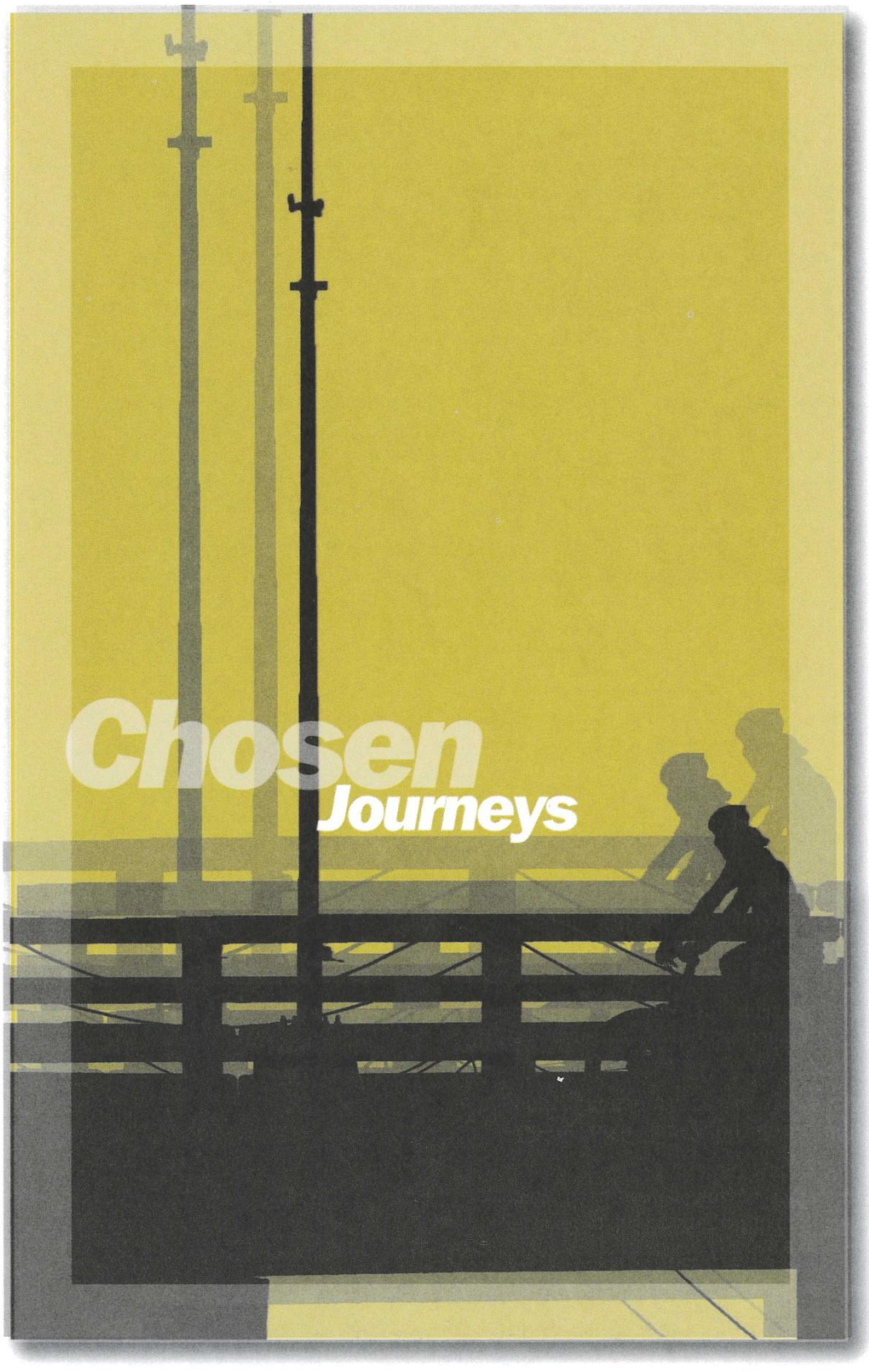

Chosen
Journeys

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 –

July 5, 2026 | Sixth Sunday after Pentecost | 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. Kirstin Shrom-Rhoads

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

PRELUDE

- Selections by John Thomas Schley (1712-1790), founder of Frederick, MD

Rondo Allegro in F Major
Larghetto Siciliano in F Major
Largo in Bb Major

***CONGREGATION CENTERING PRAYER**

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**

In joy and gladness, enter the presence of the Sovereign One who rules and reigns over all creation. Worship the Holy One!
The voice of the Holy One is powerful and gracious, loving and challenging, compassionate and convicting.
In joy and gladness, receive the fresh wind of the Spirit who ignites our hearts and connects us to one another. Worship the Holy Spirit!

The voice of the Holy Spirit gives wisdom, discernment, comfort, and confirmation.
In joy and gladness, follow the path of the Embodied One. Worship God With Us!
The voice of God With Us models for us what to say and how to live. Praise God!

***OPENING PRAYER**

God of all nations and all peoples, bless us as we gather in your name. Open us to vessels in building your kin-dom and spreading the good news of life and liberty. May we drink from the well of your abundance. May our cups overflow with your love. May our hearts burn in your presence. Be with us in this time and place. Amen.

***OPENING HYMN**

For the Fruits of All Creation #425

For the fruit of his creation,
thanks be to God.
For his gifts to ev'ry nation,
thanks be to God.
For the plowing, sowing, reaping,
silent growth while we are sleeping,
future needs in earth's safekeeping,
thanks be to God.

In the just reward of labor,
God's will is done.
In the help we give our neighbor,
God's will is done.
In our worldwide task of caring
for the hungry and despairing,
in the harvests we are sharing,
God's will is done.

For the harvests of the Spirit,
thanks be to God.
For the good we all inherit,
thanks be to God.
For the wonders that astound us,

for the truths that still confound us,
most of all, that love has found us,
thanks be to God.

***CALL TO TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE**

Let us seek God in the assurance that new life is available. Let us ask for the strength, courage, and persistence to seek God's kin-dom, peace, justice and righteousness in any and all circumstances and for all people and creation.

***PRAYER FOR GRACE**

Gracious One, where do we begin? You call us to do justice,
and we explain that justice is complicated.
You ask us to love mercy,
and we counter that a show of strength is necessary.
You invite us to walk humbly with you,
and we struggle to recognize you in our neighbors, in the dispossessed, in the poor and hungry places of our own hearts.
We confess we have failed to summon the courage and compassion required by your call.
We have treated hospitality as an option, kinship as a choice, instead of as the center of our life together.
We have claimed your name, yet rejected your way.
Forgive us, we pray.

***WORDS OF GRACE**

The God of Covenant is still with us. By the power of the Spirit, we receive the fruit necessary to fuel our shared commitment and commission to building the world as God would have it over the world we inherit. God has given us everything we need to contribute, including the community of faith so that we do not labor alone.

Alleluia! Amen.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Children, youth, and all who wish to join them are invited to come forward for a special message. During the summer, we do not have Junior Church on a regular basis. Children are welcome to spend time in the children's worship space or using books and supplies from there and the bookshelves while sitting with their families in the pews.

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.

THE SCRIPTURES The Rev. John Shillingburg

Psalm 139 OT Page Number 577
Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43 NT Page Number 14

Reader: May God bless the reading of this word.
All: Thanks be to God.

SERMON The Rev. Dr. Rebecca Shillingburg

MORNING PRAYER

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

With abundance and generosity, The Holy One gives gifts beyond measure or compare. The God of Covenant invites us to ensure equitable, faithful, and mutual sharing so that no one needs to experience a lack of resources. Let us give from the well of abundance to honor God's faithfulness and to demonstrate trust in God's provision.

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

Battle Hymn of the Republic *- Howe/Steffe, arr P. Wilhousky*

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Giving God, make us a people who not only receive your gifts, but empower us to give in mutual measure so that all needs are met. Bless these gifts and amplify their impact as a witness to your goodness and so all may flourish in your name. Amen.

– SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION –

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

The ancient prophet reminds us that we are called by name;
we are precious and honored in God's sight.

The Apostle Paul taught us that God's enduring love binds us together in community. We are called to live as the body of Christ.
"For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body."
Jesus Christ, manna of heaven, is the host of this table.

Christ taught us that this is the table where abundant provision overwhelms our fears of scarcity.
This is the table where divine hospitality embraces
the <u>whole</u> body and <u>each</u> of its members.

This is Christ's table, open to all who come.

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

Eternal God, who has created the universe, giving breath to every living thing, we thank you for the gifts of creation and for the gift of life itself. As we partake of this bread and wine, we honor you, everlasting God. We give thanks that you come to us and abide with us.

Come, Holy One, come. Bless this meal; bless this fellowship; bless our lives, that justice and love may be the measure of our common witness. Amen.

As we bless and share these gifts, we celebrate the hospitality of Christ's table. All are worthy, all are welcome! Receive the fruits of the Spirit, and celebrate the communion of all things. Creator, Christ, and Spirit dance as

one. So may it always be.

Be present with us as we share this meal and throughout all our lives, that we may know you as the Holy One, who, with Christ and the Holy Spirit, lives forever.

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

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

On the night Jesus was betrayed, the Light of the World took bread and blessed it. Then he thanked God for it and broke it, saying:
"This is my body which is broken for you. Whenever you eat it, remember me."

And likewise at the end of the meal, Jesus took the cup, blessed it and thanked God for it. Pouring out the red wine, he said:
"This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you. When you drink this cup ever after this night, remember me."

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

SHARING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

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

After all have received the bread and the cup:

Great is the mystery of faith.
Christ has died;
Christ is risen;
Christ will come again.

***PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

Thanks be to you, O God, for your presence and your purpose,
for your loving kindness and your steadfast Spirit.
May the blessings of this table strengthen our faith,
increase our generosity and unify our hearts. **Amen.**

***CLOSING HYMN**

America the Beautiful *- K.L. Bates*

O beautiful for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain!
America! America!
God shed His grace on thee
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!

O beautiful for pilgrim feet,
Whose stern, impassioned stress
A thoroughfare for freedom beat
Across the wilderness!
America! America!
God mend thine every flaw,
Confirm thy soul in self-control,
Thy liberty in law!

O beautiful for heroes proved
In liberating strife,
Who more than self their country loved,
And mercy more than life!
America! America!
May God thy gold refine
Till all success be nobleness,
And every gain divine!

O beautiful for patriot dream
That sees beyond the years
Thine alabaster cities gleam
Undimmed by human tears!
America! America!

God shed His grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea! Amen.

***BENEDICTION**

As you go,
Celebrate liberty and pursue justice.
Pray for the land on which you are planted.
And open space for neighbors seeking a home.
Remember the challenges and blessings of the past.
Work for the promise and hope of the future.
Knowing that the God of the Covenant
Lives, reigns, and abides with us.
As the journey continues
Go in peace and go for peace
To love and to serve.
Amen.

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

POSTLUDE

The President's New March *- John Thomas Schley*

Worship Notes: Written by the Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology for the United Church of Christ. Prayer for Grace by Rev. Erika Marksbury and Rev. Amanda Meisenheimer, Illustrated Ministries.

Please join us for **Fellowship** with light refreshments and time for casual conversation after worship in our Community Room (1st Floor).

The flowers on the altar this morning are placed in honor of all military service members by Jeff and Starr Schaeberle.

The yellow rose is presented by Karen Justice in honor of those who have and continue to protect our country's freedom.

Attendance Last Sunday: 10 at 8:30 AM, 76 at 10:30 AM, and 67 online.

Watch worship live every Sunday at 10:30 AM or on-demand:
https://erucc.org/visit/sunday-live-stream

Serving Today: July 5		**Serving Next Week: July 12**
Deacons:	Mark Ulrich, Quynn Adkins	Robin A. and Robin L. Brady-Slifer
Elder:	Ave Barr	Robin L. Brady-Slifer
Scripture Reader:	Rev. John Shillingburg	Patti Patterson
Acolyte:	Laurel Nguyen-Powell	Wyatt Pomeroy
Greeters:	Felecia Bishop	Kathleen Clancy Jefferson
	Paul McGinley, Cliff Barr	Robin Cooney
Welcome Table:	Julie Clark	Rissah Watkins
Audio/Visual:	Ethan Cline, Jeff Schaeberle	Ethan Cline, Jeff Schaerberle
Nursery:	Kate Fromknecht	Molly Black
Fellowship:	Julie Clark, Joe Adkins	Emily, Chris, Abby and Ben Spear
	Quynn Adkins, Kyle Miller	Jocelyn, Chris and ElaRose Vara
	Pat Dorsz, Zaydan York	Rachael and Josh Bowman
Communion Prep:	Ave Barr	
Communion Clergy:	Rev. John Shillingburg and Rev. Rob Peters	

Next Sunday: July 12 – Seventh Sunday after Pentecost
Matthew 20:1-16
Come find out what the kingdom of heaven is like!

The Rev. David Cooney, PhD will be preaching and leading worship. Spirit 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.

Dan Rice (Alison Shafer's partner)
Friends & family of Catherine Crome
Rodney Martin
Donna Logee
Daniel Schaffer (neighbor of Kathleen & Niel Jefferson)
Paul McGinley
Sue Whiting (sister of Nan McNamara)
Mike Simms
Adam Huegel
Carroll Smith (friend of Sandra Trout)
Tom Ford
Ingrid Jacobsen
Della Willmann (Shelley Weakly's mother)
Charlie Woodward
John Stush
Izzie Sims (friend of Molly Black)
Debbie Jennings *(friend of Kathleen Jefferson)*
Robert Debonis (uncle of Sophia Carliss)
Sandy Maples (sister-in-law of Allen and Joan Maples)
Betsy Fisher
Barbara Heverley
Todd Starr (nephew of Mary Staley)
Sharon DiDonato (aunt of Darryl Glick, friend of Mark Ulrich)
Ginny Peters
Karen Stitely
Donna Baumgardner Smith (friend of Sandra Trout)
Bill Cassell (brother of Ave Barr)
The Murray/Lennox/Cable Family
Sandra Trout
Family of Charlie Van Eman (son of friends of Kathleen and Niel Jefferson)
Mary Staley
Pat Condo
Wells Condo
Tom Frazier
Pauline Marendt
Colton Pudvah (great nephew of Kim Sexton)
Carol Spera (mother of Mark Ulrich)
Emogene Wyand
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)

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

Welcome Our New Settled Senior Pastor!

We are delighted to welcome the Rev. Josh Privitt as our new settled senior pastor! On Saturday, June 20th, many of us met Pastor Josh and his wife, Nicole Warrington. Then on Sunday, we heard him preach. After the service at a special congregational meeting, ERUCC called Pastor Josh to be our next settled senior pastor.
Don't worry if you missed meeting Pastor Josh and Nicole – they will be back! Details on his start date will come soon, but we anticipate him starting sometime in August.
To hear Pastor Josh preach, click here and click on Sunday, June 21, 2026 in the menu on the right.

SPECIAL GIVING OPPORTUNITY TODAY

Mortgage Assistance: On the first Sunday of each month, we have a special opportunity for giving towards Mortgage Assistance. Donations fund ERUCC's mortgages with the Fisher Fund and FCB Bank, a division of ACNB Bank, payments on which are about $153,000/year.

LET'S STUDY THE BIBLE WITH REV. JOHN SHILLINGBURG

Let's Study the Bible is taking a break for the summer.

THEOLOGY AMONG THE PEOPLE WITH REV. DR. REBECCA SHILLINGBURG

Theology Among the People is taking a break. In September, we will begin with a review of the early chapters of *Genesis for Normal People* by Peter Enns and Jared Byas, making it easy for anyone to join us. 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.

WEDNESDAY PRAYERS
Wednesdays
Sanctuary, **4:30 PM**

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.

GRETNA GLEN CAMPER MAIL

Later this month, six ERUCC children and youth will be campers at Gretna Glen, where they will have the opportunity to share in a camp experience filled with singing, Bible Discovery, worship, crafts, nature, swimming, boating, fishing, campfires, hiking, archery, sports, games, and much more. We have campers over two weeks this year.

Campers love to get mail while at camp! You're invited to send a positive note or letter (see below for dates), encouraging campers to have fun during their camp experience. Please address as follows:

Gretna Glen Camp & Retreat Center
c/o ***Camper's Name***
87 Old Mine Road
Lebanon, PA 17042

Pre-printed mailing labels are also available at the reception desk in the Kieffer Lobby on Sunday, July 5 and 12. Please remember that it may take a few days for letters to arrive at camp. Gretna Glen will hold mail until the campers are there, so you can begin sending mail right away. Please do not send any kind of food, snacks, candy, or gum.

Abby Spear (After Hours): send by July 14
Ben Spear (After Hours): send by July 14

Julianne Black (Music and Drama): send by July 21
Emmie Rhoads (Music and Drama): send by July 21

Emma Baker (Gaga and Gimp Galore): send by July 21
Marley Rhoads (Gaga and Gimp Galore): send by July 21
Kirstin Shrom-Rhoads (Gaga and Gimp Galore): send by July 21

ERUCC SUPPORTS THE UNITED WAY STUFF THE BUS CAMPAIGN

Collection Period: June 14 – August 3

ERUCC is collecting NEW school supplies for The United Way's Stuff the Bus campaign, which supports Frederick County Public Schools students in ALICE families.

Drop off school supplies in the big yellow bins in the Sanctuary and Kieffer Lobbies. The supplies most needed include markers, two-pocket folders (plastic preferred), earbuds with microphones, composition notebooks, spiral notebooks, three-ring binders, crayons, and backpacks. Complete lists of supplies are available above the yellow bins.

WEARING NAMETAGS

Please be sure to wear your nametags so that we have that gracious reminder as we get to know people who are new to us. If you do not have a nametag and want one, please request it at either the Welcome desk or Welcome table.

AWESOME CLOTHESLINE SHARING

Our Eastertide theme has been "Pursuing Awe". Tom Dorsz has wowed us with his photographs, still on display in the music suite hallway. We have explored the deeps of the ocean and the shells on the beach with an awesome sealife display in the lobby outside the Community Room.

Now, it is your turn to share what inspires awe (or awww) for you by posting photos, drawings, or easily hung 2D pieces on a lighted clothesline on the blue wall at the head of the stairs from the Kieffer Lobby. Starting this week, please show us the things that move you, amaze you, inspire you, or bring you overwhelming joy and gratitude. No explanation is needed other than the image itself, but please put enough information on the back of the piece that we can return it to you when the display is taken down. This will be an ongoing installation project of the Worship Design Team.

GET OUT THE VOTE POSTCARDING

The Mission, Evangelization, and Social Justice committee will once again be writing postcards encouraging voters to check their registrations so they are ready to have their votes counted this fall.

We are working with the Center for Common Ground on this effort. Volunteers are needed to hand-write messages to voters in North Carolina, Georgia and Virginia. If you are interested in helping, please email Kate McDermott at katemmcdermott@msn.com or Sophia Carliss at scarliss07@gmail.com with the subject line POSTCARDS.

INVITATIONS TO PARTICIPATE IN GERMANY HOSPITALITY

Note these dates to gather as a church family with our guests as we participate in hospitality together.

- **July 6**: Dinner and Blessings in a Backpack service project. Project starts at 4:00 PM, Dinner at 6:00 PM
- **July 12**: We welcome our guests in worship and extended visiting at fellowship
- **July 14**: Goodbye dinner at ERUCC, 6:30 PM

Donations
As we prepare to host this experience for both our youth and the German youth, we are asking for your donations.

Use this link to sign up for and provide items for "**Blessings in a Backpack**." We will be packing at least 100 backpacks to provide weekend food for Frederick families.
You will need to bring these food donations to church on **Sunday, July 5 or Monday, July 6** for our 4:00 PM packing service project in the community room, just before the church dinner. www.signupgenius.com/go/10C094DAFA72DA3FBC34-64523261-blessings

Use this link to provide food for our opening dinner (July 6) youth and closing dinner (July 14).
www.signupgenius.com/go/10C094DAFA72DA3FBC34-64523302-germany

Questions? Kelly Hueting will be in charge of July 6, and Shelley Weakly will be in charge of July 14.

Monetary donations can be made to support this ministry by giving to YOUTH ACTIVITIES and indicating GERMANY. Pastor Kirstin will then sort any food purchases accordingly.

LUCAS NGUYEN-POWELL'S EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT (BSA TROOP 1023)

I am happy to announce that I am doing my Eagle Scout Project this summer. I will be building a total of five benches, two for the front portico and three for the garden space behind the church. This will help manifest the welcoming spirit of our congregation by giving people a comfortable place to sit while they are in the church's outdoor space. If you would like to learn more and support my project, I will have an information table during fellowship on 7/12, 7/19, and 7/26.

PACK THE PANTRY
Sunday, July 12, during both worship services

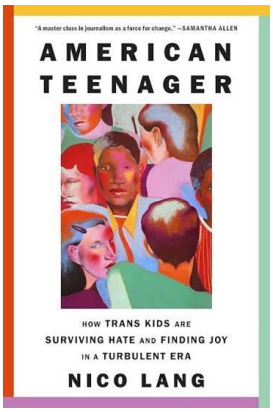
Let's continue to BE the Church by supporting our neighbors in need. Once a month, we work together to fill the Frederick Community Fridge pantry in our church parking lot.

Summer Months: Peanut Butter Jelly Mission
You are invited to bring any of the following shelf-stable, unopened, and unexpired items to worship to make sure there is food for children while school is out. 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:

- Peanut/nut/sun butters
- Boxed mac & cheese
- Shelf-stable milk
- Juice boxes or bottles
- Cereal
- Ravioli/Spaghetti-Os
- Cans of soup
- Applesauce
- Canned proteins (tuna, chicken, etc.)
- Treats like fruit rollups, Little Debbie's, goldfish, Oreos, etc.

Contact: Kim Sexton, mkcssexton@comcast.net.

PFLAG WELCOMES AUTHOR NICO LANG
Tuesday, July 21
Downtown Community Room, 6:00 – 8:00 PM



PFLAG is hosting a free author talk and Q&A with award-winning journalist and author Nico Lang. They will discuss their acclaimed book, *American Teenager: How Trans Kids Are Surviving Hate and Finding Joy in a Turbulent Era*. The book will be available for purchase and signing by the author. Email pflagfrederick@gmail for more information.

CALLING ALL CRAFTERS!
Saturday, July 18
North Room, 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM

There is a wonderful crafters' gathering in the North Room once a month, which happens to be meeting this month on Saturday, July 18. We'll be there from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Join us for 10 minutes, two hours, or all day. Any craft is welcome, but please, no glitter, hahahaha!!! Contact Nancy Jones with any questions.

THE KOKOPELLI WINDS CONCERT
Sunday, July 26
Sanctuary, 4:00 PM

Mark your calendar for Sunday, July 26th, 4:00pm for a concert of American music to Celebrate the 250th Anniversary of our country. The concert will be held in the Sanctuary, and will be performed by The Kokopelli Winds and Alison E. Shafer, organist. The concert is free, and a freewill offering will support The Community Fridge.

CAC WORK CAMP OPPORTUNITY
October 18-24, 2026
Western North Carolina

High Country UCC in Western North Carolina is accepting groups of up to 20 people with the church coordinating work in the area with a variety of different community organizations to do rebuilding and recovery work based on the skills and interests of the volunteers. Cost is $100 and includes housing at the church ($60 per person), meals, gas, and some funds for materials. Trip leaders are Rev. Dr. Barbara Kershner Daniel, CAC Disaster Response Coordinator (bkdaniel@cacucc.org) and Rev. Chance Martinez-Colon, Grace UCC (pastorchance.graceucc@gmail.com). Please contact Barbara or Chance for more information and to register for this trip.

Children & Youth Activities, Events, and Announcements

SUMMER CHRISTIAN EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY
Children entering Kindergarten through 5th grade are invited to join us for a fun, camp-themed Summer Sunday School! Offered during Junior Church time at the 10:30 AM worship service, we will meet in the Thomas Room on the following four Sundays: **June 28, July 12, July 26, and August 9**. We will have a fun-filled end of summer camping themed event on August 16th in the evening. We will share more details on this event as the date approaches.
Each week stands alone with a unique outdoor-themed Bible lesson paired with an exciting campfire-style game or creative craft. Because every session is a brand-new adventure, children can attend as many or as few as your summer schedule allows. Come unplug, get active, and explore how outdoor adventures bring us closer to God!

CATOCTIN ASSOCIATION OVERNIGHT LOCK-IN
Friday, July 24, 6:00 PM – Saturday, July 25, Noon
Grace United Church of Christ
25 E 2nd St, Frederick

All youth going into 7-12th grades are invited! There is zero cost, and registration includes food and activities all night long, as well as a 2-hour service project on Saturday. There will be time to rest for those who don't wish to go all night. Planning and Leadership by Pastor Kirstin, Pastor Chance Martinez and Pastor Katie Pennick.
Register at https://tinyurl.com/CACJulyLockIn or scan this QR code:

Ministers, Staff, & Lay Leaders of Evangelical Reformed UCC

MINISTERS AND STAFF

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The Rev. Dr. Barbara Kershner Daniel ~ *Pastor Emerita*

The Rev. Fred Wenner ~ *Pastor Emeritus*

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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 – 12:00 PM	**Nursery Care**
10:30 – 11:30 AM	**Worship**, Sanctuary and Online at www.erucc.org
11:30 AM	**Fellowship,** Downtown Community Room

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SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

July 5, 2026 Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

Chosen Journeys

My husband wonders why I make life hard for myself. He especially wonders this when, under the scorching sun, he watches me walk by the hose he bought — the one with the extra-long extension — choosing instead to lug sloshing buckets of water from the house to my out-of-the-way garden.

It is a bit odd. I sometimes question my own sanity, too. But I have chosen this garden journey as a spiritual discipline. For in the arduous act of carrying water buckets, I'm reminded of those who still walk miles for their water. It is a small, prayerful act that keeps my coddled heart conscious of the urgent need for clean, accessible water for all.

Last summer, though, I finally admitted that watering the garden this way was becoming too much for me. My husband smiled, thinking the prized hose he bought would finally be used. He was wrong. Rather, what arrived a few days later in the mail was a 19th-century wooden yoke from a farmer in Lithuania. Its well-worn patina featured ornate notches carved into the wood that kept the buckets from sliding.

I placed the arch of the yoke behind my neck and masterfully balanced the buckets. The yoke did help to distribute the weight of the water, lightening the load a bit, and making my task a bit easier. And it also deepened my spiritual gardening discipline, as feeling the buckets sway with my steps, I heard my Savior's invitation once again: Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.

I thought about the heavy burdens I carried that no one knew of — the worries that sloshed around in my spiritual buckets. I had grown weary by their weight. I had a tiredness in my bones that no sleep could cure. It was a tiredness that came from the constant buzz of stress keeping my nerves on high alert.

How many times would I ignore Jesus' help? Why did I insist on carrying all of life's burdens alone?

It is no wonder Jesus told the people of his time to take his yoke, for his was an easy one. Before modern machinery, farmers would use a wooden yoke on their animals. The frame that joined two beasts of burdens would mean they would share the weight of a load, making it easier to keep moving forward.

What a beautiful invitation we have as well. This is our opportunity, this day, to finally give our burdens to the one who will make them lighter. Will you embrace Jesus' yoke? I have. The garden hose, though? That I still ignore.

Patient God, how tiresome it must be to watch us struggling with the burdens and stresses and worries that we insist on carrying by ourselves. Help us to finally accept Jesus' invitation to take his yoke. May we stop being crushed by the weight of this world. May we know that all we struggle with is now in Jesus' capable and loving hands. 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.)

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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