

Surprising Investment



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 the 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 five 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.

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 —



September 28, 2025

Sixteenth 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**

PRELUDE

***CALL TO WORSHIP** *(Inspired Psalm 146)*

Praise God! Praise the Holy One, O my soul!

We will sing praises to God our whole lives long!

Praise God in whom we may trust. Praise God in whom we may hope.

Happy are we whose hope is in the Maker of heaven and earth.

The Holy One lifts the bowed down. The Righteous One loves justice.

The Holy One brings the way of the wicked to ruin.

Praise God who reigns forever!

***OPENING PRAYER**

God our Comforter and our Confronter, speak to our souls. Engage our spirits with truth and compassion. Stir our hearts with your vision of a world full of your love and hope. Inspire us through your word, meet us in the moment, and infuse us with joy and courage to pursue your way. Guide us on the journey even as you dwell in our worship so that we may honor you and be restored in you. Amen.

***OPENING HYMN**

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

#1

¹ Immortal, invisible, God only wise,

in light inaccessible hid from our eyes.

Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,

almighty, victorious, your great name we praise.

**² Unresting, unlasting, and silent as light,
not wanting, not wasting, but ruling in might;
Your justice like mountains high soaring above,
your clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.**

**³ Your life is life-giving - to both great and small;
in all life you're living, the true life of all;
We blossom and flourish as leaves and as flowers,
then wither and perish - but naught dims your powers.**

**⁴ So perfect your glory, so brilliant your light,
your angels adore you, all veiling their sight;
All praise we now render as your angels do:
in awe at the splendor of light hiding you.**

***CALL TO CONFESSION**

Friends in Christ, the good news is that God's mercy is wider than our failings and deeper than our sin. Yet we know how easily we turn inward, how quickly we forget the suffering of others, and how often we accept distortions of God's truth. Trusting in God's compassion and longing for renewal, let us turn to God together in prayer.

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Compassionate God, we need to repent. We confess that too often we only care about our own suffering and discomfort and ignore the pain and troubles of our neighbor. We turn away or even contribute to the plight of others. We feast on systems that create deprivation and inequity. We enjoy the spoils of war that leave human siblings to subsistence in rubble and ruins. We accept distortions of the gospel that claim that your creation is insufficient to meet the needs of your beloved when your kingdom enables all to flourish. Meet us as we turn back to your way and your reign. Liberate us so that we may be instruments of restoration, repair, and renewal in your name. Amen.

***ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

God's mercy endures and renews. The world envisioned by the Holy One is available when we believe it, commit to it, and pursue it with all our being. Receive God's grace to do a new thing, in word and in deed, so that the world may know the love of God, the hope of God, and the promise of God through what we say, how we live, what we do, and the fruit we produce.

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.*

THE SCRIPTURES

Betsy Selby

1 Timothy 6:6-19 NT page 210
Luke 16:19-31 NT page 79

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

Karen Justice

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

May our hearts be open to the generous life. The Sovereign God invites us to participate in building the kingdom through our financial resources. Let us give in gratitude and joy, knowing that sharing our abundance blesses our neighbor, community, and world.

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

It Is Well with My Soul

Senior Choir
– L. Langley

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Holy One, receive these gifts as expressions of trust and love of You and care and love of your beloved. Magnify them for your glory and bless those who give in faithfulness and hope. Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN**

Through All the World, a Hungry Christ

#587, stanzas 1, 3, 4
tune – GERMANY

**¹ Through all the world, a hungry Christ
must scavenge far for daily bread,
Must beg the rich for crumb and crust -
we are the rich, the daily fed.**

**³ In torture cell, a prisoner Christ
for justice and for truth must cry
To free the innocent oppressed
while we at liberty pass by.**

**⁴ We do not know you, beggar Christ,
we do not recognize your sores,
We do not see, for we are blind:
forgive us, touch us, make us yours.**

***BENEDICTION**

As you go,
Spread comfort and hope, notice people, recognize their condition,
Know their worth, and be comforted that the Maker of heaven and earth
Notices you recognizes your condition, and knows your worth.
Go in hope and care.
Amen.

***SEVENFOLD AMEN**

#814

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

POSTLUDE



Worship Notes: Adapted from *Comfort and Agony: Service Prayers for the Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost*, 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 given in joyful celebration of the adoption of Zaydan, Brooklyn, and Skylar by Owen and Tyler York. As these three precious children officially become part of our family, we rejoice in the beautiful way love creates and expands families. We give thanks for the blessing of adoption, a reflection of God's own adopting love for us, and celebrate how our ERUCC church family has witnessed and supported this journey.

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

Attendance Last Sunday: 13 at 8:30 AM, 87 at 10:30 AM, and 44 online.



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

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

Serving Today: September 28

Deacons: Angela Brittain, Jim Brittain
Elder: Matt Hueting
Scripture Reader: Betsy Selby
Acolyte: J.D. Bowman
Greeters: Niel Jefferson, Kath Jefferson
Felecia Bishop
Welcome Table:
Audio/Visual: Kelly Esslinger, Ethan Kline
Jack Day
Nursery: *trained volunteer needed*
Fellowship: Susan Kulp, David Howard
Colin Neely, Robert Morris
Linda Coyle, Rhea Stein
Jake Stein
Communion Prep: -
Communion Clergy: -

Serving Next Week: October 5

Mark Ulrich, Quynn Adkins

Eliza Stitely

Danielle Carbone, Cliff Barr

Kelly Esslinger, Jeff Baker
Jack Day
trained volunteer needed
Renae Kline, Cathie Duncan
Jim Weitz, Glenn Wallace
Kath Jefferson, Niel Jefferson
Emily Button Kambic
Ave Barr
Rev. Michelle Beadle
Rev. Fred Rhines

Next Sunday: October 5 – World Communion Sunday & Consecration Sunday

We will celebrate communion with Christians around the world, symbolically gathered at a common table, and give God thanks by consecrating our gifts to God's work in the coming year. The Rev. Sheresa Simpson-Rice, Associate Conference Minister for the Central Atlantic Conference of the United Church of Christ, will preach and lead worship. The Senior Choir will sing. A catered Celebration Luncheon will follow in the Community Room.

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.

Barbara Heverley	Doris Esslinger	Jim Baldree (father of Chuck Baldree)
Todd Starr (nephew of Mary Staley)	Sandra Trout	Anne Gallagher (friend of Milt and Bettie Joe Crutchley)
David Young (friend of Janice Staley)	Charlie Van Eman (son of friends of Kathleen and Niel Jefferson)	Lee Thomas
Sharon DiDonato (aunt of Darryl Glick, friend of Mark Ulrich)	Mary Staley	Marcia Eisenstein
Isa Baxter (granddaughter of Kathy Gelles-baxter)	Mike Robertson (friend of Kathleen and Niel Jefferson)	Derek C. Hupp (grandson of Beanie & Gaylon Cornell)
William J. Smith (father of Dan Smith)	Pat Condo	Wayne Kolb (friend of Stefan and Judi Mach and Tony and Linda LaFianza)
Ginny Peters	Wells Condo	Jeannette Johnson
Tom Ford	Kitty Bradley	Jackie Keyser (sister-in-law of Betsy and Phil Selby)
Karen Stitely	Beanie Cornell	Barbara Lee Crutchley (sister of Milt Crutchley)
Donna Baumgardner Smith (friend of Sandra Trout)	Milt Crutchley	Marcy Channell (daughter of Jo Ann Fritz)
Amber Khan (friend of Maria and Dawn Lagrotteria)	Raymond Slifer (father of Robin A. Brady-Slifer)	Paige Coffey
Bill Cassell (brother of Ave Barr)	Tom Frazier	Fran Wenner
Hayden Jessop (friend of Sophia Carliss)	Pauline Marendt	Bonnie Devilbiss
The Murray/Lennox/Cable Family	Kayla Merry (niece of Kim Sexton)	Tina Prescott (daughter-in-law of Barbara & Bill Prescott)
Rhea Stein	Carol Spera (mother of Mark Ulrich)	Heleen (sister of Karin Mens)
John Howard (brother of David Howard)	Emogene Wyand	Kathy Blue Shores (friend of Jean Fish & Barb Biser)
	Bob Pinner	
	Tanya Pearre (sister of Colleen Baldree)	

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

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

Sunday, September 28

Flora Room, 9:15 – 10:10 AM

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

LET'S STUDY THE BIBLE WITH REV. JOHN SHILLINGBURG

Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings

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 twice each week:

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

PRAYER GROUP FOR CONSECRATION SUNDAY

Flora Room

Sunday, September 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 group will meet at 10:10 AM in the Flora Room after *Let's Talk*.



THEOLOGY AMONG THE PEOPLE WITH REV. DR. REBECCA SHILLINGBURG

Tuesdays

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

Zoom: tinyurl.com/tuetap

We will begin reading *Unclobber: Rethinking Our Misuse of the Bible on Homosexuality* by **Colby Martin** on Tuesday, September 30. Conservative Christians have used a handful of passages in the Bible—the "Clobber Passages"—to stand against the full inclusion of our LGBTQ siblings. In *Unclobber*, Martin guides readers in examining what the Bible says, and doesn't say, about homosexuality to help readers understand these inaccurate interpretations.

Join TAP as we explore these passages on our journey to know God and learn how to live as Christians in today's world.

INQUIRERS' CLASSES – TWO OPTIONS!

Wednesday, October 1 OR Thursday, October 2

Community Room (10/1) or Zoom (10/2), 6:00 – 8:00 PM

Interested in learning more about ERUCC and what it means to be part of our community of faith? We warmly invite you to one of our **Inquirers' Classes** to connect, ask questions, and explore what membership looks like at ERUCC.

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 Inquirers' 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.

Two class options:

- Wednesday, October 1, 6:00 – 8:00 PM, in the Community Room. **Dinner provided!**
- Thursday, October 2, 6:00 – 8:00 PM, via Zoom



- To participate by Zoom, please **register in advance**: tinyurl.com/y68xjdxm
After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Questions? Contact Peter Brehm, pbrehm@comcast.net, or the church office at erucc@erucc.org or (301) 662-2762.

HELP PACK THE PANTRY

Sunday, October 12, 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 parking lot.

Fall Comfort Foods – There's a chill in the air as fall arrives! Bring soup, chili, stews, crackers, and muffin or biscuit mixes to warm hearts and homes. Cans with pull-tops are especially welcome for easy preparation.

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, mkssexton@comcast.net.

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.

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.

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!



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 (Morrissuzyq@aol.com)
- 1 more driver for Saturday, October 11, for a 3:45 PM airport arrival
 - Contact Pastor Kirstin (ksrheads@erucc.org) 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 (jclarkad@yahoo.com) know what you are providing

BE PART OF A NATIONWIDE COMMUNITY MURAL PROJECT

You are invited to take part in a nationwide community mural project as part of your 2025 Advent spiritual practice.

Each participant will paint a small canvas (instruction, paints, and materials provided) with an image of their choice. Images from these individual canvases will then be combined into a large composite mural, which will be displayed publicly after its completion. Participants will keep their own canvas as a keepsake. Participants will have the opportunity to paint either in a group or individually.



The cost will be \$25 per canvas. More details to follow for those who express interest.

If you'd like to participate, indicate your interest by October 19 here: tinyurl.com/3dy3va6r

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*

REGISTER NOW – WOMEN’S RETREAT

Friday, November 7 – Saturday, November 8*

Manidokan Camp and Retreat Center

Mark your calendars for a time of rest, renewal, and connection at our annual Women’s Retreat! We’ll gather off-site at beautiful Camp Manidokan for a weekend of fellowship, reflection, and fun. Overnight and day-only options are available. *A second night’s stay, departing on Sunday, November 9, will also be available.

- *Friday overnight + Saturday (4 meals) - \$75*
- *Saturday only (3 meals) - \$50*



Register now: tinyurl.com/ERwmn25

We celebrate and honor the diverse identities and expressions embodied in the feminine spirit. Regardless of how you were defined by doctors at birth, you define yourself. All who connect with any aspect of the feminine are warmly invited to join us.

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.



NEIGHBORS IN NEED OFFERING

Sunday, October 5

The Neighbors in Need offering, which we will receive on October 5, supports the UCC's ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States.

The Neighbors in Need Offering is a Special Mission Offering of the United Church of Christ.



Your gifts support ministries of justice and compassion, the Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM) and Neighbors in Need grants. Thank you for your generosity!

Give to Neighbors in Need: ppay.co/9cc7UUy4TaE



Neighbors in Need

Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.
- Galatians 6:2

**Advocacy is essential to participating in
God's mission in the world.**

Gifts to the **Neighbors in Need** offering support ministries of justice and compassion in the United Church of Christ, including the UCC Office of Public Policy & Advocacy in Washington D.C.



The UCC Washington D.C. Office was called into being by a resolution at General Synod 10 in 1975. The office was assigned to identify, analyze, and forecast social issues which called for the attention of the church. The work has always been guided by the discernment of the UCC through General Synod gatherings and resolutions that collectively witness to God's call.

Each week the Washington D.C. Office creates an action alert to help give church members the opportunity to contact legislators simply and easily. In 2025 these weekly alerts have encouraged church members to fight for disability housing accommodations, to stop the gun violence epidemic, and to support environmental justice for all.

Thank you for your generosity!

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 tinyurl.com/k1dzreg. 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

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

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 worship and receive communion with their families.



SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH

Sundays

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. Always use the crosswalk when crossing the street.

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, from 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM!

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!



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

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

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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 <i>Pre-K, Nursery</i> <i>K – 2nd Grade, Liz Coffey Room</i> <i>3rd – 5th Grade, Thomas Room</i>
9:15 – 10:15 AM	Youth Sunday School <i>Middle School Youth/Confirmation, Trinity Chapel</i> <i>High School Youth, Trinity Chapel</i>
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>
11:30 AM	Fellowship , Downtown Community Room

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SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 28, 2025

Jeremiah 32:1-3a, 6-15

Surprising Investment

When my husband and I moved to our 18th-century Vermont home, complete with a charming old stone well, I couldn't resist doing what generations of farmers have done before me. I named our humble abode, "Old Stone Well Farm."

My husband, though, gently pointed out that two chickens and a small garden does not make a farm. Furthermore, he inquired, why would I even want the farming life?

His question comes from seeing the struggles — and closures — of the farms in the area. He has driven a feed truck long enough to have heard the stories of families barely making ends meet.

He is a local, rooted in reality. I, on the other hand, am an outsider who still romanticizes early morning milkings. Yes, our little village used to boast more cows than people, but I haven't given up on the dream of going beyond two chickens and adding some goats and perhaps an apple orchard.

The prophet Jeremiah bought a farm many years ago despite the warnings from all the naysayers. It wasn't really an opportune time to invest in land. There were great political conflicts between the Northern and Southern Kingdoms. And to top it all off, Jeremiah was in prison for warning people what was about to befall them. It is then, Jeremiah's cousin asks the prophet to buy his farm. And so, he does.

This land deal had nothing to do with buying low and selling high. It had everything to do with hope. Jeremiah proclaimed that he is doing it because God promises that the people will come home from exile and houses and fields and vineyards will be theirs once again.

How many times have we let reality cloud the vision of hope that God still has for us? Where are the dreamers who can see the goodness of God in the most desperate of situations?

Three months before his execution by the Nazis, theologian and pastor, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, wrote to his fiancée Maria, "When Jeremiah said, in his people's hour of direst need, that 'houses and fields and [vineyards] shall again be bought in this land,' it was a token of confidence in the future. That requires faith, and may God grant us it daily."

Yes, may God grant us such faith each day of our lives. Faith to buy the farm and live into the hope of a better tomorrow.

Old Stone Well Farm has yet to become a real working farm, but that doesn't mean I have given up on the dream. If anything, I am only just beginning to envision the amazing things that can be.

God of beautiful tomorrows, help us to invest in your Kingdom. Where others see dead ends, let our eyes see the possibilities. Increase our faith and help us always to hold on to hope. 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.)



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