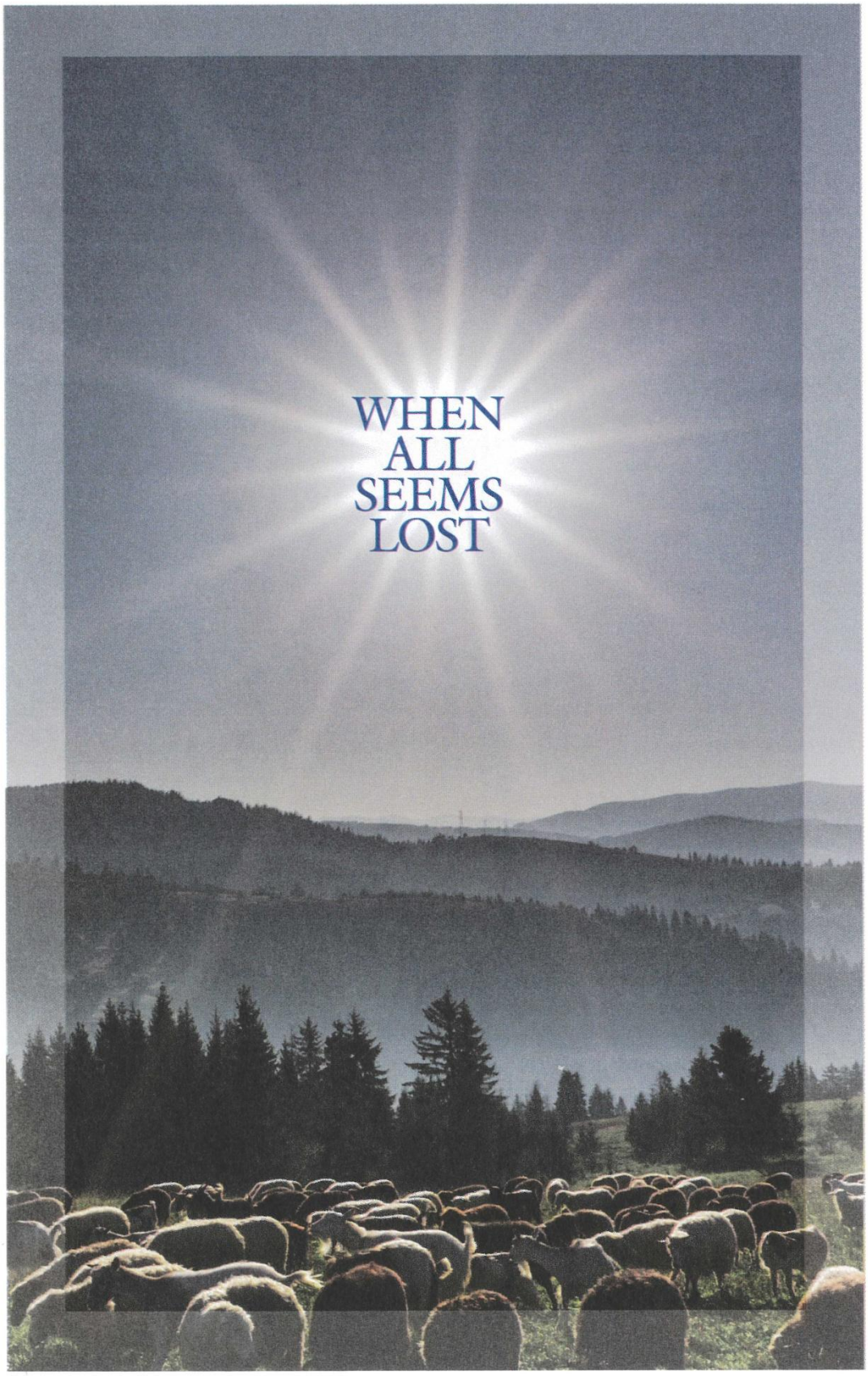
WHEN
ALL
SEEMS
LOST

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 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 –

Aug 9, 2026	Eleventh 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. Dr. Rebecca Shillingburg

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

PRELUDE

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

O give thanks to the Holy One; call on God's name
Make known God's deeds among the peoples.
Sing of the Holy One's abiding love, grace, compassion, and justice
Rejoice in the God's redemptive power
Seek the Holy One's presence, strength, and wisdom
Remember God's wondrous works. Praise the Holy One!

***OPENING PRAYER**

Loving and Wonderful God, you make a home for us. You provide us shelter and sanctuary. You embrace us and uphold us. You come to us and go before us. We come to you now. We search for your presence in this world, in this community, and in this gathering. Let us connect with you and be reminded of the path of full and flourishing life you offer. Let us connect with one another and be reminded that your kindom comes in us and through us for your glory. Amen.

***OPENING HYMN**

Rejoice, Give Thanks and Sing #303

Rejoice, give thanks and sing;
Your Sovereign God adore!
For Christ has robbed death's sting
And triumphs evermore.
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice!
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice.

Our Savior Jesus reigns,
The God of truth and love;
The Lamb who purged our stains
Is crowned with power above.
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice!
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice.

Christ Jesus cannot fail
To rule both earth and heaven;
The keys of death and hell
Are to the Savior given.
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice!
Rejoice, again I say, I rejoice.

Rejoice in glorious hope,
For Christ the Judge shall come,
And take the faithful
Up to their eternal home.
We soon shall hear a heavenly voice
Above the trumpet's sound, "Rejoice!"

***PRAYER FOR GRACE**

Gracious and eternal God, we, like Peter, struggle when confronted with hard things. We panic when we experience distress and hardship. We, like the other disciples, cry out in fear of anything strange or unknown. We get stuck in our crisis response instead of breathing and centering on you, Holy One. Help us to pause, breathe, and slow down enough to see your Spirit moving. Help us to look for your guiding amid the storms. Amen.

***WORDS OF GRACE**

Inheritors of the kindom, rest assured that the Holy One's love knows no bounds. Rest assured that God will companion with you when the struggles life presents overwhelm you. We are all capable of confronting hard things and doing the hard work of restoration through recognition, repair, and reconciliation. God is with us on the journey…helping us to carry the burdens and reducing the load. Be made new in Christ Jesus.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Children, youth, and all who wish to join them are invited to come forward for a special message. Children entering Kindergarten through 5th grade are invited to join us for a fun, camp-themed Summer Sunday School during Junior Church time. We will meet in the Thomas Room.

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.

HYMN

My Life Flows on in Endless Song #476

My life flows on in endless song,
above earth's lamentation.
I hear the sweet, though far-off hymn
that hails a new creation.
Through all the tumult and the strife,
I hear that music ringing.
It finds an echo in my soul –
How can I keep from singing?

What though my joys and comforts die?
My Savior still is living.
What though the shadows gather 'round?
A new song Christ is giving.
No storm can shake my inmost calm,

While to that rock I'm clinging.
Since love commands both heaven and earth,
How can I keep from singing?

When tyrants tremble, sick with fear,
And hear their death knells ringing.
When friends rejoice both far and near,
How can I keep from singing?
In prison cell and dungeon vile
Our thoughts to them are winging.
When friends by shame are undefiled,
How can I keep from singing?

I lift my eyes, the cloud grows thin;
I see the blue above it.
And day by day, this pathway smooths,
Since first I learned to love it.
The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart,
A fountain ever springing.
All things are mine since I am Christ's –
How can I keep from singing?

THE SCRIPTURES Eliza Stitely

1 Kings 19:9-18 OT Page Number 326
Matthew 14:22-33 NT Page Number 16

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

SERMON The Rev. Josh Privitt

MORNING PRAYER

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

The Holy One gives gifts freely and abundantly so that all will be well and whole. God provides and empowers us to participate in providing for one another. There is enough for all. Let us join in the Creator's holy, wondrous, and abundant generosity in sharing the gifts we have claimed.

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 Summer Choir

Just a Little Talk - C Derricks, arr S Pethel

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Giver of perfect gifts, refine these offerings and our hearts so that they may bear fruit. Bless each of us with the joy of gift giving and help us to know the good that our generosity lends to the world in your Holy and Precious Name. Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN**

Precious Lord, Take My Hand *#472*

Precious Lord, take my hand,
Lead me on, let me stand,
I am tired, I am weak, I am worn.
Through the storm, through the night
Lead me on to the light,
Take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home.

When my way grow drear,
Precious Lord, linger near.
When my life is almost gone,
Hear my cry, hear my call,
Hold my hand lest I fall.
Take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home.

When the shadows appear
And the night draws near,
And the day is past and gone,
At the river I stand,
Guide my feet, hold my hand.
Take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home.

*BENEDICTION

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

POSTLUDE

Worship Notes: Liturgy is adapted from **Lived as an Alien: Service Prayers for the Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost Year A** was written by the Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology for the United Church of Christ.

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

The flowers on the altar this morning are placed in loving memory of Isabel Kreh Wilcoxon, Susan Nelson Cramer Kreh, and Lola Ann Dorcus by Susan Kreh.

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

Attendance Last Sunday: 13 at 8:30 AM, 80 at 10:30 AM, and 81 online.

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

Serving Today: Aug 9		**Serving Next Week: Aug 16**
Deacons:	Robin A. Brady-Slifer Robin L. Brady-Slifer	Kyle Miller Tommie Bradshaw
Elder:	Susan Kulp	Susan Kulp
Scripture Reader:	Eliza Stitely	Laurel Nguyen-Powell
Acolyte:	Laurel Nguyen-Powell	
Greeters:	Sue Pinner, Robin Cooney Rob Smith, David Cooney	Felecia Bishop Rob Smith
Welcome Table:	Elizabeth Slade, Molly Black	Betsy Selby
Audio/Visual:	Ethan Kline, Jeff Schaeberle David Howard	Ethan Kline, Jeffrey Baker David Howard
Nursery:	Emily Spear	
Fellowship:	Ave Barr, Cliff Barr Joan Maples, Allen Maples Jen Powell, Pat Condo Bud Rossig	Karen Justice, Marj Berkheimer Peter Brehm, Rob McGuire Felecia Bishop, Alex Martinez

Next Sunday: Aug 16 – Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

Matthew 15:10-28 and Psalm 67

"When Jesus says the wrong thing."
(God's grace is big and wide! Praise God!)

The Rev. Josh Privitt will be preaching and leading worship. The Summer Choir will sing.

~ We extend our heartfelt sympathy to the friends and family of John Stush, who passed away on August 2, 2026. Please keep John's wife, Audrey Rayfield, in your hearts and prayers. Memorial service information will be forthcoming. ~

~ We also extend our heartfelt sympathy to Jo Ann Fritz after the passing of her daughter, Marcy Channell, on August 2, 2026. Please keep Marcy's friends and family in your hearts and prayers, especially Jo Ann, Richard, and Marcy's husband, Steve. ~

On behalf of my family, I would like to thank everyone at ERUCC for their kindness and prayers on the death of my sister, Cathy Crome. She will be missed greatly. – Nancy Jones

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.

Rose Plankey (mother of Kathy Gourlie)
Angela Brittain
Scott Maples (nephew of Allen and Joan Maples)
Friends and family of John Stush
Friends and family of Marcy Channell (daughter of Jo Ann Fritz)
Jessica Snyder (niece of Janice Staley)
Debbie Jennings
Betty Schaeberle
John Maslowski
Friends and family of Phil Berkheimer
Dan Rice (partner of Alison Shafer)
Daniel Schaffer (neighbor of Kathleen & Niel Jefferson)
Mike Simms
Friends and family of Adam Huegel
Carroll Smith (friend of Sandra Trout)
Tom Ford
Ingrid Jacobsen
Charlie Woodward
Izzie Sims (friend of Molly Black)
Robert Debonis (uncle of Sophia Carliss)
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
Mary Staley
Pat Condo
Wells Condo
Tom Frazier
Pauline Marendt
Colton Pudvah (great nephew of Kim Sexton)
Carol Spera (mother of Mark Ulrich)
Emogene and Don Wyand
Bob Pinner
Jim Baldree (father of Chuck Baldree)
Lee Thomas
Marcia Eisenstein
Derek C. Hupp (grandson of Beanie and 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)
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

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.

MEDITATIONS ON CONNECTION

Be sure to visit the Music suite hallway in the next four weeks to view artwork by **Sophia Carliss**, local artist and member of our congregation. The paintings were all done to highlight something Sophia cares deeply about. "These pieces focus on the necessity of connection: spiritually, interpersonally, and environmentally."

MISSION, EVANGELISM & SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS

Are you concerned about what is happening to immigrants and refugees in our country? Here are a couple of actions you can take:

Urge the Senate to join the House in overruling the Trump cancellation and extending TPS to Haitians: https://cwsglobal.org/action-alerts/take-action-protect-haitians-at-risk-following-historic-discharge-petition/

Demand Justice for Detained Immigrants:
http://www.votervoice.net/Shares/BHPGABZUBC7zhAYdK-h7FAA

ATTENTION CHURCH KEY HOLDERS

In the event that we would need to re-key any doors to our buildings, we are compiling a comprehensive list of anyone who has keys, electronic or metal, to any doors at ERUCC. If you have keys, please stop by the Kieffer Lobby desk on Sunday mornings, contact Ann at erucc@erucc.org, or call the office. We will need your name and the numbers on the key(s). Please reach out with any questions.

REAL WISDOM DECIDES: FAITH COMMUNITIES FACING DATA CENTERS, TOGETHER
Tuesday, August 11th at 7:00 PM, Online

Join Interfaith Power & Light (DC/MD/NoVA) and faith communities across our region for this webinar to learn about the data center threat to our communities, reflect on our how we are called to respond, and connect (in place-based breakout groups) with grassroots leaders in data center fights in your community.

Register: bit.ly/rw-aug11

END OF SUMMER CHURCH COOKOUT
Sunday, August 30
Ballenger Creek Park, Shelter #1
Approximately 1:00 - 4:00 PM, but we have it reserved all day!

We are excited to gather to say goodbye to summer! Please meet at Ballenger Park, Shelter #1! We will head there after church so that we can have an early afternoon lunch together. We are looking for people to bring items AND to volunteer to grill. Please reach out to Pastor Kirstin if you are willing to cook!

Also, please review the available slots on the SignUp Genius and click the button to sign uphttps://bit.ly/ERUCCCookout2026 or scan the QR code:

In addition to bringing yourself and something to share, please bring your own table settings/cups/napkins, beverages, camping chairs if desired (there will be plenty of table space), and a board game if you want to share! We will have some community-building games for all ages after we eat, and we will also have frisbees and a variety of sports balls to share. We hope to see you there!

UN-BURDENED, FREDERICK COUNTY UNITED IN RELIEF

ERUCC is partnering with Grace UCC, All Saints Episcopal Church, Calvary United Methodist Church, Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Frederick, and St. Katharine Drexel Catholic Church for an Undue Medical Debt campaign. As Grace UCC said, "Too many of our neighbors are burdened with medical debt, and we want to unburden them."

Please consider giving to this campaign. If we raise $103,172.00, we will wipe out $15 MILLION DOLLARS in accumulated medical debt! This would unburden more than 14,000 of our neighbors right here in Frederick County. What a perfect opportunity to come together and make a real difference in the lives of our neighbors!

To give, please visit: https://bit.ly/FCUnitedInRelief or scan the QR code:

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 **August 9**.

SPLASH BACK TO SCHOOL!
Saturday, August 15, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM
Apples UCC, 7908 Apples Church Rd, Thurmont, MD 21788

Rev. Michelle Beadle invites you to this free, old-fashioned, outside, drop-in funfest on the beautiful grounds of Apples United Church of Christ in Thurmont! Enjoy a splash zone and lots of other water play, games and craft stations, plenty of space for tag, a nature path through their woods, climbing and swinging on their play equipment, shooting hoops and a game of HORSE, playing some cornhole, joining the dance party on their outside stage, and relaxing with your own picnic lunch in their covered pavilion. RSVP to let them know you're coming and if you or your child has any accessibility requirements:
https://form.jotform.com/261937592401056

BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS
Sunday, August 16, during 10:30 AM Worship

The first day of school is just around the corner, and we want to send you into the new year with love, laughter, and a whole lot of blessings! Join us on Sunday, August 16, for our annual Blessing of the Backpacks, a joyful celebration for students, teachers, and school staff of all ages and stages. Whether you're heading into preschool or grad school, teaching your first class or your thirtieth, or supporting students behind the scenes, you are welcome!

Bring your backpack, tote bag, laptop case, or briefcase to worship as we bless the journey ahead and remind one another: you are not alone; your church family is cheering you on every step of the way!

END OF SUMMER CAMPFIRE CELEBRATION!
Sunday, August 16
4:00 – 6:00 PM

Children, youth, families, and friends, come celebrate a summer of adventure! For four Sundays, our children explored the *Camping* curriculum, discovering how getting away from the noise and stepping outside can bring us closer to God. From Abraham counting the stars to Moses and the burning bush, to Jesus standing strong in the wilderness, to Jesus revealing His glory on the mountaintop. Now it's time to celebrate together! Join us for camp food, games, campfire songs, and good company as we wrap up a wonderful summer and send everyone off with a joyful start to the new school year.

Please RSVP by August 10 so we can plan accordingly:
https://www.signupgenius.com/go/805044BA8AD2FA5FC1-65039942-campfire

We can't wait to celebrate together! See you at "camp"!

SAVE THE DATE!
Sunday, September 13, 9:15 AM

First Week of Sunday School for all ages!

Ministers, Staff, & Lay Leaders of Evangelical Reformed UCC

MINISTERS AND STAFF

Rev. Josh Privitt ~ *Senior Pastor* ~ revjosh@erucc.org

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 ~ *Church Administrator* ~ awatkins@erucc.org

Ashley Murphy ~ *Nursery Attendant*

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

The Rev. Fred Wenner ~ *Pastor Emeritus*

LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Robin L. Brady-Slifer ~ *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* | Keith Stickley ~ *Property Chair*

Kate Fromknecht ~ *Stewardship/Generosity Chair* | Holly Davis ~ *Christian Education Chair*

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

Darryl Glick ~ *Personnel Chair*

ELDERS

Ave Barr | Robin L. Brady-Slifer | 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 – 12:00 PM	**Nursery Care**
10:30 – 11:30 AM	**Worship**, Sanctuary and Online at www.erucc.org
	Junior Church (Summer Sunday School), Thomas Room *Participating children are dismissed from Worship after Thought for the Day*
11:30 AM	**Fellowship,** Downtown Community Room

Stay Informed

Subscribe to receive e-news from ERUCC at http://eepurl.com/gDNCu5 or by scanning the QR code.

Ways to Give to Evangelical Reformed UCC

WEBSITE
www.erucc.org/give

one time or recurring gifts

MOBILE

Scan to give from your mobile device

CASH OR CHECK
made payable to
Evangelical Reformed UCC
15 W. Church St,
Frederick MD 21701

offering plates are available in the rear of the sanctuary before and after worship

Worship services and events at Evangelical Reformed UCC are sometimes photographed and videotaped to document the vibrant life of our church. If you do not wish to be included in these recordings, please notify a deacon or the church office. Always obtain permission prior to sharing images and videos that include minors on your personal social media.

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

August 9, 2026 Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28

When All Seems Lost

Joseph was a dreamer. He was also the child his father loved the most, which didn't sit well with his brothers. So much so, they plotted to kill their younger sibling. But not wanting Joseph's blood on their hands, they threw him in a pit instead. When the pit didn't ease their guilty conscience, they then sold the boy for 20 pieces of silver to a group of Ishmaelites on their way to Egypt.

Yes, Joseph was a dreamer. And yes, he was the family's golden child. But I believe what really spurred the brothers' hatred was that Joseph dared to dream.

"Here comes the dreamer," his brothers would say with a biting sarcasm when Joseph approached. Here comes the one with lofty ideas, with bold plans, with a vision that quite honestly isn't enviable but downright frightening because it holds a mirror to our inability to embrace a new way of living.

And that's the thing about dreams. They have the power to unsettle others. A reason why many life coaches advise against sharing too freely our most treasured dreams with everyone, because not everyone will understand and be supportive. Many a dream has been squashed by a naysayer who thought they were listing all the cons out of love and concern for the dreamer.

What a shame it is that in our lives we give too much power to the opinions of others, especially when it comes to our dreams, for those dreams just might be from God who, in the Bible, often communicated in nocturnal slumbering.

And when a dream is a God dream, they are never then the sole property of the dreamer. They are for the making of a better world, which comes at the price of the old world having to come to an end or at least make some big changes. Thus, why people often seek to kill dreams.

Yes, here comes the dreamer. No, I am not referring to Joseph, but to you, for we all have dreams. Some so big they might seem impossible, but they are not. Some within reach, ready to be grabbed hold of. And all with the ability to change life as we know it.

As Harriet Tubman once said, "Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience and the passion to reach for the stars and to change the world."

If all seems lost right now for you, my dear dreamer, it is not. Keep reaching. Keep believing. God is with you.

Inspiring God, may today we find ourselves daring to dream once again. May we find the strength to take those forgotten dreams off the dusty shelves of our hearts. May we believe beyond belief, that with You, all things are indeed possible. 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

8½" x 14" UCC SUNDAY BULLETIN SERVICE

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