

# Christ Reformed United Church of Christ

# VISIONS

*No matter where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here. Because Jesus has taught us to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, strength, and mind, and to love our neighbors as ourselves we declare Christ Reformed UCC to be an Open and Affirming church. We invite people of every race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age, marital status, economic circumstance, and physical and mental ability into the worship, rites & sacraments, fellowship, and leadership of our church.*

## Young Thoughts

What do you say when December rolls around and our lives are still upturned? Thanksgiving and Christmas are the holidays of the moment, yet we still remember that we celebrated Easter online. It has been quite a year! The good news is that in the midst of 2020 we have seen God at work. God has not been absent from our lives even though we have not been gathering in the sanctuary Sunday mornings. In fact, from what I can see, God has been very present in the work and ministry of Christ Reformed United Church of Christ. We have all experienced new ways to be with one another, to join in worship, and to care for one another.

Every year I write a piece of poetry that we include with our Christmas letter in our cards. Over the years I have focused on different parts of the nativity story as part of my own spiritual journey and as part of the planning for Advent and Christmas Eve worship. This year my mind went to that phrase "peace on earth". Amidst the turbulence and uncertainty of the year 2020 I have felt a deep longing for peace. I suspect I am not the only one. My wish for you this Christmas season is that you too will be find the peace of the Christ now and always.

### IN SEARCH OF PEACE

Footfalls on dusty walkways.  
 Peace required by those in power.  
 Not the peace of God-is-with-us  
 Come to rescue those God loves.

What today millennia after?  
 Peace elusive in this the world.  
 Peace defined as blind agreement  
 Sliced as surely as by sword.

Ancient yearnings are womb-waiting  
 Midst oppression and despair  
 Peace enforced by other's wishes  
 Pax Romana served by sword.

Sleep disturbed by anxious feelings  
 Tossed upon the rocks of hate  
 Dreams of something different, better  
 Waken us to paths toward peace

Proclaim to Caesar all the glory.  
 "NO" responds the heaven's host.  
 Glory be to God the highest  
 Peace on earth the angel's song.

"Let us go" the shepherds uttered  
 On to Bethlehem we walk  
 To the manger where the Savior  
 Christ the Lord lies fast asleep.

Birtherd in Bethlehem, the baby.  
 Birtherd is Jesus, Mary's son.  
 God Incarnate, ancient promise  
 Peace has come to pass at last.

There we find our deepest longing  
 Loved by God for all we are  
 Heard and honored as God's children  
 We can sleep in heavenly peace.

*May the Peace of God be With You.  
 Clara Young, Christmas 2020*



Young Thoughts	1
Stewardship Update Year End Giving Christmas Fund Clergy Offering White Gift Service 2021 Offering Envelopes What's Shakin?	2
Kathleen's Korner Holiday Greetings Operating Finances	3
Christmas Eve Services	4



**Stewardship Update**

Stewardship pledge cards were mailed the week of November 2nd. So far, we have received 58 pledges for the General Fund campaign for a total of \$161,660. Nine of the pledges did not specify an amount. Five Capital Fund pledges for a total of \$4,260. You have the option to submit your pledge cards by mail or electronically using our Realm software (contact Debbie if you need help setting up your Realm account). Thank you to everyone for your continued support of the church and our ministries.

**Year End Giving**

As we close out the calendar year we also close out our fiscal year. The Consistory is grateful for your generous support of the church's ministries throughout these past 12 months. A reminder that contributions you plan to claim for 2020 tax purposes must be received by December 31. If you have questions you can contact either of our financial secretaries, Paul Fink or Nancy vom Lehn at [crucfinancialexecutive@gmail.com](mailto:crucfinancialexecutive@gmail.com).

**Christmas Fund Clergy Offering**

There are many retired clergy who served congregations at a time when compensation was small and pension provision very limited. Other clergy and lay employees serve at levels that leave them near poverty. Each year UCC churches take up a special offering called The Christmas Fund which provides a lifeline of hope to many lower-income active and retired clergy and lay employees. The money collected is used to supplement pension checks, help pay health insurance premiums, and to provide emergency grants to individuals and families in need. You are invited to make a contribution to the health and well-being of these servants of God. Checks can be made out to the church and noted "Christmas Fund."

**White Gift Service Sunday**

Our White Gift Service will be on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent, December 6, 2020. This year we will need to do things a little differently. The following is the information about what Community Living, Inc. is asking regarding "White Gifts". We encourage you to respond to these needs and then join us virtually on December 6 for a service of worship in the tradition of White Gifts. Community Living is a nonprofit that supports people who have Down syndrome, autism and other intellectual/developmental disabilities. Every year, you are kind enough to donate gifts and gift cards for Christmas for the people we support. This year, we are asking for your help to put on a special socially distanced Christmas party for the people we serve. We have an Amazon wish list that we put together with the items we need. Since the event will be December 18th, anything you can provide before the 11th, whether items from the wish list or gift cards, would be amazing! Amazon and Wal Mart gift cards would be preferable, as we can get the items we need easily with these. But as always, anything you are able to donate is SO, SO appreciated! Here is the link to the list: <https://a.co/0fqqxxkf>. Please make sure to include a note with your name and address so we know who to thank!

**2021 Offering Envelopes Available**

2021 Offering Envelopes are available from Paul or Nancy. If you have not previously requested envelopes and would like to receive a pack, please contact Paul Fink (301-371-4658), Nancy vom Lehn (301-371-7457), or Debbie Bruns in the church office.

**WORSHIP SERVICES****Sundays @ 10:30am**

Pre-recorded services viewing options are available on our Facebook page, YouTube and Instagram (links posted on church website at [www.cruc.org](http://www.cruc.org)).

**COFFEE HOUR****Sundays @ 11:30am**

Join us after worship at 11:30am for Zoom Coffee Hour. Link is sent out via email on Sunday mornings.



Did you know that we have the English to thank for the choir chimes that supplement our four octaves of handbells? Choir chimes were developed for children with cerebral palsy to use in their physical therapy sessions. A doctor in the UK contacted the Malmark Bell Company in Pennsylvania for assistance and the first chimes were produced in 1982. Today they are very popular in elementary schools because they are lightweight, easy to ring, and children can quickly learn to play without having to learn to read music.

*Ringer of the Month: Sue Wickless*

Sue has been ringing for almost 30 years! She enjoys the fellowship we share as a choir, she likes the sound that the bells make, and Sue enjoys learning new pieces to perform for the congregation. Her hobbies are reading, computer coloring games, cooking and taking walks. A fun fact is that Sue loves rabbits. She would have 100 of them if possible!



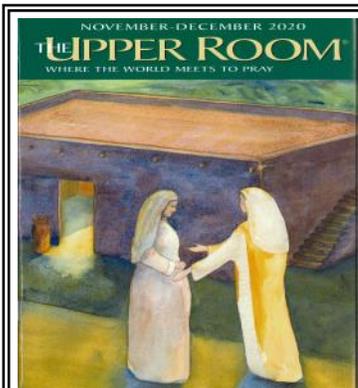
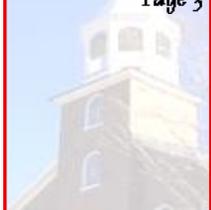
**Kids Say the Darndest:**



- After church on Sunday morning, a young boy suddenly announced to his mother, "Mom, I've decided I'm going to be a Minister when I grow up."  
"That's okay with us," the mother said, "but, what made you decide to be a minister?"  
"Well," the boy said, "I'll have to go to church on Sunday anyway, and I figure it will be more fun to stand up and yell than to sit and listen."
- A Sunday school teacher asked her class, "Does anyone here know what we mean by sin of omission?" A small girl replied, "Aren't those the sins we should have committed, but didn't?"



- ◆ Please join us for Children's Church/ Sunday school each Sunday via Zoom at 9am. Link sent out each week.
- ◆ December 2 starts the Devotion group. We will meet on zoom at 7:30pm each Wednesday in December. Join us for fellowship and sharing some of our God's messages with and for each other. You just might be the person God has chosen to give insight to someone else. We will using the Upper Room Devotionals. You can pick up a copy from the Parish House porch mailbox.



**Women's  
Devotion Group  
Wednesdays in Dec.  
@ 7:30pm**

Please contact Kathleen at  
[kathleen.rogers1@comcast.net](mailto:kathleen.rogers1@comcast.net) for  
the link.



**Adult Book Study  
Sundays @ 5pm**

Please contact David Grieger at  
[griegerdavid@gmail.com](mailto:griegerdavid@gmail.com)  
for the link.

**Holiday Greetings**

Mike Anne Terry Debra Kathleen  
Jeri Clara Ed Missy

Merry Christmas and many blessings to you and your family!  
from the Christ Reformed UCC Staff

**Operating Finances**

**2020 Operating Finances Year-to-Date – OCTOBER 31, 2020**

	<b>Actual Income</b>	<b>Budgeted Expenses</b>	<b>Actual Expenses</b>	<b>Variant</b>
Operating	\$335,969.50	\$322,405.00	\$287,634.49	\$48,335.01
Children's Center	\$464,821.77	\$680,323.10	\$513,148.50	-\$48,326.73
Global	\$800,791.27	\$1,002,728.10	\$800,782.99	\$8.28

*Christ Reformed  
United Church of Christ*

Rev. Clara Young, Pastor

OnLine Worship 10:30am  
Zoom Coffee Hour 11:30am

Church Office Hours  
Mon/Wed/Fri 9:00am-3:00pm  
301-371-6610  
Fax: 301-371-6912

12 South Church Street  
P.O. Box 333  
Middletown, Maryland 21769  
[christreformeducc@comcast.net](mailto:christreformeducc@comcast.net)  
[www.crucc.org](http://www.crucc.org)

Non Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage Paid  
PERMIT 2202  
Frederick, Maryland 21701

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

*Christ Church Children's Center  
Childcare*

Mrs. Missy Payne, Director  
Mrs. Jesi Bell-Godfrey, Asst. Director  
6 Weeks—5th Grade  
Mon-Fri 7:00am – 5:30pm  
301-371-0360  
[www.christchurchchildrenscenter.net](http://www.christchurchchildrenscenter.net)

*Reaching out to help people to know  
God through Jesus Christ.  
Equipping people to love God through  
the community of faith.  
Sending people to serve God  
throughout the world.*

# Virtual Christmas Eve Services

## 7pm Christmas Eve Service

*Please join us on our Facebook page or our  
Youtube channel. (links are on our church  
website at [crucc.org](http://crucc.org))*

Christmas Eve Worship Bags will be available for pickup from the Reopening Committee via a drive thru in the Church Parking Lot on December 20th from 12pm to 1pm. If you are unable to pick up on the 20<sup>th</sup>, we will have bags available on the Parish House porch during the week.

