at 8:30 AM, 135 at 10:30 AM, and 43 online.



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

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

Serving Today: May 4

Deacons: Matt Davis, Quynn Adkins

Elder: Matt Hueting

Scripture Reader: Brooklyn N.

Greeters: Danielle Carbone, Rob Smith
Felecia Bishop, Julie Ebersole

Welcome Table: Holly Davis

Lobby Attendant: Rob Smith

Audio/Visual: Rodney Martin, Larry Martin
Kelly Esslinger

Nursery: Meredith Neely

Fellowship: Julie Clark, Joe Adkins
Quynn Adkins, Hollie Mercier
Kyle Miller, Pat Dorsz
Bobby Van Dyk

Communion Prep: Peter Brehm

Communion Clergy: Rev. Carolyn Roberts
Rev. Dr. Rebecca Shillingburg

Serving Next Week: May 11

Robin A. Brady-Slifer
Robin L. Brady-Slifer
Jeanellen Kallevang
Laurel Nguyen-Powell
Cathie Duncan, Sue Pinner
Ave Barr, Cliff Barr
Julie Clark
Cliff Barr
Ethan Kline, Larry Martin
Jeff Baker
Emily Spear, Ben
Emily Spear, Chris Spear, Abby, Ben
Jocelyn Vara, Chris Vara
Rachael Bowman, Josh Bowman

Next Sunday: May 11 – Fourth Sunday of Easter

Acts 9:36-43 | John 10:22-30

Scripture links our identity to the identity of God. If we are made in the image and likeness of God, as Genesis tells us, then the image we have of God matters a great deal. If we perceive God as a controlling patriarch, this ideology shapes our identity. If, however, our image of God is of one who overturns the status quo, disturbs the tower builders, and those who insist on a monolithic language and culture, we are more likely to develop an identity that resists systems that oppress. The resurrection of Christ is God's response to the domination of Rome and therefore shapes the character of all who live as faithful disciples of Christ

Today, we will ordain and install the newly elected elders, deacons, and committee chairs. Spirit will share in music leadership this morning.

PRAYER LIST

We invite you to hold the following people in your prayers this week. Though we may not know the specifics of their needs, God does, and our prayers are a meaningful way to surround them with love and support.

ERUCC seeks permission before adding a name to this list or in worship announcements. There are many for whom we pray and visit whose names are not listed in the bulletin by their request.

Susan Kulp

Charley Robison (great-granddaughter of Judy Bowman)

Linda Skewes (sister of Audrey Rayfield)

Christy Kehlbeck (friend of Hollie Mercier)

John Howard (brother of David Howard)

Doris Esslinger

Sandra Trout

Charlie Van Eman (son of friends of Kathleen and Niel Jefferson)

Trish Coffey

Kathy Johnson

Mary Staley

Mike Robertson (friend of Kathleen and Niel Jefferson)

Pat Condo

Wells Condo

The Murray/Lennox/Cable Family

Greg Alley

Dave Alley

Kitty Bradley

Beanie Cornell

Milt Crutchley

Raymond Slifer (father of Robin A. Brady-Slifer)

Susan Bonhag (friend of the Mercier family)

Tom Frazier

Pauline Marendt

Kat Weedon (friend of Jean Fish & Barb Biser)

Kayla Merry (niece of Kim Sexton)

Carol Spera (mother of Mark Ulrich)

Charlotte Blue and Family (friends of Jean Fish & Barb Biser)

Emogene Wyand

Bob Pinner

Delmar Speak

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)

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)

PASTORAL CARE

ERUCC 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 the 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.

Christian Education: Spiritual Life, Learning, and Practices

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

An Altar in the World by Barbara Brown Taylor
with Rev. Rebecca Shillingburg
North Room / Zoom, 11:00 AM

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

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

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.



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

Activities and Events

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Sunday, May 4

Community Room / Zoom, ~12:00 PM

Our annual meeting will be held on Sunday, May 4, in the Community Room. Lunch will be served immediately following worship. We will elect new elders, deacons, and committee chairs. Members and friends of the congregation may also participate via Zoom.

To participate by Zoom, please **register in advance**: bit.ly/ERmtg0504



After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Read the 2024 Annual Report: <https://bit.ly/ER24rppt>

To be elected by the Congregation:

Elder for first 3-year term

Susan Kulp

Elder for first elected 3-year term

Ave Barr

(currently appointed as Elder after the position was vacated by resignation)

Deacon for second 2-year term

Jim Brittain

Deacon for second 2-year term

Robin A. Brady-Slifer

Deacon for second 2-year term

Robin L. Brady-Slifer

Deacon for first 2-year term

Tommie Bradshaw

Deacon for first 2-year term

Mark Ulrich

Finance Chair for first 2-year term

Peter Brehm

Stewardship/Generosity Chair for first additional 1-year term

Julie Clark

Christian Education Chair for first 2-year term

Holly Davis

Worship Chair for first additional 1-year term

Rebecca Shillingburg

Member-at-Large for first additional 1-year term

Larry Martin

YOUTH LEMONADE SALE

Sunday, May 4

Church Street Entrance, approximately 1:00 – 2:00 PM or after lunch is served

After our Annual Meeting, ERUCC youth will gather outside the Church Street entrance to sell lemonade in honor of National Lemonade Day! Choose regular lemonade or elevate it with a fruity mix, an idea created by the imagination of our youth and supported by their parents.

This Germany partnership fundraiser will be a fun project to engage our church and community.

INQUIRERS' CLASS #2

Sunday, May 11

Flora Room and Zoom, 9:30 AM

Interested in learning more about ERUCC and what it means to be part of our community of faith? We warmly invite you to join us for our two-part **Inquirers' Class** — a time to connect, ask questions, and explore what membership at ERUCC looks like.

If you're seeking a church where...

- You don't have to check your mind at the door
- God's love embraces *every* person, no matter who they are or where they are on life's journey
- Faith engages with the real world — offering meaning, hope, and purpose
- You and your family can grow spiritually in an open, affirming, and thoughtful community

.... then we'd love to get to know you.

At our Inquirer's Class, you'll meet our pastors and church members, hear more about our values, beliefs, and history, and learn about the United Church of Christ — our wider church family.

Who should come? Anyone curious about ERUCC, whether you're brand new or have been worshipping with us for a while, but haven't taken the step of membership. ERUCC members looking for a refresher or who simply want to be part of meeting and welcoming others into our church community are also welcome.



To participate by Zoom, please **register in advance**: bit.ly/ERinq0427

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Questions? Contact the church office at erucc@erucc.org or (301) 662-2762.

HELP PACK THE PANTRY

Sunday, May 11, during both worship services

Let's continue to BE the Church by supporting our neighbors in need. Once a month, we work together to fill the Frederick Community Fridge pantry in our church parking lot.

May: Breakfast in Bed for Moms

In May, we'll honor and care for mothers in our community by collecting breakfast-themed items. On Mother's Day, Sunday, May 11, you are invited to bring any of the following shelf-stable, unopened, and unexpired items to worship. You can place them on the table at the chancel as you arrive. We will offer a prayer of dedication over the items before sending them out to bless our neighbors:

- Pancake mix
- Shelf-stable milk
- Canned fruit
- Syrup
- Juice boxes or bottles

If you're unable to bring donations on May 11, you can place them in the pantry at any time.

Contact: Kim Sexton, mkcssexton@comcast.net.

ALL CHURCH MOVIE NIGHT

Friday, May 23

Community Room, 6:00 – 9:00 PM

Enjoy an intergenerational night at our All Church Family Movie Night in the Community Room: *The Wild Robot*, Dinner and a Movie. Feel free to wear pajamas! Come at 6:00 PM for a finger food dinner and at 6:30 PM the movie will begin. Legos and cardboard blocks on the side to build robots and coloring pages of baby ducks will be provided to help our younger listeners who can't sit still as long. Bring a friend! This is not a child drop-off event.

We are collecting small boxes between the size of a shoe box or cereal box. If you can contribute boxes, please bring them to the church office by Sunday, May 18th for Pastor Kirstin

Contact:

Thomasa Pomeroy, tomato.pomeroy@gmail.com, or Pastor Kirstin, ksrhoads@erucc.org

ERUCC BOOK GROUP

Tuesday, May 27

North Room / Zoom, 7:00 PM

Zoom: bit.ly/ERUCCbooks

Meeting ID: 848 7056 7574

Passcode: 226669

Braiding Sweetgrass by Robin Wall Kimmerer.

Drawing on her life as an indigenous scientist, a mother, and a woman, Kimmerer shows how other living beings offer us gifts and lessons, even if we've forgotten how to hear their voices. In a rich braid of reflections, she circles toward a central argument: that the awakening of a wider ecological consciousness requires the acknowledgment and celebration of our reciprocal relationship with the rest of the living world. Only when we can hear the languages of other beings will we be capable of understanding the earth's generosity, and learn to give our own gifts in return.

2025 ERUCC Book Group Reads:

July 22 *The Sea Around Us* by Rachel Carson

September 23 *A Midwife's Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard, Based on Her Diary, 1785-1812* by Laurel Thatcher Ulrich

November 25 *Lula Dean's Little Library of Banned Books* by Kirsten Miller

BE A BLESSING PRACTICE PEACE.
LEAD WITH LOVE.
BE JOYFUL. PRAY OFTEN. BE KIND. GIVE THANKS.
DO GOOD. HAVE COURAGE. WORK FOR JUSTICE.
BE THE LIGHT. ENCOURAGE OTHERS. 

SACRED CONVERSATIONS ABOUT LIFE TRANSITIONS

Tuesday, May 27

Flora Room, 2:00 PM

Join us for our next monthly gathering where we will share stories and challenges related to life's changes, body limitations, and shifts in dependency. This is a sacred space to listen, pray, and connect as we navigate these transitions. Pastor Kirstin and Ave Barr will lead us in this time of holy sharing, emphasizing the importance of leaning on each other and recognizing that we are not alone in our journeys.

Contact: Ave Barr, Linda Coyle, or Pastor Kirstin with questions.

SAVE THE DATE – CHURCH TENT CAMPING

June 13 – 15

Gifford Pinchot State Park, PA

We're tent camping June 13-15 in Gifford Pinchot State Park in Pennsylvania, about an hour's drive from ERUCC. The park includes multiple small sites next to one another for pitching a tent (you may bring an RV/camper, but need to reserve your own site), a central area with gravel ground that includes multiple picnic tables, and several fire circles. Our site is within walking distance of a shower house and a short distance from a small sandy beachfront with a small playground area. We can also drive to other waterfront locations to visit the nature center, rent boats, or fish, and to other green spaces to play other sports.

More details coming soon, but save the date now to join us! All are welcome.

Ways to Give to Evangelical Reformed UCC

WEBSITE

www.erucc.org/give



one time or recurring gifts

GIVE THE NEW WAY



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*

CENTRAL ATLANTIC CONFERENCE UCC – SUMMER BOOK CLUB

CACUCC



One of the most delightful aspects of seminary, for me, was the external processing of the things I was reading and learning in class. I was just recently sharing that the feeling of digging into rich material (full of challenging ideas) and parsing it out with colleagues and classmates is invigorating.

Next Wednesday, May 7 is the first of a two-part book study that kicks off our summer reading series. May 7 and 14 7:00 – 8:30 PM will be led by Dr. Greg Carey, a professor of New Testament at Lancaster Theological Seminary. He will lead us through the book, *Baptizing America: How Mainline Protestants helped build Christian Nationalism*. Dr. Carey has been a strong voice on the subject of Christian Nationalism and I encourage you to grab a copy and read; for in joining this book study you will find a fascinating conversation that engages accountability amidst the tenor of our current political system's engagement of religion.

We'll spend the rest of the summer reflecting on the topics of congregational development/social justice, community trauma, coping, healing, and creating a better world. The June, July, and August offerings are a single date (as opposed to the May book study.)

Opportunities like this allow for the conference, made up of a delightful bouquet of people with different experiences, gifts, skills and interests to sit awhile with topics we might not engage in a bible study or on a Sunday morning. Moses, in his sermonic instruction to the Israelites, speaks the words we find in Deuteronomy with the hope that they will be received with the same joy as a rain shower: soaking into the land and bringing the promise of transformative power. I pray the same for us this summer- that in our slower pace we might seize the opportunity to learn, engage, and transform this world into the kin-dom of God.

Rev. Sheresa Simpson-Rice
Associate Conference Minister
Central Atlantic Conference UCC

Summer Book
Club 2025



Learn more about the selections and register: <https://bit.ly/4k4jK25>

Children, Youth, & Families

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

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.

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.

YOUNG SPIRIT REHEARSAL

rehearses the 1st and 3rd Sundays
dismisses from 10:30 AM worship service

Rehearsals are held after the Thought for the Day on the first and third Sundays of each month and wrap up by 11:30 AM so you can rejoin your family in the sanctuary.

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.

YOUTH GROUP – LEMONADE SALE

Sunday, May 4

Community Room, during Fellowship

Youth will staff the lemonade sales table after the Annual Meeting to raise funds for our Germany partnership trip. This Germany partnership donation fundraiser will also be a fun project to engage both our church and our community.

Youth will be invited to make signs for the sale during the annual meeting.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL – SAVE THE DATE

ERUCC's Vacation Bible School will be August 4 – 8! Details and registration information will be shared in early summer.

Contact: Pastor Kirstin, ksrroads@erucc.org.

BE THE CHURCH

Protect the environment.

Care for the poor.

Forgive often.

Reject racism.

Fight for the powerless.

Share earthly and spiritual resources.

Embrace diversity.

Love God.

Enjoy this life.

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 ~ *Executive Church 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
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	Fellowship , Downtown Community Room 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>
11:30 AM	Fellowship , Downtown Community Room

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.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

May 4, 2025

Acts 9: 1-6, (7-20)

The Way Forward

The Greek philosopher Heraclitus taught that "the only constant thing in life is change." Who can argue with that? After all, who hasn't had their world suddenly turned upside down?

As unsettling — and unwelcomed — as these life-changing events are, they are often the pivotal moments that move us forward in directions we never would have imagined going.

So it was for Saul of Tarsus. The noted persecutor of Christians, who searched them out relentlessly and punished them mercilessly, was on one such trip when he suddenly heard a voice from the heaven. "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" The voice was that of Jesus. Saul was then blinded where, for three days, he sat in darkness, fasting and praying.

During this time, Ananias of Damascus, a follower of Jesus, received a vision to heal Saul. Given Saul's reputation, it's understandably that Ananias was not keen on doing that. But he did as he was told. Saul regained his sight, but even more importantly he was healed from his spiritual blindness.

And in true biblically tradition, once someone's life is changed forever by the grace of God (remember Abram became Abraham, Sarai become Sara), Saul became Paul. He would then go on and become one of the most influential spokespersons of the Jesus way.

It's always good for us to revisit Paul's backstory because his conversion gives us an amazing hope that change is possible. His story reveals the boundless mercy of God who isn't turned off by our shadow selves. Paul shows us that with God no one is beyond the Divine One's loving reach. There's always a way forward.

Many times, though, we get stuck in the muck of a past that we believe defines our present. We let the heavy chains of grievous mistakes and hurts hold us captive from a future full of hope. But if someone like Saul can be redeemed, so can we all.

Yes, one day we are going about our business and the next we find ourselves startled by just how Jesus Christ enters our hearts, changing everything we ever knew and setting us on a new way forward. May it be so.

God of grace and mercy, enter our hearts this day, forgive our mistakes, remove our guilt and set us free to move forward on paths that shine with Your divine light. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.



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