

# 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

Although snowflakes continue to fall, temperatures are low enough to require coats and scarfs, Christmas decorations have barely been put away, the season of Lent is upon us. Ash Wednesday is February 17th. The planning for the Lenten-Easter season is just beginning (knowing that we are yet in a situation where things will be different than from years past). I'll give you some hints about what you may anticipate in this VISIONS article.

Lent in many ways is New Year's on steroids. On January 1st we ring in a new year with joy, anticipation, parties and resolutions. Lent provides us the space to make some of those resolutions actionable. And if you didn't make resolutions, Lent is a time for introspection and reflection. It is a preparation for the Passion of Jesus where we remember Christ's redemptive action. It is a preparation for Easter, the Day of New Beginnings.

Walter Brueggeman, a UCC pastor, writer, teacher, theologian writes these words about Lent that are particularly resonant in our day and time. "I imagine Lent for you and for me as a great departure from the greedy, anxious antineighborliness of our economy, a great departure from our exclusionary politics that fears the other, a great departure from self-indulgent consumerism that devours creation. And then an arrival in a new neighborhood, because it is a gift to be simple, it is a gift to be free; it is a gift to come down where we ought to be." — *Walter Brueggemann, A Way Other Than Our Own: Devotions for Lent*

Lent is a time for prayer, repentance, resolve, rededication. Here are some of the ways we will mark the season of Lent at Christ Reformed UCC.

- ◆ Wednesday, February 17, 2021 – Ash Wednesday service will be live-streamed from the sanctuary with music and words focused on prayer and repentance and forgiveness. The time is to be determined but it will probably be at 7:30-8:00 PM on Facebook Live and Instagram.
- ◆ Lenten Candle Liturgy – as part of our Sunday morning worship the person giving the call to worship will have a lighted candle. After appropriate words to begin a service of worship in Lent, that candle will be extinguished. As part of a Good Friday service, the last candle will be extinguished. On Easter morning, all seven candles will once again be lit.
- ◆ Midweek Meditation – During Lent this space (Young Thoughts) will be dedicated to three traditional practices for this season: prayer (Justice towards God), fasting (justice towards self), almsgiving (justice

(Continued on page 2)



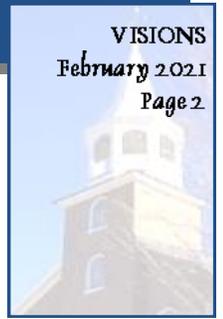
Young Thoughts	1
Young Thoughts (cont.) Stewardship Update 2021 Offering Envelopes A Message from the Financial Secretaries Food Bank Donations Adult Book Study	2
2021 Consistory, Boards & Committees Members	3
2020 Community Outreach	4
Kathleen's Korner What's Skakin? Operating Finances	5
Lent Season	6

**Valentines Day trivia....**  
**What kind of flowers are traditionally given to symbolize love? Red Roses**

**Which Roman goddess was Cupids mother? Venus**

Happy Valentines Day  
 from Called to Care





towards others). We will try to move beyond only giving up chocolate or chewing gum to the implications of Lenten Practices.

- ◆ Lenten/Easter Bags – Although we have no idea where we will be in this pandemic by the first of April, we will be putting together Lenten/Easter Bags similar to what we did for Christmas Eve. These bags will include the Communion Elements for Maundy Thursday. They will have a bit of palm branch since they will be distributed on Palm Sunday. They will have the worship aids for Easter morning.
- ◆ Maundy Thursday Service – We will have a Maundy Thursday service that will include communion.
- ◆ Good Friday Service – We will have a time for worship on Good Friday
- ◆ Easter Morning – April 4th we will celebrate Christ's Resurrection.

We have learned over this past year that we cannot predict when it will be safe to reopen. Your reopening committee is keeping track of the way the virus is spreading and is prepared to open the doors in a limited and responsible way as soon as possible. We have also learned that we can find the ways to be in community in worship. Let us prepare to move into the Lenten season together.

*Grace and Peace.  
Rev. Clara*

## Notes

### **Stewardship Update**

To date, we have received 77 pledges for the General Fund campaign for a total of \$199,828. Last year at this time, we had received 104 pledges for \$236,382. Of these 77 pledges, twenty of the pledges increased, 14 pledges decreased and 43 pledges stayed the same. Fourteen pledges did not specify an amount. We have received seven Capital Fund pledges for a total of \$4,620. 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.

### **2021 Offering Envelopes Available**

Envelopes are available to be picked up at the church office. A box of envelopes can be left on the porch if you cannot stop by during office hours. Please call Debbie to make arrangements for pickup.

### **A message from the Financial Secretaries**

The end of the calendar year means it's time to gather documents for taxes. You may be wondering how to get your Giving Statement for 2020 from the church. There are a few options:

- ◆ If you have entered an email address in your REALM account, you should have received an email with a link to access your 2020 statement.
- ◆ If you did not receive the email, you can still log on to your REALM account and print out your statement.

If you have difficulty accessing your REALM account or need help setting up your account, please contact

Debbie in the church office. If you are unable to print out your statement, contact the church office or the Financial Secretaries to request a copy. Requested statements will usually be printed each Thursday when the weekly deposit is completed. You can stop by the church office to pick up your statement or request to have it mailed to you. In an effort to save money on paper and postage, Nancy and Paul will not print out statements for church members unless requested.

### **Middletown Food Bank Donations**

The inability to hold church services has cut down our Food Bank offerings considerably, so the Discipleship Board has placed a box on the Parish House porch for canned and non perishable food donations. Please, if you can, pick up an extra item or two while doing your regular grocery shopping, and when you're in the vicinity, drop them off at the Parish House. The pandemic is affecting many, and more families find themselves in need, so our help is desperately needed. Thank you.



## Adult Book Study Sundays @ 5pm

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



CONSISTORY

Elders

Edward Fontaine, Ed Higginbottom, Beth Tucker

New: Renee Brandenburg-Huffer, Gail Johnson, Joe Kroener

Deacons

Terri DeLloyd, Crystal Fink, Amanda Murphy, Gregg Petermann, Garry vom Lehn

New: Bob Woods

CHAIRPERSON OF CONGREGATION (1 year term)

Ed Link

CEMETERY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Madelyn Cross, Jay House, Skip Lare, Richard Kefauver, Tom Mende, Scott Montgomery, Bob Sheffler, Keith Staley

New: Keith Welty

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION BOARD

Stephanie Bidle, Jean Gale

New: Meagan Fogle, Myesha Jackson-White, Melissa Miller

CHURCH PROPERTY BOARD

Dale Biggs, Jason Moser, Rich Potter

New: John DeLauder, Bill Falconer, Jack Lynch

DISCIPLESHIP BOARD

Wendy Campbell, Dinah Esworthy, Pay Joy, Anita Link, Beth Stitely

New: Judy Brandenburg, Linda DeLauder, Kathy Morris

PARISH LIFE BOARD

Chris Botker, Marty Estell, Be' Hill, Pat McBride, Gertie Mende, Jan Stock

New: Connie Bell, Margaret Brandenburg, Brenda Fogle

NOMINATING COMMITTEE (1 year term)

To be named (Deacon), To be named (Elder), To be named (Cemetery Board)

New: Bunny Cramer, Tony Verdi

CHURCH & MINISTRY COMMITTEE

Ron Blain, Jill Brandenburg, Jenny Powell, Lisa Remsberg

New: Ed Link, Kevin Martin

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

JJ Bell-Godfrey, Kathy DeLauder, Laura Fontaine

New: Charlotte Hanson, Susan Keller, Tony Verdi

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE (2 year term)

Maureen Lee, Bill Steigelmann

New: TBD

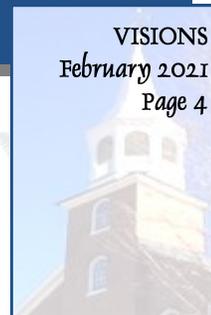
USHERING COMMITTEE

TBD – Coordinator(s)

CHRIST CHURCH CHILDREN'S CENTER

Jesi Bell-Godfrey, Missy Payne, Jessi Zecher, Katie Roberts

New: TBD



### **Discipleship Board Direct Giving**

- \$2,000 to the Religious Coalition
- \$1,500 to Heartly House
- \$500 to Hoffman Homes
- \$500 to I Believe In Me, Inc.
- \$500 to Frederick County Mental Health Association

### **Fish Fund and Other Friends In Need**

- Over \$21,000 collected

### **Middletown Valley Food Pantry Collection**

- Over 880 food pantry items collected

### **Middletown Valley People Helping People**

- Over \$1,625 in gift cards collected for “Adopt a Family” at Christmas

### **Community Living**

- Provided toiletries, gift cards, and wish list items for Holiday Party

### **Frederick County Soup Kitchen**

- Six meals provided and served throughout the year

### **Heartly House**

- Toiletry and health care items were collected

### **Growing Project**

- \$2,000 was donated

### **UCC Special Offerings**

- \$3,000 for One Great Hour of Sharing
- \$685 for the Christmas Fund
- \$953 for Neighbors In Need Fund
- \$200 for Strengthen the Church

*Thank you! to everyone who participated in  
the community outreach efforts listed here.  
This is just a sampling of the many ways our  
congregation reaches out to the community.  
We can make a difference!*



Kid's say the darndest:



- Four year old, Tucker attended VBS, and the theme was "Discipleship and Saving Mother Earth." When Tucker got home his mom asked him what he had learned and he told her all about Jesus and the 12 recycles.
- A Pastor in Indianapolis went to an informal church gathering, wearing shorts and a T-shirt. A little girl from a newly-churched family, who had only seen him in his Sunday morning attire, promptly should "Hey, preacher, you sure look different with clothes on!"



- ◆ COMING FEBRUARY 7th---12 NOON--- I am inviting the youth to spend Check in Chat time with me (CCT). It is a time slot where we can get together to just say hello, share a thought, a poem, whatever! It is a time to reconnect with each other in just a small way but I feel necessary. It will have a time limit of 30 minutes, you do not have to stay on the entire time. It is more or less a way for you to share your thoughts and for me to connect to you.
- ◆ Please be sure to check you emails regularly for notifications.
- ◆ Beginning in Feb. (Feb. 7th) Sunday School will be starting at 9:30am.

## What's Shakin'?

*Fun Facts About Our Jubilate Deo Handbell Choir.*



- We have had three previous directors, Cordelia Brengle, Andrew Corl and Terry Sparks.
- The original three octaves of bells were given as a gift by Edward and Naomi Holter in 1974 and the first performance was January 1975. A picture of the first bell choir is in the 1975 pictorial directory. Members were Joel Brengle, Joyce Snyder, Loretta Guyton, Susan Keller, Lewis Corl, Cordelia Brengle, Sara Remsberg and Tom Bunting. A celebration of 25 years of handbells was held in 2000 and Mrs. Brengle was honored as she retired as director. Diana Corl made our banner.
- Over the years we have shared our talents in several locations besides our own church. We have performed at Beaver Dam Church of the Brethren, Mt. Pleasant Christ Reformed Church, Union Bridge Church of the Brethren, and Church of the Transfiguration in Braddock Heights. We joined with other area choirs for a bell and history performance at the old Francis Scott Key Hotel building. We also played at the weddings of Linda and Pat Nichols and Julie and David Frye and at the funeral of Cordelia Brengle.
- Christmas performances include Christmas in the Valley at the Lutheran Church in Middletown, Fredericktowne Mall, a civic organization in Brunswick, a live nativity at our own church, and at the Vindabona and Homewood nursing homes.
- Our choir has had plenty of comic relief as well. For example, during a church service, Martha Morris' A flat bell fell apart. The casting bounced off the edge of the table onto the pew below. What a blessing it did not fly off the balcony!

*Ringer of the Month: Renee Huffer.*

She began playing handbells in middle school under Cordelia Brengle. Renee enjoys playing for the laughter, friendship, and stress relief (although, she says, some songs can cause stress). Renee loves her bell family. When not playing handbells, she likes to swim and make Christmas wreaths. She teaches lifeguarding, gives swim lessons and teaches CPR. Renee enjoys football Sundays, camping and cookouts. Her favorite food is crabs – hot and loaded with Old Bay. Did you know Renee wrote a book on how to operate a swimming pool? It is accepted in Maryland as a text for the state operator's certification.



## Operating Finances

### 2020 Operating Finances Year-to-Date – DECEMBER 31, 2020

	<b>Actual Income</b>	<b>Budgeted Expenses</b>	<b>Actual Expenses</b>	<b>Variant</b>
Operating	\$408,432.15	\$386,878.83	\$335,509.87	\$72,922.28
Children's Center	\$566,720.31	\$816,387.82	\$626,657.23	-\$59,936.92
Global	\$975,152.46	\$1,203,266.65	\$962,167.10	\$12,985.36

*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.*

- 
- Lent Season**
- ◆ **Ash Wednesday** – An Ash Wednesday service on February 17th, will be live-streamed from the sanctuary with music and words focused on prayer and repentance and forgiveness. The time is to be determined but it will probably be at 7:30-8:00 PM on Facebook Live and Instagram.
  - ◆ **Lenten Candle Liturgy** – as part of our Sunday morning worship the person giving the call to worship will have a lighted candle. After appropriate words to begin a service of worship in Lent, that candle will be extinguished. As part of a Good Friday service, the last candle will be extinguished. On Easter morning, all seven candles will once again be lit.
  - ◆ **Midweek Meditation** – During Lent, “Young Thoughts” will be dedicated to three traditional practices for this season: prayer (Justice towards God), fasting (justice towards self), almsgiving (justice towards others). We will try to move beyond only giving up chocolate or chewing gum to the implications of Lenten Practices.
  - ◆ **Lenten/Easter Bags** – Although we have no idea where we will be in this pandemic by the first of April, we will be putting together Lenten/Easter Bags similar to what we did for Christmas Eve. These bags will include the Communion Elements for Maundy Thursday. They will have a bit of palm branch since they will be distributed on Palm Sunday. They will have the worship aids for Easter morning.
  - ◆ **Maundy Thursday Service** – We will have a Maundy Thursday service that will include communion.
  - ◆ **Good Friday Service** – We will have a time for worship on Good Friday
  - ◆ **Easter Morning** – April 4th we will celebrate Christ's Resurrection.