Growing in God's Love

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 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 items, books, and crayons are in the rear of the sanctuary, and a 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

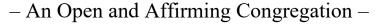
We, the members of this congregation, seek to celebrate in word and deed the gospel of Jesus Christ, by nurturing spiritual growth through worship, study and prayer; by caring for one another as God cares for us; and by proclaiming God's love for all people as we work to help our neighbors near and far.

We commit ourselves to develop and implement specific programs to fulfill our mission.



EVANGELICAL REFORMED

United Church of Christ





September 14, 2025

Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

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

*CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP

You Are Welcome Here

Spirit

- G. DeMan

Refrain

You are welcome here, no matter who you are, no matter where you are on life's journey.
You are welcome here, no matter who you are, come and join with us, we're united in the church of Christ.

*CALL TO WORSHIP (Inspired Psalm 51)

Let us enter the presence of our God with a renewed heart and a right spirit.

Have mercy on us, O God, according to your steadfast love.

Let us speak, hear, and embrace truth and the wisdom of God.

Strengthen and empower us, O God, according to your steadfast love.

Let us hear joy and gladness. Restore our crushed spirits.

Revive us again, O God, according to your steadfast love.

*OPENING PRAYER

Maker of Heaven and Earth, we rejoice in your presence. In you, we find joy and strength, comfort and courage, truth and insight. Speak to us again. Reveal your power in and through us. Show us your glory and be glorified in our worship. May your glorious light shine through hidden spaces. May your blessed darkness make space for rest. Fortify us for this journey and make us instruments of your kingdom. Amen.

*OPENING HYMN

Give Me a Clean Heart

#188

Give me a clean heart so I may serve you.

God, fix my heart so that I may be used by you.

For I'm not worthy of all these blessings.

Give me a clean heart and I'll follow you.

*CALL TO CONFESSION

Friends, God's love is wide enough to hold all of us. Yet we know how often we fall short: ignoring neighbors, choosing comfort over compassion, forgetting the image of God in one another. Still, God seeks us and welcomes us home. With trust in that love, let us confess together.

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy God, you seek us when we are lost. You do not turn away from those who others minimize and demean. Help us to recognize the belovedness of every human being and all your creation. Give us courage and curiosity to engage with those that others would ignore or isolate. Let us rejoice on earth as your rejoice in heaven as we make restoration, redemption, and reconciliation abound among us. Amen.

*ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Beloved, the Holy One seeks you and rejoices when you turn from the ways of the world that minimize and marginalize the community God has prepared for us. We can be builders of a future that celebrates the kingdom of God on earth.

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

*HYMN

Amazing Grace #547

¹ Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but now am found, was blind, but now I see.

² 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved; How precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed!

³ Through many dangers, toils, and snares, I have already come; 'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.

⁴ My God has promised good to me, whose word my hope secures; God will my shield and portion be as long as life endures.

⁵ When we've been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun, We've no less days to sing God's praise than when we'd first begun.

THE SCRIPTURES Katie Zander

1 Timothy 1:12-17 NT page 174 Luke 15:1-10 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

CONSECRATION SUNDAY ANNOUNCEMENT

Julie Chappell

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

Let us give generously and lovingly to support the ministry of the gospel—loving our neighbors as ourselves through sharing the abundant gifts of God.

This is a time during worship 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 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

All My Days

Spirit – L. Zelman, M. Miller

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

God our Provider, receive these gifts in gratitude from your people. We pray that these offerings meet the needs of the world and our community. May they serve as a public witness of our commitment to being your church.

We ask that you bless all who come to the Community Fridge and Pantry in need. May they receive more than sustenance—may they experience dignity, community, and care.

Multiply these humble offerings, that they may bear fruit in a world longing for justice, flourishing, and joy. Amen.

*CLOSING HYMN

I'm So Glad, Jesus Lifted Me

#474

¹ I'm so glad, Jesus lifted me, I'm so glad, Jesus lifted me, I'm so glad, Jesus lifted me, singing glory, hallelujah, Jesus lifted me.

² Satan had me bound, Jesus lifted me, Satan had me bound, Jesus lifted me, Satan had me bound, Jesus lifted me, singing glory, hallelujah, Jesus lifted me.

³ When I was in trouble, Jesus lifted me, When I was in trouble, Jesus lifted me, When I was in trouble, Jesus lifted me, singing glory, hallelujah, Jesus lifted me.

*BENEDICTION

As you go, rejoice that God knows you, recognizes you, and communes with you. Rejoice knowing that you have the power to do the same with all those you encounter. Go, and rejoice!

Amen.

*CHORAL BENEDICTION

God Be with You #809

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

POSTLUDE



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

Worship Notes: *Joy in Heaven: Service* Prayers for the Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost was written by the Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology for the United Church of Christ.

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 Jack Stush and Audrey Rayfield.

The yellow rose is presented as a remembrance of those who were prisoners of war (POW) and those who are missing in action (MIA), as well as their families, by the York Family.

Attendance Last Sunday: 9 at 8:30 AM, 130 at 10:30 AM, and 40 online.



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

https://sundaystreams.com/go/ERUCC

Serving Today: September 14 Serving Next Week: September 21

Deacons: Robin A. Brady-Slifer Kyle Miller, Quynn Adkins

Robin L. Brady-Slifer

Elder: Jeanellen Kallevang Ave Barr Scripture Reader: Katie Zander Tom Jenkins

Acolyte: Abby Spear

Greeters: Sue Pinner, Barb Barry Tom Ford, Rachel Ford

Cliff Barr, Felecia Bishop

Welcome Table: Jeanellen Kallevang Betsy Selby, Rissah Watkins

Elizabeth Slade

Audio/Visual: Kelly Esslinger, Ethan Kline Kelly Essingler, Larry Martin

David Howard Jeff Baker

Nursery: trained volunteer needed trained volunteer needed

Fellowship: Emily Spear, Chris Spear Starr Schaeberle, Julie Chappell

Abby Spear, Ben Spear Mark Ulrich, Darryl Glick Jocelyn Vara, Chris Vara Betsy Selby, Angela Brittain

Rachael Bowman, Josh Bowman

Next Sunday: September 21 – Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

1 Timothy 2:1-7 | Luke 16:1-13

Today's lessons explore what faithful living looks like in a complex world. In 1 Timothy, Paul calls us to pray for everyone, including even the most difficult leaders, seeking peace and flourishing for all. Jesus' parable of the shrewd manager challenges us to be as creative and urgent about our spiritual priorities as we are about earthly concerns. Both passages ask: Where do our ultimate loyalties lie, and how do we navigate the tension between faithful living and worldly wisdom?

The Season of Stewardship continues, and we recognize the International Day of Peace. The Senior Choir will sing.

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.

Sharon DiDonato (aunt of Darryl Glick, friend of Mark Ulrich)

Isa Baxter (granddaughter of Kathy Gelles-baxter)

Beverly Mapp (sister of Audrey Rayfield)

William J. Smith (father of Dan Smith)

Ginny Peters

Tom Ford

Karen Stitely

Donna Baumgardner Smith (friend of Sandra Trout)

Amber Khan (friend of Maria and Dawn Lagrotteria)

Bill Cassell (brother of Ave Barr)

Hayden Jessop (friend of Sophia Carliss)

The Murray/Lennox/Cable

Family

Rhea Stein

John Howard (brother of David Howard)

Doris Esslinger

Sandra Trout

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

Kathy Johnson

Mary Staley

Mike Robertson (friend of Kathleen and Niel Jefferson)

Pat Condo

Wells Condo

Kitty Bradley

Beanie Cornell

Milt Crutchley

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

Tom Frazier

Pauline Marendt

Kayla Merry (niece of Kim Sexton)

Carol Spera (mother of Mark Ulrich)

Emogene Wyand

Bob Pinner

Tanya Pearre (sister of Colleen Baldree)

Jim Baldree (father of Chuck Baldree)

Anne Gallagher (friend of Milt and Bettie Joe Crutchley)

Lee Thomas

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.

Activities, Events, and Announcements

HELP PACK THE PANTRY

Sunday, September 14, 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.

Pasta Power - National Linguine Day is September 15, so let's celebrate by packing the pantry with all things pasta! Bring any shape pasta and your favorite shelf-stable sauce to fill the community pantry. You are invited to bring any 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. If you're unable to bring donations on Sunday, you can place them in the pantry at any time.

Contact: Kim Sexton, mkcssexton@comcast.net.

LET'S TALK: OH, THE PLACES WE'VE BEEN AN AFRICAN SAFARI & VICTORIA FALLS

Sunday, September 14 Flora Room, 9:15 – 10:15 AM

Is Africa on your bucket list? This is your chance to hear firsthand about the wonders of Africa and some get some travel tips. Presented by Terry and Donna Logee.

LET'S STUDY THE BIBLE WITH REV. JOHN SHILLINGBURG

resumes Sunday, September 7, and Wednesday, September 10 North Room / Zoom

Led by Rev. John Shillingburg, this is an ongoing class, with new members welcome at any time. No prior Bible knowledge is required. The class explores scripture in its original context, considering who wrote it and how it has been interpreted over time. This multi-faceted approach leads to deep learning and engaging conversations. In September, the Sunday morning class will begin by studying the Gospel of Mark and the Wednesday evening class will begin by exploring the book of Hosea.

The course is offered two times each week:

- Sunday morning, 9:15 10:15 AM, Zoom: <u>bit.ly/ERsunstudy</u>
- Wednesday evening, 7:00 8:15 PM, Zoom: <u>bit.ly/ERwedstudy</u>

CONGRATS TO NEW MEMBER IN DISCERNMENT

Congratulations to Tommie Bradshaw, who was unanimously accepted as a Member in Discernment with the Catoctin Association! The Rev. Chance Martinez-Colon of Grace UCC in Frederick will be serving as his mentor. A Member in Discernment (MID) in the United Church of Christ (UCC) is a member of a local UCC congregation who has been formally recognized and is in a covenant relationship with the wider church (via their Association Committee on Ministry) to discern a call to ordained ministry or another authorized form of ministry.

THEOLOGY AMONG THE PEOPLE WITH REV. DR. REBECCA SHILLINGBURG

resumes Tuesday, September 9

North Room / Zoom, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Zoom: tinyurl.com/tuetap

Our new name reflects the diverse nature of this class. We've explored topics ranging from what we believe to how the truth of the Bible is more than we get when we read it literally. In September, we will finish the last chapters of *An Altar in the World* by Barbara Brown Taylor. This beautifully written book has helped us discover the sacred in the small things we do and see every day of our life. We hope you will join us.

GENTLE YOGA

Tuesdays, starting September 9 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.

PRAYER GROUP FOR CONSECRATION SUNDAY

Flora Room

Sundays, September 14 - 28, 10:10 AM

Please join our prayer groups for Consecration Sunday, led by Tommie Bradshaw, our Consecration Sunday Prayer Team leader. We will pray for the Consecration Sunday program, its leadership team, and guest leader, and that all congregation members will seek God's will when coming to a faithful decision on what God is calling each to give.

The prayer groups will meet at 10:10 AM in the Flora Room after Let's Talk:

- Sunday, September 14
- Sunday, September 21
- Sunday, September 28

WEEKLY PRAYER GATHERING

Wednesdays Sanctuary, 4:30 PM

When the world outside is disintegrating, there is a place of respite. Look how Jesus approached it with his disciples: "Come away by yourselves to a lonely place and rest awhile".

On Wednesday afternoons, you are invited to enter the church (the far left front door into the Kieffer Lobby and the elevator vestibule door will be unlocked at 4:15 PM) and proceed quietly to the front of the sanctuary. We will meet promptly at 4:30 PM, have a few moments of "wisdom," perhaps chant together, and then fall into 20 minutes of silence (centering prayer/meditation). We will dismiss in silence at 5:00 PM. Led by Rev. Richard Leslie.

CONGREGATIONAL NAME CHANGE SURVEY

As we prepare to welcome our new settled pastor next year and celebrate the completion of the Trinity Chapel steeple restoration later this fall, we are also discerning whether a new name might better reflect who we are as a congregation and how we serve our community.

On October 13, 2024, the congregation voted "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."

To guide this process, we need your input. Please take a few minutes to complete a short anonymous survey and share your perspective on how ERUCC is perceived and how we might best reflect our identity and values.

Complete the congregational survey by October 1: http://erucc.org/namesurvey

Your voice matters. Whether you have been part of ERUCC for decades or have joined more recently, your insights will help us discern our path forward.

SACRED CONVERSATIONS ABOUT LIFE TRANSITIONS

Tuesday, September 16 (monthly on the third Tuesday) Flora Room, 2:00 PM

Join us for our as we resume our monthly gathering to 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. This time of holy sharing emphasizes the importance of leaning on each other and recognizing that we are not alone in our journeys.

Contact: Ave Barr or Linda Coyle with questions.

LET'S TALK: SUN DAY

Sunday, September 21

Flora Room, 9:15 – 10:15 AM

This Sunday is a day to prayerfully lift up the Sun and its role in creating clean energy. The Trump administration has chosen to end tax incentives for clean energy projects on December 31 and on September 30 for EVs, but there is still time to take advantage of the tax credits until the end of the year. Come find out more details during Let's Talk. Presented by Linda Coyle and members of the Green Team.

ERUCC BOOK GROUP

Tuesday, September 23 North Room / Zoom, 7:00 PM Zoom: <u>bit.ly/ERUCCbooks</u> Meeting ID: 848 7056 7574

Passcode: 226669

A Midwife's Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard, Based on Her Diary, 1785-1812 by Laurel Thatcher Ulrich. Drawing on the diaries of one woman in eighteenth-century Maine, Thatcher, a historian, unraveled the fascinating life of a community several hundred years ago. Between 1785 and 1812, a midwife and healer named Martha Ballard kept a diary that recorded her arduous work (in 27 years, she attended 816 births) and her domestic life in Hallowell, Maine.

HELP OUR GARDEN GROW – ONGOING MISSION OPPORTUNITY

At Vacation Bible School, our campers rolled up their sleeves to build a raised bed, fill it with compost, plant seeds, and give them a good first watering. You can see their beautiful work in the rear parking lot!

With hope and trust in God, we planted with wisdom, strength, creativity, and prayer. Now we need your help to keep the garden thriving.

How you can help:

- Sign up for a watering day: https://signup.com/go/TFyEHkf
- On your day (unless it rains), grab the hose from the fenced area, hook it up, and set the sprinkler (full instructions on the sign-up page).
- While the sprinkler runs for 20–30 minutes, enjoy a walk to the library or nearby shops.
- When finished, unhook the hose and put everything away.

Thank you for helping our garden grow! Our VBS campers can't wait to see the fruits of their labor, most of which will be shared with the Frederick Community Fridge: carrots, beets, kale, cilantro, and more!





CONSECRATION SUNDAY – A SEASON OF STEWARDSHIP AND REFLECTION

This year's Season of Stewardship will conclude on Consecration Sunday, October 5, when we formally offer our Estimates of Giving to the church for the coming year and joyfully join together after the 8:30 AM worship service for a Celebration Breakfast or after the 10:30 AM service for a catered Celebration Luncheon. We are again using the spiritually focused stewardship program this year, and we hope you find it meaningful.

The Consecration Sunday program is grounded in Biblical teaching that financial stewardship is part of our faithful response to and worship of God. It provides us with a structure in which we can, together, examine our values and our patterns of giving and think consciously about what percentage of our income God is calling us to give.

We are grateful to be on this spiritual journey with you and look forward to celebrating with you on October 5!

LET'S TALK: *OH, THE PLACES WE'VE BEEN* EAST GERMANY

Sunday, September 28 Flora Room, 9:15 – 10:15 AM

Before our German visitors arrive, we will hear from some our adults who travelled to East Germany in prior years. Their insights will help us in welcoming our German visitors in October. Presented by members of ERUCC.

GET EXCITED ABOUT OUR FALL GERMAN PARTNERSHIP

Prepare to support our **West Germany Youth Partnership**, who will be with us October 11-19 (Saturday night through Sunday worship, leaving for the airport Sunday after church).

Our Germany Hospitality Team is in need of the following:

- Host families for October 11-October 19
 - Contact Suzanne Morris (Morrissuzyg@aol.com)
- 1 more driver for Saturday, October 11, for a 3:45 PM airport arrival
 - Contact Pastor Kirstin (<u>ksrhoads@erucc.org</u>) if you can help with airport travel
- Old sweatshirts or jackets to serve as "workshirts" for outdoor work at Franklinton Center
- Sleeping bags to borrow for DC overnight. Please bring to ERUCC's Community Room on Sunday, October 12 by 6:00 PM.
- Personal-sized snacks and beverages for car rides. Bring to church on Sunday, October 12.
 - Julie Clark (<u>jclarkad@yahoo.com</u>) know what you are providing



Volunteers are needed to help with September 21 International Day of Peace events at ERUCC and Baker Park. Thanks for volunteering: tinyurl.com/2s3zwm6a

DISASTER RECOVERY TRIP - TIOGA COUNTY, PENN.

October 5 - 10, 2025

ERUCC's Mission, Evangelism, & Social Justice Committee encourages anyone interested to participate in an upcoming long-term recovery disaster relief work trip, with others in the Central Atlantic Conference UCC, to Tioga County, Pennsylvania, this October 5-10!

Tioga County was particularly hard hit by flooding triggered by the remnants of Tropical Storm Debby in August 2024. Some of those affected areas were also drenched by the leftovers of Tropical Storm Fred in August 2021 and took months to recover.



Learn more: bit.ly/tioga1025

Cost: Approximately \$100 per person for food. As of right now, the group will be cooking at a local church. One dinner out at your own expense.

Accommodations: Penn York Camp. Participants will need to bring sleeping bags or bedding.

Schedule: Participants arrive late afternoon/early evening on October 5. We can arrange for the carpooling once we know who is going.

- Monday Friday, October 6-10: Work Projects
- Departure: Early afternoon on Friday, October 10th

Contact: Barbara Kershner Daniel, CAC Disaster Response Coordinator at bkdaniel@cacucc.org.



Children & Youth Activities, Events, and Announcements

ANNUAL CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTRY REGISTRATION

for all minors: from birth through Grade 12

Families with children from birth through high school: It's time to complete your annual registration for children and youth ministries! This includes both new families (or new children!) and current families who need to review and update their information.

New Registration: Complete your form online at <u>tinyurl.com/k1dzreg</u>. After saving your first child's information, you can easily add additional children by clicking "+Add Registrant" without starting a new form.



Current Families: Your existing registration information is available for review on printed forms at the reception desk in the Kieffer Lobby. Please review and update your family's information.

Why This Matters: These forms provide our staff with critical information to care for your children safely and effectively, including:

- Allergies and health needs
- Emergency contact information
- Behavioral considerations
- Permissions for health emergencies
- Photo and image sharing preferences

Time-Saving Benefit: This comprehensive annual form streamlines future registrations for Sunday School, Junior Church, VBS, God's Kids Club, and other activities. Our staff can access your child's information quickly, making separate event registration and permission forms simpler, saving you time throughout the year.

Questions? Contact the church office or speak with Pastor Kirstin. Thank you for helping us provide the best possible care for your children in all our ministry programs!

JUNIOR CHURCH

resumes September 14

Children in K – Grade 5 are invited to Junior Church most Sundays during the school year. Children begin worship at 10:30 AM in the sanctuary with their families and, after the Thought for the Day, are dismissed for creative, well-supervised spiritual formation activities. On the first Sunday of each month, children remain in worship to participate in communion with their families. We hope you will join us when Junior Church resumes on Sunday, September 14!

YOUTH GROUP KICK-OFF & PLANNING

Sunday, September 14 2:00 – 6:00 PM

Youth and families, mark your calendars now for our Youth Group kick-off and planning time! We'll swim, play games, enjoy snacks, and plan for the year ahead! More details to come!

SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH

Sundays, beginning September 7 9:15 – 10:15 AM

We're excited to welcome all children and youth back for a year of Sunday School starting Sunday, September 7! Join us for a joyful morning of learning, connection, and faith formation as we begin a new year together. Classes for all ages begin at 9:15 AM.

- **Pre-K:** Meets in the Nursery
- **K Grade 2:** Meets in the Liz Coffey Room
- Grades 3 5: Meets in the Thomas Room

Check-in for Pre-K – Grade 5: Please stop at the reception desk in the Kieffer Lobby each Sunday to check-in for class. Students will be given a label, which they must provide their teacher when arriving to the classroom.

Pre-K – Grade 5 classes conclude with optional **Music & Movement** from 10:00 - 10:15 AM. Students who wish to participate in Music & Movement will transition under the direction of their teachers to the Liz Coffey Room at 10:00 AM.

Pickup: All families must check out children with leaders in their classrooms at 10:00 AM OR at in the Liz Coffey Room at 10:20 AM if staying for Music & Movement.

- Middle School/Confirmation: Meets in Trinity Chapel, 10 West Church Street
- **High School:** Meets in Trinity Chapel, 10 West Church Street

Check-in for Middle School/Confirmation & High School: Youth should enter through the side door of Trinity Chapel, located behind the iron gate on the left side of the building. Please check in at the self-service kiosk before proceeding to your classroom. <u>Always use the crosswalk when crossing the street</u>.

Dismissal: Youth, escorted by a teacher, will return as a group to the Kieffer Lobby in the main building at 10:15 AM.

SAVE THE DATES! GOD'S KIDS' CLUB RETURNS IN OCTOBER

Now that school is back in session, mark your calendars for the first two God's Kids' Clubs of the year on Thursday, October 2, and Tuesday, October 28!

God's Kids' Club offers fun, faith-based programming for children on many scheduled school closure days—providing both a safe place to be and meaningful opportunities for youth to serve as helpers. We can't wait to kick off another great year together!



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

Ann Watkins ~ Administrative Assistant/Receptionist ~ awatkins@erucc.org

Ashley Murphy ~ Nursery Attendant

The Rev. Dr. Barbara Kershner Daniel ~ Pastor Emerita
The Rev. Fred Wenner ~ Pastor Emeritus

CONSISTORY

Peter Brehm ~ Acting President | Matt Hueting ~ Vice President

David Kehne ~ Secretary | Robert Morris ~ Treasurer

Rebecca Shillingburg ~ Worship Chair | Peter Brehm ~ Finance Chair

Shelley Weakly ~ Mission, Evangelism, and Social Justice Chair | Vacant ~ Property Chair

Julie Clark ~ Stewardship/Generosity Chair | Holly Davis ~ Christian Education Chair

Mark Ulrich ~ Head Deacon | Larry Martin ~ Member-at-Large

ELDERS

Ave Barr | Peter Brehm | Matt Hueting | Jeanellen Kallevang | Susan Kulp | Eric Weakly

DEACONS

Quynn Adkins | Tommie Bradshaw | Robin A. Brady-Slifer | Robin L. Brady-Slifer Angela Brittain | Jim Brittain | Kyle Miller | Mark Ulrich

SETTLED PASTOR SEARCH AND CALL COMMITTEE

Rachael Bowman | Tommie Bradshaw | Karl Cooper | Linda Coyle | Matt Hueting

Terry Logee | Jen Powell | Bud Rossig | Eliza Stitely

Sunday Morning Schedule

subject to change

8:30 – 9:15 AM Early Worship, Sanctuary

9:00 AM Coffee and Conversation, Kieffer Lobby

9:15 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

Pre-K, Nursery

 $K - 2^{nd}$ *Grade*, Liz Coffey Room $3^{rd} - 5^{th}$ *Grade*, Thomas Room

9:15 – 10:15 AM **Youth Sunday School**

Middle School Youth/Confirmation, Trinity Chapel

High School Youth, 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 <u>www.erucc.org</u>

Junior Church, Thomas Room

Participating children are dismissed from Worship (2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th Sundays)

11:30 AM Fellowship, Downtown Community Room

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FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 14, 2025

1 Timothy 1:12-17

Growing in God's Love

In all my years in ministry, I only once lived in a parsonage. The church-provided house was one of those Sears Roebuck mail-order homes that were popular from 1908 through the 1940s.

The house had pockets doors, a sunroom, and a cozy living room with a large stone fireplace. It also had a kitchen doorway that was marked with lines and dates, documenting the growth of a former pastor's child. Judging by the years etched into the wood, it seemed no one had the heart to ever sand the frame and give it a coat of fresh paint.

The markings always intrigued me, making me pause each time I walked into the kitchen. I would gently touch the grooves and marvel at the miracle of growing up, not just physically, but spiritually as well.

I thought about how the growth lines on a doorframe are ultimately so finite. There comes the day when we reach our God-intended height. Our spiritual growth lines, though, are infinite. There's not stopping point. God wants us to keep growing in knowledge of God's love. The Spirit wants us all to reach new and glorious heights.

The Apostle Paul, our ancient, prolific letter writer is once again penning a note of wisdom and grace. This time to his young disciple Timothy. Paul wants to impart his honed leadership skills to Timothy, but before he does, he reflects on his own spiritual growth. He shares with Timothy how no one is beyond the reach of God's forgiveness and, once received, that forgiveness leads to a spiritual growth spurt that Paul himself experienced. Once a persecutor of Jews, God's grace led Paul to become a towering proponent of Christ's love.

Paul's letter to Timothy is one we all need to read this day because no matter how old we are, we need to remember that we should never stop growing spiritually. There is a divine doorframe with markings on it for each one of us, recording just how much we have matured in the knowledge of a great and redeeming God.

Wondering just how much you have grown? Here's a spiritual exercise for you. Think back to who you were 5 years ago. Now 10 years. How about 20 years ago? What did you believe? What were the prejudices you clung to? What were the awakenings your soul experienced?

Now mind you, spiritual growth does not always mean a notch higher up on the heavenly doorframe year after year. There might be years of no growth. There might even be years of backsliding. And that's okay, because the wonderful truth is this: God always gives us another chance. There are limitless opportunities to keep growing in the Spirit.

God of wisdom, may we never stop growing in the Spirit. May we continue to master the lessons you have for us — lessons on how to love one another, how to trust your guidance, and how to forgive and show grace to others. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

(Rev. Donna Frischknecht Jackson is a communications specialist for the United Church of Christ and author of today's Sunday Bulletin.)

