



Holy Language

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.

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 –



April 12, 2026

Second Sunday of Easter

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

The Rev. Dr. Rebecca Shillingburg

CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP

Welcome

- M. A. Miller

**Let's walk together for a while and ask where we begin
To build a world where love can grow and hope can enter in,
To be the hands of healing and to plant the seed of peace,**

**Singing welcome, welcome to this place
You're invited to come and know God's grace
All are welcome the love of God to share
'cause all of us are welcome here; All are welcome in this place.**

**Let's talk together of a time when we will share a feast,
Where pride and power kneel to serve the lonely and the least,
And joy will set the table as we join our hands to pray,**

**Singing welcome, welcome to this place
You're invited to come and know God's grace
All are welcome the love of God to share
'cause all of us are welcome here; All are welcome in this place.**

**Let's dream together of the day when earth and heaven are one,
A city built of love and light, the new Jerusalem,
Where our mourning turns to dancing, every creature lifts its voice**

**Crying welcome! Welcome to this place
You're invited to come and know God's grace
All are welcome the love of God to share
'cause all of us are welcome here; All are welcome in this**

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

As we walk together through this time of transition, we give thanks for the faith that has shaped us and look with hope toward what lies ahead. We covenant to proclaim and embody God’s love and justice for all people, serving our neighbors both near and far. Through faithful living and active participation in our congregation, we commit to following in the way of Jesus to build a community of extravagant welcome and inclusivity for all people. May we continue to reflect God’s light through our love and hope in all that we do. In Christ’s name we pray. Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE CENTERING CANDLE

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Our quest in this series is to be “purveyors”—to promote a state of awe about the lives we’ve been given and revel in the sheer miracles of life that surround us. This is a spiritual journey in the tradition of biblical poets and of mystics. In our modern day, researchers who study wellbeing know that when we cultivate elements that deepen our awe of life, our appreciation for others, our dedication to the good, we live longer, more purposeful and more joyful lives.

In a time when we are exposed to the weight of the world by the messages around us, we will discover that awe is indeed a precious good in the world, and we will seek to bring more of its elements alive in us. Let us open the eyes of our hearts to awe.

***HYMN**

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

#1

**Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
in light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
almighty, victorious, thy great name we praise.**

**Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,
nor wanting, nor wasting, thou rulest in might;
thy justice like mountains high soaring above
thy clouds, which are fountains of goodness and love.**

**To all life thou givest, to both great and small;
in all life thou livest, the true life of all;
we blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,
and wither and perish but naught changeth thee.**

**Great Father of glory, pure Father of light,
thine angels adore thee, all veiling their sight;
all praise we would render, O help us to see
'tis only the splendor of light hideth thee.**

***OPENING PRAYER**

Gracious and Eternal God, you are the one who calls us together and the one who sends us out in the world. Remind us, as we gather, how good it is to dwell with you and one another. Stir our hearts to love boldly, freely, and joyfully. Let us praise you with our whole lives and magnify your name by our works. We bless and honor you, O Faithful One, from generation to generation and from community to community. Speak to our spirits and receive our worship. Amen.

***CALL TO TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE**

On this day, we begin our adventure into a heightened sense of awe. As a species, we are prone to attending to that which we dread and fear. It helped keep us alive. But now, the frequency of bad news is off the charts and it isn't keeping us alive, rather it is quietly draining the life right out of us. We must engage in awe-filled practices that heighten our connection to that which is bigger than us, remind us that we are not alone, and offer us respite and resilience.

Let us rise in body and/or spirit and pray:

***PRAYER FOR GRACE**

Holy One, we come together this day because we need to be reminded to see through the lens of awe.

Too often, we feel helpless when faced with the circumstances of our lives, of this moment in time.

Open us to perceive anew.

Inspire us to receive our surroundings with awe.

Forgive us when we move through our lives forgetting that our hearts can be buoyed by your presence.

Be with us on this journey as we seek again to marvel at your works.

***WORDS OF GRACE**

The awesome presence of God is ever abiding.
God forgives us. Jesus embraces us. The Spirit enlivens us.
We are whole.
With awe, we accept this belovedness.
And all God's people say, "**Amen.**"

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Children, youth, and all who wish to join them are invited to come forward for a special message.

***HYMN**

Open the Eyes of My Heart, Lord

- P. Baloche

**Open the eyes of my heart, Lord.
Open the eyes of my heart;
I want to see you,
I want to see you. [REPEAT]**

**To see you high and lifted up,
Shining in the light of your glory.
Pour out your power and love
As we sing. Holy, holy, holy.**

**Open the eyes of my heart, Lord.
Open the eyes of my heart;
I want to see you,
I want to see you. [REPEAT]**

**To see you high and lifted up,
Shining in the light of your glory.
Pour out your power and love
As we sing. Holy, holy, holy. [REPEAT]**

**Holy, holy, holy.
Holy, holy, holy.
Holy, holy, holy.
Holy, holy, holy.**

THE SCRIPTURES

Peg Stahler

Psalm 5:1-3, 7

OT page number 490

John 20:19-31

NT page number 115

Reader: May God bless the reading of this word.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

The Rev. Fred Wenner, PK, PP, PE

MORNING PRAYER

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

Through Christ, we receive an inheritance that is unfading. Let us express our gratitude to God by sharing the gifts we receive. Let us bring our material offerings for tangible ministry to spread good news in our 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

Spirit

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Generous One, may these gifts be a blessing to those in need, a source of hope for those in despair, comfort for those who grieve, encouragement for those who doubt, a balm for those in pain. May our generosity reflect our gratitude and our giving be another source of praise. Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN**

We Would Be Building Temples Undone

#607

**We would be building; temples still undone
O'er crumbling walls their crosses scarcely lift;
Waiting till love can raise the broken stone,
And hearts creative bridge the human rift;
We would be building,
Master, let Thy plan
Reveal the life that God would give to man.**

**Teach us to build; upon the solid rock
We set the dream that hardens into deed,
Ribbed with the steel that time and change doth mock,
Th'un failing purpose of our noblest creed;
Teach us to build;
O Master, lend us slight
To see the towers gleaming in the light.**

**O keep us building, Master; may our hands
Ne'er falter when the dream is in our hearts,
When to our ears there come divine commands
And all the pride of sinful will departs;
We build with Thee,
O grant enduring worth
Until the heavenly Kingdom comes on earth.**

***BENEDICTION**

***CHORAL BENEDICTION**

God Be in My Head

- V. Pennington

**God be in my head, and in my understanding; God be in my eyes, and
in my looking; God be in my mouth, and in my speaking; God be in my
heart and in my thinking. [REPEAT]**

**God be in my head, God be in my eyes, God be in my mouth, my heart,
and in my thinking. God be at my end and my departing.**

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

POSTLUDE



Worship Notes: Liturgy by McFee, Marcia. Purveyors of Awe: Elements for Curating a Life of Spiritual Depth. www.worshipdesignstudio.com/purveyors-of-awe

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 for the congregation of ERUCC.

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

Attendance Last Sunday: 21 at 8:30 AM, 197 at 10:30 AM, and 119 online.



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

<https://erucc.org/visit/sunday-live-stream>

Serving Today: April 12

Deacons: Robin A. & Robin L. Brady-Slifer
Elder: Matt Hueting
Scripture Reader: Peg Stahler
Acolyte: Wyatt Pomeroy
Greeters: Kathleen Jefferson, Niel Jefferson
Paul McGinley, Rob Smith
Welcome Table: Rissah Watkins, Molly Black
Audio/Visual: Jeff Schaeberle, Kelly Esslinger
Ethan Kline
Nursery: Rachael Bowman,
Maria Lagrotteria
Fellowship: Ave Barr, Cliff Barr
Joan Maples, Allen Maples
Jen Powell, Pat Condo
Bud Rossig

Serving Next Week: April 19

Kyle Miller, Tommie Bradshaw
Ave Barr
Felecia Bishop, Rob Smith
Cliff Barr
Betsy Selby
Kelly Esslinger, Jeff Baker
Jeff Schaeberle
Linda Coyle
Karen Justice, Marj Berkheimer
Peter Brehm, Rob McGuire
Felecia Bishop, Alex Martinez

Next Sunday: April 19 – Third Sunday of Easter

The Revs. Kirstin Shrom-Rhoads and Dr. Rebecca Shillingburg will be leading worship. 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.

Rhea Stein after the passing of her mother	Barbara Heverley	Emogene Wyand
Ingrid Jacobsen after the death of her wife, Kitty Bradley	Todd Starr (nephew of Mary Staley)	Bob Pinner
Laura Broderick	Sharon DiDonato (aunt of Darryl Glick, friend of Mark Ulrich)	Jim Baldree (father of Chuck Baldree)
Della Willmann (Shelley Weakly's mother)	Ginny Peters	Lee Thomas
Claude Huntsman (brother-in-law of Robin A. Brady-Slifer)	Karen Stitely	Marcia Eisenstein
Charlie Woodward	Donna Baumgardner Smith (friend of Sandra Trout)	Derek C. Hupp (grandson of Beanie & Gaylon Cornell)
John Stush	Bill Cassell (brother of Ave Barr)	Wayne Kolb (friend of Stefan and Judi Mach and Tony and Linda LaFianza)
Izzie Sims (friend of Molly Black)	The Murray/Lennox/Cable Family	Jeannette Johnson
Debbie Jennings (<i>friend of Kathleen Jefferson</i>)	Doris Esslinger	Jackie Keyser (sister-in-law of Betsy and Phil Selby)
Charlie and his mother, Amanda Brown (friend of Rachael Bowman)	Sandra Trout	Marcy Channell (daughter of Jo Ann Fritz)
Robert Debonis (uncle of Sophia Carliss)	Charlie Van Eman (son of friends of Kathleen and Niel Jefferson)	Paige Coffey
Sandy Maples (sister-in-law of Allen and Joan Maples)	Mary Staley	Fran Wenner
Betsy Fisher	Pat Condo	Bonnie Devilbiss
Barbara Heverley	Wells Condo	Tina Prescott (daughter-in-law of Barbara & Bill Prescott)
Betsy Fisher	Tom Frazier	Heleen (sister of Karin Mens)
	Pauline Marendt	Kathy Blue Shores (friend of Jean Fish & Barb Biser)
	Kayla Merry (niece of Kim Sexton)	
	Carol Spera (mother of Mark Ulrich)	Confirmands and Mentors

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 communion from our pastoral team. 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 STUDY THE BIBLE WITH REV. JOHN SHILLINGBURG

Sunday morning, 9:15 – 10:15 AM, Zoom: bit.ly/ERSunstudy

Wednesday evening, 7:00 – 8:15 PM, Zoom: bit.ly/ERWedstudy

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.

THEOLOGY AMONG THE PEOPLE WITH REV. DR. REBECCA SHILLINGBURG

Tuesdays

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

Zoom: tinyurl.com/tuetap

Join us as we read and discuss *How We Learn to Be Brave: Decisive Moments in Life and Faith* by Mariann Edgar Budde.

Beginning April 14th: Our next book will be *Genesis for Normal People* by Peter Enns and Jared Byas. If you are not a Bible scholar but want to be able to read Genesis and understand its big picture, this brief, witty book is the guide you've been waiting for. Clear summaries and thought-provoking questions provide direction for personal reflection and group discussion. Peter Enns, a Biblical Studies professor, and Jared Byas, an Old Testament professor, summarize the book's key themes and help us see Genesis as an ancient story, one with continued relevance for human experience today.

GENTLE YOGA

Tuesdays

Community Room, 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.

NEW! Pay what you can or drop in for free. The donations will be used to purchase food for the Frederick Community Fridge & Pantry, located in the church parking lot.

Questions? Contact Renae, rdkline15@gmail.com.

WEDNESDAY PRAYERS

Wednesdays

Sanctuary, **4:30 PM** **Please note time change**

On Wednesday afternoons, you are invited to enter the church (doors open at 4:15 PM) and proceed to the front of the sanctuary in silence. We will pray silently in our own personal traditions. We begin promptly at 4:30 PM and end at 5:00 PM. What you can expect: substance for your everyday journey. Led by Rev. Richard Leslie.

MISSION, EVANGELISM, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE invites us to partner in giving to **Beyond Shelter** this season. We will be collecting diaper wipes, diaper genie refills, hot drink mixes: tea, coffee, hot chocolate; and cases of individual water bottles. Please bring items all through April to the bin in the Sanctuary Lobby, to the left of the Welcome Table.

VISIT THE GREEN TEAM IN THE SANCTUARY LOBBY ON SUNDAY, APRIL 12

- Learn why native plants are important to our Creation Justice mission!
- See photos from local native plant gardens including our own ERUCC plantings!
- Find out where you can buy native plants!

Look for native plant information at the tables in fellowship.

- Check out the pictures of native flowers with the insects they support!
 - Find info on where to buy native plants on the back of the photos.
-

ERUCC SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE



ERUCC is fortunate to have several scholarship programs available to our members as they seek educational opportunities to develop knowledge and skills in the realization of their full potential. These scholarships are gifts to church members for post-secondary undergraduate education and are awarded by the Scholarship

Committee. The awards are based on the quality of the candidate's plan for use of the funds, the ability and promise of the applicant, and the need for financial assistance. The aid may continue for subsequent years after an interview with the Scholarship Committee, submission of intent to reapply, and a transcript of grades for the current year. The committee consists of chair, Sandra Trout and members Dan Smith, Trish Coffey, and Cathie Duncan.

All application materials must be submitted to the Scholarship Committee through the Church Office by **May 7, 2026**.

Request an application for new or renewing applicants by visiting Ann at the reception desk in the Kieffer Lobby on Sunday mornings or email: erucc@erucc.org.

MUSIC OF THE REGIMENT – FREE CONCERT

Sunday, April 12

Sanctuary, 2:30 PM

In the spirit of the United States Semiquincentennial of 2026 (America's 250th), join us for "Music of the Regiment" and their new 2026 program "Equal to any Band in this Country...!"

Music of the Regiment is a musical ensemble that performs music from the past as closely as possible for the present, including on period-appropriate instruments. They have a focus on the classical and military music traditions of the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

New for the Semiquincentennial year, their program "Equal to any Band in this Country..." combines dramatic readings with the marches and opera arrangements that formed the soundtrack of American, French, and British forces serving during the American Revolution. Featuring classical clarinets, horns, and bassoons, the band established by Virginia's Colonel Christian Febinger was the first of its kind to boost his soldiers' morale as they converged on Yorktown by 1781.

The concert will begin at 3:00 PM in the main sanctuary of Evangelical Reformed United Church of Christ (ERUCC). Join us at 2:30 for a short preconcert talk before the main show!

THE CLOTHESLINE PROJECT – T-SHIRT MAKING SESSION

Wednesday, April 15

Community Room, 6:00 – 8:00 PM



The Clothesline Project is an effort to raise public awareness about sexual and intimate partner violence. If you identify as a survivor (or ally) of power-based violence, human trafficking, and sexual assault, we invite you to create a T-shirt and confidentially share your story of message to encourage others. The Clothesline Project shirts will be displayed on Thursday, April 23 at Hood College prior to Heartly House's Take Back the Night rally. Go to <https://wash.org/clothesline-project> to learn more. Shirts and limited art supplies will be available, or participants are welcome to bring their own shirt or supplies.

EARTH DAY TREE-PLANTING PROJECT

Friday, April 17

REED Center, 6:00 – 8:00 PM

We are SO excited to be gathering for an intergenerational creation justice service project at the REED Center for Ecosystem Reintegration at 1932 Mountain Church Road, Middletown. We will meet at that location. We currently have 4 families of multiple generations going, and welcome more! We have invited members of Grace UCC to join us as well. To RSVP, contact Pastor Kirstin so we have a general idea to tell our host organization: ksrhoads@erucc.org.

COMMUNITY HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE

Sunday, April 19

Beth Sholom Congregation and Congregation Kol Ami of Frederick
1011 N. Market Street

We hold this Holocaust Remembrance Day Service to educate and to remember the atrocities of the Holocaust. We strive to honor and remember the six million Jewish victims of the Holocaust and millions of others killed by the Nazi regime and its collaborators during WWII. Too late we “Heeded the Warnings.”

This year we are very honored to present and interview a **deaf survivor, Dr. Eugene Bergman**. He will be speaking to us through an interpreter about his incredible and miraculous journey, a journey that ultimately found him emigrating to the United States. Notably, the first deaf person to earn a PhD in English, Dr. Bergman taught at Gallaudet College from 1972 to retirement in 1996. He is 95.

Questions? Please contact Marty Erlichman, Chair of the Holocaust Committee,
erlichman@verizon.net or 301-694-9217.

“LESSONS LEARNED”

Saturday, April 25

Sanctuary, 9:00 – 11:00 AM

As you plan ahead this month, please consider joining us for a time of reflection and reconnection as a congregation after our season of interim ministry. Our gathering will take place in the sanctuary because we consider this conversation part of the holy work of our faith community. We understand that there are some unresolved questions by some of our ERUCC congregational family, and our Spiritual Council, including Matt Hueting and Peter Brehm, want to be able to listen, learn, and offer some of their own observations of this past season, so that we can better move forward together. Pastor Kirstin will be present and will open and close us in prayer together. We have invited Rev. Sheresa Rice-Simpson, who is able to join us, to offer her gifts in facilitation and guidance.

UCC FLOOD RESPONSE TO DISASTER IN HAWAII

In late March 2026, Hawaii experienced back-to-back storms known as Kona Lows that caused severe flooding across the Hawaiian Islands. This flooding represents the worst flooding that Hawaii has seen in more than 20 years. The Governor of Hawaii estimates the damages from these storms at over \$1 billion, including damage to airports, schools, roads, homes, and a Maui hospital in Kula. The **Global HOPE team** is in regular communication with the Hawaii Conference staff, ecumenical partners in disaster recovery, and response coordination calls with the national network of voluntary organizations active in disasters (VOAD). At this time, we are working to connect response resources with communities in need – this includes coordination with Church World Service and the potential deployment of clean up kits.

As we continue to pray for and support those who experienced unimaginable loss, we invite you to support the UCC's recovery efforts in the following ways:

- Donate to the UCC's Hawaii Flooding 2026 Appeal. Your gifts will support the long-term recovery efforts of these communities, as we work to ensure an equitable approach to recovery.
- Pray for those who have been impacted.
- Act by assembling Hygiene Kits and Cleanup Buckets. **(Watch for an opportunity to make flood clean-up buckets with our ERUCC community!)**

Thank you for your partnership in our collective efforts to accompany those most deeply impacted by these recent events. Your heartfelt support will make a difference.

You can also mail a check payable to the United Church of Christ, PO Box 71957, Cleveland, OH 44194. Please be sure to note "Hawaii Flooding 2026" in the memo section of your check. Our EIN: 34-1927041



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).

Pickup: All families must check out children with leaders in their classrooms 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. (Special activities are provided in the children's worship space on these Sundays).

Support our Confirmands!

Please save these 2 dates to support our Confirmation Class! This year we have two projects, both representing values of our ERUCC Faith Community. Our confirmands would love to have your support by attending one or both!

1. Peace Walk: **Sunday, April 19**, 4-5pm. Riverside Park, 1801 Monocacy Blvd, Frederick, Combining Just Peace themes with Creation Justice, two of our confirmands have chosen a paved path along the Monocacy River on which to lead us in a slow paced creation centered walk, with pauses for reflection on a few quotes and scriptures and a shared art project at the end of the journey.
2. **Sunday, June 7**, join confirmands for food and trivia in the community room combining themes of being an Anti-Racist church with a Trivia experience and a service project that will support the RISE Coalition of Western Maryland, a grassroots coalition led by immigrant community members, advocating for immigrant rights, social justice, and community empowerment.

Flyer invitations and announcements by our youth are soon to come!

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2026: A THEATRE CAMP APPROACH!

June 22-26, Monday – Friday, with a performance Friday morning.

Registration for both students and volunteers will go live on Monday, April 6.

Both volunteers and participants can choose a half-day (8:00am-12:30pm) or full-day camp (8:00am-3:00pm).

Because it is a musical, and we need singers, high school students are invited to be volunteers and middle school students up to age 13 can choose to be a volunteer or to participate in the musical! We will be learning and performing the children's musical "*Moses and the Freedom Fanatics!*" while still having activities, crafts, and an afternoon at the pool.

All students will register through All Saints Episcopal Church and all volunteers will register through ERUCC. See QR Code on Flyer to register students.

Volunteers from both churches will need to have updated safe church background checks, trainings, and be cleared to help with children. We will have a training in the beginning of June for anyone who needs to be recertified or who has been within our community for at least 6 months and wants to help this week!

Sign up here to volunteer:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C094DAFA72DA3FBC34-63299992-vacation>.

You will be signing up through ERUCC for this event.

Please direct any questions to Pastor Kirstin: ksrhoads@erucc.org

EAST GERMANY GROUP IS COMING THIS SUMMER

July 5-16, Approximate Dates

We will need help with host families and other hospitality for 10-12 people. Feel free to ask our planning team: Matt Pomeroy, Owen York, Barb Barry, Jeff Baker, or Pastor Kirstin, if you have any questions!

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0A4EACA828A7F5C34-63397965-german>

IMPORTANT "SAVE THE DATES" FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES

April 17	Tree planting at the Reed Center
May 2	Tots Family Flower Photos
June 22-26	Full Day VBS in partnership with All Saints Episcopal
July 6-16	East Germany Group is Coming!
July 26-31	Gretna Glen Camp for Children and Youth, Lebanon PA

Ministers, Staff, & Lay Leaders of Evangelical Reformed UCC

MINISTERS AND STAFF

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

Alison E. Shafer ~ *Director of Music*

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 , Downtown Community 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, Flora Room</i> <i>High School Youth, Alcove</i>
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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RALLY AND PACK THE COURT

April 15, a judge will hear the Maryland Attorney General's landmark lawsuit to stop ICE's conversion of a 825,000 ft Williamsport warehouse into a concentration camp.

Join us and stop this camp!

► **9AM:** Rally outside Courthouse

10AM: Attend the court hearing or the interfaith vigil outside

Location: Garmatz Federal Courthouse,

► 101 West Lombard St. Baltimore

Sign up here: bit.ly/April15Hearing

STOP MARYLAND'S ICE CAMP

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

April 12, 2026

John 20:19-31

Holy Language

The season of Easter is underway. It's a time where we are being invited to experience the full 50 days of Eastertide, embracing the resurrection promise that breathes newness and vitality into our ordinary days.

Chances are, though, there are many — perhaps even you, dear reader — who are feeling anything but hopeful. Perhaps your faith in a great God is as stale as the leftover jellybeans that filled last week's Easter baskets.

Take heart, for you are not alone. Doubts plague everyone, even the saintliest of saints among us. After her death, it was revealed how Mother Teresa battled many dark nights of the soul, questioning God's presence in her life.

And long before Mother Teresa's doubting, there was Thomas. Known as "the twin," Thomas was absent that first Easter evening when Jesus came into the room speaking words of comfort and assurance: "Peace be with you."

Still reeling from Jesus' death, Thomas couldn't believe his friends who told him the great news of Jesus being alive. He didn't dare to believe for the pain of losing Jesus once before was enough. Why dare to hope again?

To protect his heart from breaking with false hope, Thomas said that he had to see Jesus in the flesh for himself. He had to be able to put his fingers in Jesus' pierced side to believe the impossible news that he was walking among the living.

Thomas got what he asked for. Jesus returns and stands before the doubter and shows him the scars. It's then Thomas utters the first public confession of faith, "My Lord and my God!"

Doubt. It haunts us all. It makes us insist on proof today for evidence of a better tomorrow. Why do we need to see before we believe? It is not an intellectual quest as some might think, but a protective reflex born out of too many shattering-heart let downs.

Like Thomas, we can relate to the scary vulnerability of risking our hearts to believe in hopeful possibilities, especially when there's no guarantee we won't be let down yet again.

But as Eastertide gets underway, we are given the good news that with God we can risk our hearts. We can believe boldly in God's care for us, even without hard proof. Even on those days when we think God has forgotten us. God has not. God shows up at the right time. The Easter promise is that our hopes will never be crushed, because God who raised Jesus from the dead is raising us from our own tomb of doubts.

God of new beginnings and bright promises, transform our doubts into beautiful truths this Eastertide. Open our guarded hearts to the amazing possibilities that You have waiting for us. And help us, O God, to always believe without the proof we often insist on. 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.)

