

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 lobby. We would love to meet and learn more about you, and we are available to answer your questions. 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 people 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 aged 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

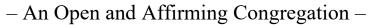
We, the members of this congregation, seek to celebrate in word and deed the gospel of Jesus Christ, by nurturing spiritual growth through worship, study and prayer; by caring for one another as God cares for us; and by proclaiming God's love for all people as we work to help our neighbors near and far.

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



EVANGELICAL REFORMED

United Church of Christ





November 30, 2025

First Sunday of Advent

10:30 AM



The numbered hymns are from The New Century Hymnal
*All who are able may stand
Bold text read in unison

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Peter Brehm

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

PRELUDE

THRESHOLD MOMENT

In the Time of Herod

read by Nancy Jones
– written by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed

I didn't live during Herod's time—

that brutal, murderous king, God save his soul.

But even hundreds of years later, I know the prayers of his people.

I know the prayers of the mothers and the children under his rule.

I know the prayers of the young men under his angry arm.

I know their prayers, because anyone who has ever lived in this soft world for more than two days knows how to pray for a miracle.

We rub our hands together.

We fold weary shoulders in,

a cage of bone to protect our bleeding hearts.

We sing, we shall overcome and bind my wandering heart to thee.

We walk across bridges and in front of powerful buildings.

We cover our cars in stickers that scream, we will not give up!

We allow a hungry cry to slip from our lips,

giving our lament a life of its own (with room to dance!).

And when all of that is said and done, we whisper to our creator,

God, break through the yelling and the fear.

Break through the violence and the oppression.

Get past the Herods of this world, and come be here.

Like every bleeding heart before, we pray for a miracle.

Reader 1: O God, we light the first candle of Advent.

The Candle of Hope is lighted.

- Reader 2: We kindle it with hope. We long for you to come to our world, to break through and reign with compassion, justice, and peace. We remember times we longed for God to be present to us, this congregation, and this world.
- Reader 1: The prophet Isaiah also cried to God to tear open heaven and come down. He called God's people to do right. Isaiah called them to be refashioned like clay by God, the potter. This Advent, we call out to God.
- People: Mighty God, creator of the world, break through all that keeps us from you. We ask for your mercy and reform us in your image. This Advent, visit us with your justice, love, and peace. Amen.

Choral Response

- tune PICARDY

Shine on us, O God of justice; Guide our path through gloom of night; Bear within us Wisdom's glory; Come to us, O Christ the Light.

*OPENING HYMN

O How Shall I Receive You

#102

¹O how shall I receive you, how meet you on your way, blessed hope of every people, my soul's delight and stay? O Jesus, Jesus, give me now by your own pure light, to know whate'er is pleasing and welcome in your sight.

² Love caused your incarnation; love brought you down to me; your thirst for my salvation procured my liberty. O love beyond all telling, that led you to embrace in love, all love excelling, our lost and fallen race.

3 You come, O Christ, with gladness, in mercy and goodwill, to bring an end to sadness and bid our fears be still. In patient expectation we live for that great day when a renewed creation your glory shall display.

*CALL TO TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE

Friends, if you long to feel closer to God, then the Prayer for Grace is a step in the right direction. For in the Prayer of Grace, we lay our hearts before God. We pour out the truth of our lives. We do not hide anything from our Creator, and in that simple act, God somehow always feels closer. So join me in this prayer as we invite God to draw closer, to break in here.

*PRAYER FOR GRACE

Ever-present God, we long to feel you close.

We long to feel your presence in our lives.

We long for you to break through the chaos and suffering of this world.

However, if we're honest, we rarely stand still long enough to feel you in our midst.

Forgive our rushing and distractions.

Forgive our wandering hearts, and center us in this space.

Remind us that even in the time of Herod,

even on the longest nights, you are always there. Amen.

*WORDS OF GRACE

Family of faith,

even when we doubt God's presence,

even when we fail to notice God's fingerprints in this world,

God is always moving closer to us.

Hear and believe the good news this Advent season:

Nothing can keep God's love away.

We are seen. We are forgiven. We are not alone. Amen.

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 Nancy Jones

Lamentations 3:55-57 OT page 767 Luke 1:5-13 NT page 57

Reader: May God bless the reading of this word.

All: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

The Rev. Kirstin Shrom-Rhoads

MORNING PRAYERS

The Rev. Richard Leslie

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

Friends, in every generation, God breaks in. In the time of Herod, God spoke hope into fear and whispered to Zechariah, "Do not be afraid." God met people in their longing, their waiting, and their everyday lives. Today, God meets us still. And our gifts—our resources, our time, our prayers—help prepare space for that hope to take root. With trust in the God who comes close, let us bring our offerings back to 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

Senior Choir

Angels Are Making Their Rounds

– P. Choplin

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

God, you have always found a way to speak—
through prophets, angels, and quiet whispers of hope.
Break into our world again through these gifts.
Use them to strengthen your people, lift the weary,
and carry your "Do not be afraid" to every waiting heart.
We dedicate these gifts—and ourselves—to your coming hope. Amen.

#110

Now Bless the God of Israel

¹Now bless the God of Israel, who comes in love and power, who raises form the royal house deliverance in this hour. Through holy prophets God has sworn to free us from alarm, To save us from the heavy hand of all who wish us harm.

²Remembering the covenant, God rescues us from fear, that we might serve in holiness and peace from year to year; And you, my child, shall go before to preach, to prophesy, that all may know the tender love, the grace of God most high.

³In tender mercy, God will send the dayspring from on high, our rising sun, the light of life for those who sit and sigh. God comes to guide our way to peace, that death shall reign no more.

Sing praises to the Holy One! O Worship and adore!

*BENEDICTION

In a fearful world,
may you look for God's spirit.
May you reach for each other's hands.
May you choose courage whenever you can.
And in all things, may you remember
that good news is louder than fear.
In the name of the one who calls,
the one who sends,
and the one who journeys with—
go in peace and
be not afraid.

Amen.

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

POSTLUDE



Worship Notes: Liturgy by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.

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 placed by the Stush Family of NY and NJ in loving memory of Audrey Rayfield's late sister, Linda Rayfield Skewes.

The yellow rose is presented by John Stush in memory of his uncle, Michael Gbur, who perished in WWII.

Attendance Last Sunday: 13 at 8:30 AM, 135 at 10:30 AM, and 39 online.



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

https://sundaystreams.com/go/ERUCC

Serving Today: November 30 Serving Next Week: December 7

Deacons: Kyle Miller, Tommie Bradshaw Mark Ulrich, Quynn Adkins

Elder: Peter Brehm Eric Weakly Scripture Reader: Nancy Jones Dan Smith

Greeters: Susan Kulp, Sue Pinner Danielle Carbone, Paul McGinley

Paul McGinley

Welcome Table: Julie Clark Julie Clark

Audio/Visual: Jeff Baker, Jeff Schaeberle Ethan Kline, Jeff Baker

David Howard Jack Day

Nursery: Trained Volunteer Needed Trained Volunteer Needed

Fellowship: Joe Adkins Renae Kline, Jim Weitz

Cathie Duncan, Emily Button Kambic

Kathleen Jefferson, Niel Jefferson

Communion Prep: - Cathie Duncan, Will Duncan

Communion Clergy: - Rev. John Shillingburg

Rev. Dr. Rebecca Shillingburg

Next Sunday: December 7 – Second Sunday of Advent When We're Running Out of Hope, God is At Work

Isaiah 43:19-21 | Matthew 11:1-11

John the Baptist sends word to Jesus from his prison cell, asking, "Are you the one?" John has spent his entire life preparing the way for Jesus; but from his prison cell, now certainly facing death, the future looks grim. Like John, even the most confident of us wonders from time to time: Is all this work worth it? Does anything I do matter? Am I on the right track? We can't always see the fruits of our labor, yet God is at work anyway. How might we, like Jesus and Isaiah, point to the places where God is at work in our world? How might we keep hope alive?

We will share in Communion at the chancel rail. The Senior Choir will share a cantata.

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.

Christopher Dove Donna Logee Jason Rhoads Charlie and his mother, Amanda Brown (friend of Rachael Bowman) Robert Debonis (uncle of Sophia Carliss) Sandy Maples (sister-in-law of Allen and Joan Maples) Confirmands and Mentors **Betsy Fisher** Laura Duncan Broderick (Cathie and Will's daughter) Barbara Heverley Todd Starr (nephew of Mary Staley) Sharon DiDonato (aunt of Darryl Glick, friend of Mark Ulrich) Isa Baxter (granddaughter of Kathy Gelles-baxter) **Ginny Peters** Tom Ford Karen Stitely

Donna Baumgardner Smith (friend of Sandra Trout) Bill Cassell (brother of Ave Barr) The Murray/Lennox/Cable Family Rhea Stein Doris Esslinger Sandra Trout Charlie Van Eman (son of friends of Kathleen and Niel Jefferson) Mary Staley Pat Condo Wells Condo Kitty Bradley Beanie Cornell Raymond Slifer (father of Robin A. Brady-Slifer) Tom Frazier Pauline Marendt Kayla Merry (niece of Kim Sexton) Carol Spera (mother of Mark

Bob Pinner Jim Baldree (father of Chuck Baldree) 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) 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)

Emogene Wyand

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.

Ulrich)

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

ITEMS NEEDED FOR CARE PACKAGES TO THOSE IN COLLEGE & MILITARY

Collection: November 2 - December 7

We're sending care packages to our young adults in college, job training, or military service—just a little reminder that ERUCC's care extends to them no matter where they are on life's journey! We are collecting individual snacks and small office/household items to include in these packages. Donations could include hot chocolate packets, chips/crackers, fruit pouches, popcorn, granola bars, cookies, soup packs, candy, sticky notes, pens, reusable straws, decks of cards, word search or game books, stress balls, and lip balm. Think: what can be useful and fun?!

Bring donations to the Sanctuary Lobby and place them in the designated donation box. Thanks!

CARE PACKAGES FOR CAREGIVERS

Collection: November 2 – December 7

Our Faithful Friends volunteer team is collecting small items to put together "Care packages for Caregivers" of our Faithful Friends and others. Donations will be collected on November 2, both on Sunday morning and during Trunk-or-Treat. We will continue to collect them through December 7. Our youth will pack them up along with other packages on December 7.

- Prayer cards
- Playing cards
- Cards to send to other people with stamps
- Shelf-stable food (protein bars, nuts)
- Lip balm
- Socks
- Gloves
- Lotion
- Question books/cards
- Pet treats/toys

- Tea bags
- Small stuffed animals
- Low-maintenance plant with a small pot for the youth to decorate

Bring donations to the Sanctuary Lobby and place them in the designated donation box. Thanks!

SAFE CHURCH TRAININGS

Monday, December 1, 5:00 – 7:00 PM – North Room Thursday, December 4, 5:00 – 7:00 PM – Zoom: <u>tinyurl.com/SCer1204</u>

If you would like to be a Safe Church-trained volunteer, or if you are currently volunteering and your training was more than two years ago, please plan to attend one of these Safe Church training events! Not sure when your last training took place? Ask Ann at the reception desk on Sunday morning or email awatkins@erucc.org.



ADVENT MIDWEEK: WALKING & PRAYING THE LABYRINTH

Wednesdays, December 3, 10, 17, 24, and 31 Various locations, 12:00 – 1:00 PM

Walking a labyrinth is an ancient spiritual discipline. This year, during Advent, we invite you to gather midweek at various locations in our area to walk a labyrinth. Look for more details in the Advent edition of *Trinity Chimes*.

- **December 3**, Trinity Chapel Labyrinth
- **December 10**, Chartres Essence Labyrinth at Frederick Community College, meet there or contact Pastor Kirstin to coordinate a ride
- **December 17**, All Saints Episcopal Church Labyrinth, meet at the garden entrance, turning left just past the church
- December 24, Canvas Labyrinth borrowed from Trinity UMC, in the Community Room
- **December 31**, Trinity Chapel Labyrinth

5th ANNUAL COOKIE SWAP

Sunday, December 7 North Room, 12:00 PM

Celebrate the sweet treats of the season at ERUCC's 5th Annual Cookie Swap! Bring five dozen cookies and an extra container to take your cookies home. Children and their cookie creations are welcome. We will also be taking cookies to our members who are homebound. There will be a designated place to bring your cookies before attending worship or a Christian Education class.



Sign Up: https://tinyurl.com/ER25cookies

If you have questions, contact Starr Schaeberle, <u>starr.schaeberle@comcast.net</u> or (301) 662-6902.



MISSION SPENDING PLAN REVIEW OPPORTUNITY

Sunday, December 7

Community Room, during Fellowship

Interested in learning more about ERUCC's proposed 2026 budget before the Congregational Meeting? Join our Finance Chair and Treasurer during Fellowship on Sunday, December 7.

This is a great opportunity to ask questions, share your input, and gain a deeper understanding of the financial planning that supports our mission and ministry.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Sunday, December 14

Community Room / Zoom, ~ 12:00 PM

Register to attend via Zoom: tinyurl.com/reg1214er

Mark your calendar for Sunday, December 14, immediately following the 10:30 AM service. This is a vital opportunity for us to gather as a community, share updates, and make important decisions for our church's future.

Agenda Highlights:

- Review and approval of the proposed 2026 Mission Spending Plan
- Progress on the Historic Clock Tower project
- Response to Consecration Sunday
- Study Group plans for our Congregation Name
- Settled Senior Pastor Search and Call Committee

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

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

ORDER POINSETTIAS FOR OUR ALTAR THIS CHRISTMAS

Order deadline: Sunday, December 14

Please find details and an order form on the inside back cover of this bulletin, on printed forms at the back of the sanctuary, or order online at <u>tinyurl.com/ERpnt25</u>.



LET'S TALK: ADVENT

Sundays, December 7, 14, 21 North Room, 9:15 – 10:15 AM

Led by Kim Sexton. As we delve deeper into the theme from Sanctified Arts, *What Do You Fear? Insisting on Hope this Advent, we* will use the daily devotional that comes with the program as our book and supplement with other resources. There will also be an art project as part of our lesson and we will find ways to share our light in the world.

Questions? Contact Kim Sexton, <u>mkcssexton@comcast.net</u>.

HOT COCOA OUTREACH AT KRIS KRINGLE PROCESSION

Friday, December 12 ERUCC, 6:00 – 8:30 PM

We are excited to prepare for our fourth annual Hot Cocoa Hospitality and Outreach before and after the Kris Kringle Procession. Everyone in the congregation is invited to join in this warm act of welcome and service. Our children and youth will offer neighbors a cup of hot chocolate and share invites to our Christmas Eve services and the Historic Houses of Worship Candlelight Tour. This year we will also have a donation box to collect socks, shoes, and deodorants for SHIP students (Frederick's Student Homelessness Initiative Partnership).

We can use your help to prepare! Donations of large containers of hot chocolate mix, candy canes, and mini marshmallows are needed for this fun evening.

Sign up to donate: tinyurl.com/ER25kkp

ALL-CHURCH CHRISTMAS HAM DINNER

Sunday, December 21 Community Room, 5:00 – 7:00 PM

Come share in a joyful all-church ham dinner as we gather to celebrate connection and community. We'll have children's activities set up at the side of the room, along with a simple art project for adults—and together we'll brighten the space with paper Advent lanterns!

Please sign up to bring a side dish, and consider bringing 1–2 canned goods, shelf-stable items, or toiletries to help stock the Frederick Community Fridge.

As one big and generous family of God, let's make this a table of welcome. Think about inviting a friend or neighbor, or reaching out to someone from church you haven't seen in a while—let them know you'll be there, or offer them a ride so they can join us too.

Our worship theme for Sunday, December 21, calls us to be together in connection rather than live in isolation. The holidays can be a tender time, and gatherings like this remind us of the good news we share with one another: "Fear not! We don't go through this alone!" Come be part of this evening of warmth, belonging, and joy.

Side dish sign up: https://tinyurl.com/hamER1221

THEOLOGY AMONG THE PEOPLE WITH REV. DR. REBECCA SHILLINGBURG

Tuesdays

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

Zoom: tinyurl.com/tuetap

We are reading Brian Kaylor's book *The Bible According to Christian Nationalists: Exploiting Scripture for Political Power*. Have you heard the term Christian Nationalism and wondered exactly what was meant by that and how we as Christians should approach it and Christians in other traditions who adhere to aspects of it?

This class is slightly different than the Sunday class offered earlier, but will cover similar topics.

LET'S STUDY THE BIBLE WITH REV. JOHN SHILLINGBURG

Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings (Note: class will not meet on November 30)
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.

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: <u>bit.ly/ERwedstudy</u>

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.

WEDNESDAY PRAYERS

Wednesdays

Sanctuary, 4:00 – 4:30 PM (NOTE: Change of time)

On Wednesday afternoons, you are invited to enter the church (doors open at 3:45 PM) and proceed to the front of the sanctuary in silence. We will each pray silently in our own personal traditions. We begin promptly at 4:00 PM and end at 4:30 PM. What you can expect: substance for your everyday journey. Led by Rev. Richard Leslie.

CANDLELIGHT TOUR OF HISTORIC HOUSES OF WORSHIP

Friday, December 26

The beloved Candlelight Historic Houses of Worship Tour returns this holiday season in Downtown Frederick. This special open house celebrates Frederick's tradition of religious diversity, local history, and the holiday season on Friday, December 26, 2025, from 3 - 8 PM.

ERUCC will open its main building, located at 15 West Church Street, to the public for this tour. We will be offering refreshments and our wonderful hospitality.



■ Interested in volunteering at this event?

Scan the QR Code or go to https://tinyurl.com/ERcndl25.

Questions? Contact Julie Clark, Jclarkad@yahoo.com.

JOIN A FELLOWSHIP TEAM

Looking for a simple, meaningful way to get to know people at ERUCC? Consider volunteering on one of our Fellowship Teams! It's a fun and rewarding ministry that helps create spaces for connection over coffee, treats, and warm conversation. Whether you enjoy hosting or prefer working quietly in the background, there's a place for you. Most volunteers serve just once every other month, making it an easy commitment with a big impact. Come help create the warm, welcoming spaces that bring our community together!

Ready to volunteer or want to learn more? Contact Joe Adkins: joeadkins1301@gmail.com, or the Church Office.

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL BOOKLET

Beginning with the first week of Advent, this devotional takes seriously the angels' message in Luke's Gospel and trusts that Christ's birth truly is good news of great joy for all people. Each week offers art, reflections, poetry, and hymns to give you hope in a fearful world. The devotional is available in the rear of the Sanctuary. You can also request a copy through the church office at erucc@erucc.org.

Children & Youth Activities, Events, and Announcements

SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH

Sundays, 9:15 – 10:15 AM

Join us for a joyful hour of learning, connection, and faith formation with classes for all ages.

Children in Pre-K; K – Grade 2; and Grades 3 – 5: please check-in at the reception desk in the Kieffer Lobby (main building).

Music & Movement takes place 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 in the Liz Coffey Room at 10:20 AM if staying for Music & Movement.

Youth in Middle School/Confirmation or High School should enter Trinity Chapel through the side door, 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 cross the street at the crosswalk.

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

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.

ADVENT MISSION PROJECT FOR K-5 SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES

Collection: November 30 – December 14

This Advent season, our K-5th grade Sunday School classes are putting compassion into action with a special mission project! We're teaming up to stock the Frederick Community Fridge and Pantry, a simple but powerful way our children can help care for our neighbors. Beginning November 30, children are invited to bring non-perishable food items or hygiene products to their classrooms. We'll be collecting donations through December 14.

Weather permitting, our classes will make a special trip out to our parking lot to place their gifts directly into the Community Fridge. It's a hands-on moment of generosity and learning that embodies the heart of Advent.

TINY TOTS & YOUNGER CHILDREN - COOKIE BAKING

Saturday, December 6

Community Room, 12:00 - 2:00 PM

Families with tots and younger elementary kids are invited to gather in our Community Room kitchen to bake and decorate Christmas cookies! Come with aprons and energy to make cookies to take home and for our church cookie swap on Sunday, December 7.

To maximize the time available for decorating—the fun part!—we will use pre-made and store-bought doughs to roll out, cut, and decorate. We will also have the easy-to-make small, yummy treats like melted chocolate kisses on pretzels. If you can bring a dough to share or wish to demonstrate how to make a special family treat, please let Pastor Kirstin know.

RSVP via the link on the Church calendar to help us know how much dough to prepare.

YOUTH GROUP - WRAPPING, PACKING, & GIVING NIGHT

Sunday, December 7

Community Room, 5:00 – 7:00 PM

We'll pack up the donated stuffies, assemble Care Packages for Caregivers, and decorate mini plant pots as a bright reminder of appreciation for those caregivers. We'll also put together care packages for our college students, complete with plenty of food to help them power through finals. And yes—there will be food for our youth to enjoy that night, too!

It's a night of giving, creating, and spreading love. Come be part of it!

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 Let's Talk, Flora 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 www.erucc.org

Junior Church, Thomas Room

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

11:30 AM Fellowship, Downtown Community Room

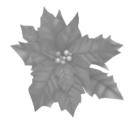
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Poinsettias



We will be ordering poinsettias from Frederick High School this year. All funds will benefit the horticultural program and Frederick High FFA Chapter. Each plant will have 4-6 blooms and will cost \$10. Plants will be placed on the chancel in the Sanctuary.

Order by December 14! Complete the form and return it with payment to the church office, offering plate, or pay online at <u>bit.ly/eruccflowers</u> by December 14.

Scan to Pay Online

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

Donor Name(s):
I would like to place poinsettias in the church for Christmas.
☐ I/we have enclosed a payment of \$ (\$10 per plant).
☐ I/we made an online payment of \$ (\$10 per plant).
If you wish for your poinsettias to be listed in memory of, in honor of, or placed by the donor please indicate which and PRINT the names below.
In memory of:
In honor of:
Placed by:

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

November 30, 2025

Matthew 24:36-44

Called to Gift

The season of Advent has begun. Four weeks till the birth of Christ. Four weeks of journeying to Bethlehem. Four weeks of lighting candles around the Advent wreath.

I love this season that begs for us to turn our back on the commercial frenzy of the holiday so that we can embrace the spiritual practices of slowing down and, as Matthew's Gospel tells us, learn to be "watchful" for we do not know when the Son of Man will return.

I will admit that I am an advocate for Advent. But no matter how hard I try to do the holidays differently than those around me, I get sucked into the busyness. And if there is one thing that I really dislike the most about this time of year, it's the gift giving.

Now before I am labeled a Grinch — or worst yet, a Scrooge — let me explain. My anxiety with Christmas gifts stems from the fact that I never have any idea what to get those I love. I envy those who know just what trinket would make their spouse, friend, or child smile.

Last year, I was especially drawing a blank as to what to get my father. Then two days before December 25, I remembered the jar of homemade mincemeat I had in my cupboard. I then remembered how much my father loved mincemeat pies.

I had an epiphany. I would make him a pie. The choice of this gift felt so right. I was excited to prepare it, imagining the joy on his face when I gave it to him. And the day I gave it to him, his expression of joy was better than I imagined.

I realized then that being a good gift giver is all about being attentive to others — to borrow from Matthew, being "watchful" — and truly learning how to listen.

Gift giving isn't hard when you realize gifts are all around you.

There's a term in the Church that I happen to love, especially this time of year when we might be struggling with our Christmas shopping lists. It's "called to gift." At first glance, it might seem grammatically incorrect. Called to do what? Gift?

But "called to gift" reminds us to take the spiritual gifts we have been given by God and share them with others. We are called to gift the world with the light that shone that holy night. We are called to gift strangers with adoration just like the Magi bestowed on Jesus. We are called to gift our loved ones with the same song of peace and good will that the angels sang announcing the babe's birth.

What are you being "called to gift" this season?

God, as the season of Advent begins, we remember how out of great love for us you gave us Jesus. That is the most amazing gift we have ever received. Help us now to share that gift of love with others. Help us to become amazing gift givers of your Spirit, Word and Truth. 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.)

