

# 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.*

## Inside Kyle's Head

Last month the Consistory finally had the chance to meet for their annual retreat day. It felt like it took too long to get everyone together, thanks to some busy schedules, but in some ways that day was the perfect time.

We worked through a number of questions Christ Reformed Church faces, not the least of which is "who are we and what do we do now that the pandemic has cleared?" For any organization that is a difficult question to suss-out the answer(s) to; it can be doubly difficult for a church or other religious group because our motivation is to not figure out what we want to do but where God is leading us to go.

The Consistory laid some of the foundation for that at last year's retreat, pondering the "why?" question: why does this church exist? why do we do the things we do? and to what end?

This year we drilled down deeper into our identity, what is our unique blessing as a church, for each other and for the community around us? We talked about what has been meaningful for us as members of the church, things of our past as well as our present. And we reviewed the results of the congregational survey the Church & Ministry committee conducted earlier this year.

What I heard coming out of this reflection and discernment process was the underlying, almost unconscious, recognition of what a blessing this church is to each of us and to Middletown, Frederick County, and who knows where else. Yes, we have our difficulties...that were exacerbated by the pandemic. Yes, we face some difficulties ahead as we—like all churches—continue to pivot to the new reality that active Christians are a minority in our country (fewer than 46% of Americans are active in any faith community as of 2019). But we have a uniqueness to offer the world around us that is compelling, that can speak to people where they are in their lives.

We identified three strengths that we want to build on in the rest of this year and into 2024 and for as long as God will have us move in these directions. They are:

### 1. To cultivate faith engagement with young families

We want to focus on building connections with the parents and children that are already here, and create ties with families at the Children's Center in ways that are meaningful to them, demonstrate that we are interested in or concerned with that which is important in their lives.

### 2. To continue the work we began when we became Open & Affirming

The O&A process was not an end, but a first step in becoming allies to people who are LGBTQ+. There are huge opportunities for us to reach out to people, to invite, welcome, and embrace them...but we don't really know yet how to effectively do that. Our first step will be to explore what it actually means and might look like for us to be active allies.

### 3. To be the kind of church that helps people explore the breadth and depth of their spiritual lives

The United Church of Christ is often portrayed as being wishy-washy Christians, because we're a little more flexible on what is and isn't correct Christian belief and practice. I saw the UCC as this way for a long time; Presbyterians are big on being doctrinal, adhering to "fixed points" of faith.

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Number VII  
July 2023



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The struggle with being a denomination where "they all may be one" (Jesus' words in John 17) is that we have to allow that there will be some unconventional views of Christian faith, of Jesus, of God, of the Bible, of the Church. We want to be a church where people, wherever they are on life's journey, may feel safe to explore what it means to be created and loved by God in Jesus. We already do some of that in bible studies, and in God on Tap; we want to continue to develop such opportunities.

These three foci are the lenses through which I and Consistory want to examine all we do, in every ministry, in every event, in everything. Every board and committee now has a way by which they can determine the priorities of the things they do—something as "mundane" as Property Board can ask "what can we do to make our facility more accessible to those we invite here?", Parish Life can ask, "What kind of events can we offer that would make those we invite feel not just welcome, but embraced?"

This is absolutely exciting to me, not just that we found three very powerful foci for our ministry but that this is just a beginning. I'm looking forward to continuing to work with Consistory on this through the coming months.

I invite you to contemplate how you might get in on this, on what God is doing with us and with you! In the coming months you will see things happening, new faith development experiences, and I hope you not only take advantage of them but invite others to do so as well.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kyle".

## Notes

### Book Club

Our Book Club will meet at Fratelli's on Tuesday, July 25th at noon. Our book is The Light Pirate by Lily Brooks-Dalton. "Florida is slipping away. As devastating weather patterns and rising sea levels gradually wreak havoc on the state's infrastructure, a powerful hurricane approaches a small town on the southeastern coast. You won't be able to put down this novel about the enduring strength of community in the face of natural disaster." New members are always welcome! Please contact Charlotte Hanson at [hansonc3306@gmail.com](mailto:hansonc3306@gmail.com) for more information.

### Summer Stewardship

We hope your summer plans provide plenty of time for rest and renewal. While you are vacationing, however, we hope you keep in mind that the church's expenses do not take time off. Salaries, utilities, insurance and mission commitments are year-round realities. We appreciate your continuing support of the church through your pledges and offerings!

### Community Day of Service—PROJECTS NEEDED

Our Community Day of Service, in partnership with Holy Family, MUMC, and Zion Lutheran churches, is looking for home projects to be done. Examples of projects are indoor/outdoor painting, repairs, yard work, cleaning. Are you in need of assistance on small home projects or know someone that is? There are no restrictions or requirements to utilize these services. If you are in need of assistance, for more details, please contact Renee Brandenburg-Huffer at [aquatictraining@aol.com](mailto:aquatictraining@aol.com).

### CRUCC Notes

Pastor Kyle sends out weekly emails that highlight upcoming events, news, etc. If you are not currently receiving these emails and would like to, please contact the church office.

### Greetings from the Church & Ministry Board!

As mentioned in last month's newsletter, after going through all the surveys, the members of the board and Pastor Kyle felt there is a need for a Worship Committee.

This group will work collaboratively with Pastor Kyle and Terry Sparks, our Music Director to continue to develop meaningful worship services to meet our needs. They will provide constructive feedback about both of our services and possibly suggest new ideas, such as sermon topics, music, new presentation methods such as skits, dramatic or dance interpretations, etc. to "spice things up". This committee would also discuss any concern about any aspect of our worship services. Currently, Pastor Kyle and Terry are the main planners of our worship services. We want to have a representative group of our congregation to provide additional input and perspective from those who attend the services to continue to make our services meaningful for all who attend.

The Worship Committee will consist of approximately four members in addition to Pastor Kyle and Terry. Ideally, we would like to have representatives from both services. This committee would meet perhaps once a month or less, to be determined by the members of the group. We hope the group will meet one time this summer. Please contact Pastor Kyle or Pat Joy ([patjoyful@yahoo.com](mailto:patjoyful@yahoo.com)) if you are interested in being on this committee.



CCCC held their Class of 2023 Pre-K Graduation on Friday, June 2nd here at CRUCC. They were lead by Ms. Terry and their teachers, Ms. Ashley and Ms. Patty. We would like to say THANK YOU to Ms. Terry for working with the children over the school year teaching them the songs that they sang during the ceremony. We could not have done it without you.

Summer is in full swing here at CCCC. We have already had Kona Ice, Soccer Shots, Middletown Library, Ferrets and Friends come to the center and Pre-K and School Age have gone on other field trips to Greenbrier State Park, Port Discovery, Putt Putt Golfing, Catoctin Creek Nature Center, and other parks. We are looking forward to the rest of the summer!



## Metal Recycling

Every Sunday from approximately 8:30am until 12:00pm in the Holy Family Catholic Community parking lot, Bill Traube and a core of volunteers collect any kind of metal, aluminum cans, steel, etc. All of the proceeds go to support 1) the local Middletown Ministerium Day of Service projects; and 2) local charities such as the Myersville Area Growing Project, Frederick Rescue Mission, Religious Coalition, Mission of Mercy, etc. In 2021, they donated over \$17K to these charities. All are encouraged to bring their scrap metal for a good cause. Arrangements can be made for picking up large items by contacting Bill Traube at 240-457-3953.



Did you know that you can donate to the church while you are grocery shopping or eating out? With every gift card you purchase from the church through the Raise Right program (formerly SCRIP), a portion of the value of the gift card is donated right back to Christ Reformed. For a list of the participating merchants, look for the order forms in the Narthex or go to the Raise Right website (<http://www.raiseright.com>). Questions? Call the church office or see Gail Johnson.

### ENROLL ONLINE

<https://www.raiseright.com/enroll?enrollCode=3124C59B3388L>



## MOST NEEDED ITEMS

### FOOD ITEMS

- Cereal
- Pasta
- Pancake Mix
- Pancake Syrup
- Coffee
- Sugar
- Flour
- Jam or Jelly
- Oatmeal
- Mayonnaise
- Canned Veggies



### PERSONAL CARE ITEMS

- Toilet Paper
- Liquid Hand Soap
- Bars of Soap
- Hand Lotion
- Facial Tissue
- Paper Towels

## Looking for Your Help!



Occasionally we have members who need our additional support. We are looking for people who are willing to lend that extra hand. If you choose to volunteer to help, you are volunteering to be placed on a list. You will be contacted only when there is a specific need in the area(s) you volunteered. You can always decline to help when you're contacted due to your availability. If you're willing to add your name to our list, sign up using one of the following methods:

- ◆ Call the church office (301-371-6610).
- ◆ Add your name to the signup sheet found in the narthex.
- ◆ Use the link or QR code to complete the information electronically.

Thanks for your willingness to volunteer to support each other!



<https://tinyurl.com/3tf5t6r3>

# Operating Finances Year to Date (Ending May 31, 2023)



<b>CRUCC</b>	Actual May 1, 2023 - May 31, 2023	Actual This Year to Date	Budget Remaining This Year to Date
<b>REVENUE</b>			
Operating Income	\$ 14,837.50	\$ 129,185.56	\$ 267,159.01
Investment Income	\$ 5.93	\$ 10,679.42	\$ (10,679.42)
Other Income	\$ 3,128.93	\$ 19,860.83	\$ 41,134.17
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	\$ 17,972.36	\$ 167,225.81	\$ 290,113.76
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Compensation Expenses	\$ 18,753.94	\$ 96,161.83	\$ 173,276.74
Operating Expenses			
Program Expenses	\$ 75.00	\$ 75.00	\$ (75.00)
Worship-Related Expenses	\$ 277.07	\$ 3,411.05	\$ 6,088.95
Education-SS/CCCC	\$ 510.54	\$ 510.54	\$ 3,989.46
Office & Supplies	\$ 2,358.92	\$ 9,934.54	\$ 15,016.46
Utilities	\$ 1,646.49	\$ 17,930.61	\$ 15,269.39
Building & Property	\$ 601.56	\$ 37,214.60	\$ 40,785.40
Equipment Maintenance	\$ -	\$ 770.00	\$ 1,730.00
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 5,469.58	\$ 69,846.34	\$ 82,804.66
Ministry Expenses	\$ 95.55	\$ 8,105.81	\$ 23,744.19
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	\$ 24,319.07	\$ 174,113.98	\$ 279,825.59
Net Total	\$ (6,346.71)	\$ (6,888.17)	\$ 10,288.17

<b>CCCC</b>	Actual May 1, 2023 - May 31, 2023	Actual This Year to Date	Budget Remaining This Year to Date
<b>REVENUE</b>			
Operating Income	\$ 83,954.50	\$ 391,843.50	\$ 571,111.26
Investment Income	\$ 7.42	\$ 34.35	\$ (34.35)
Other Income	\$ (104.04)	\$ 5,980.56	\$ 3,219.44
Designated Income	\$ -	\$ 24.98	\$ (24.98)
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	\$ 83,857.88	\$ 397,883.39	\$ 574,271.37
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Compensation Expenses	\$ 78,246.96	\$ 294,843.99	\$ 489,910.77
Operating Expenses			
Program Expenses	\$ 8,261.24	\$ 24,134.94	\$ 47,865.06
Education-SS/CCCC	\$ 81.69	\$ 161.81	\$ 2,838.19
Office & Supplies	\$ 2,124.05	\$ 11,258.37	\$ 21,941.63
Utilities	\$ 562.28	\$ 1,686.84	\$ 1,313.16
Building & Property	\$ 3,775.00	\$ 20,885.63	\$ 51,814.37
Equipment Maintenance	\$ 457.32	\$ 785.04	\$ 2,714.96
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 15,261.58	\$ 58,912.63	\$ 128,487.37
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	\$ 93,508.54	\$ 353,756.62	\$ 618,398.14
Net Total	\$ (9,650.66)	\$ 44,126.77	\$ (44,126.77)

## Ladies Chill Night

**July 21st @ 5:30pm**  
**Manalū Italian Rest.**

*Come and enjoy fellowship and food.  
Add your name to the signup sheet in  
the Narthex by 7/18 Contact the church  
office for more details.*

## Online Lectionary Based Bible Study

8am Wednesdays w/Pastor Kyle

Contact Kyle at [kyle.crucc@gmail.com](mailto:kyle.crucc@gmail.com)  
for the Zoom link.

## Guys Night Out



**Main Cup**  
**7/24 @ 6pm**

Join us for fellowship & food.  
If you plan to attend, please RSVP to Bob Galey at  
[robertgaley@hotmail.com](mailto:robertgaley@hotmail.com) or text or call 301 712-8022.

## BINGO! Buds

LUNCH, BINGO & FELLOWSHIP

**July 13**  
**Noon to 2pm**  
**Coffee Hour Area**

Add your name to the sign up sheet or  
contact the church office.



## Downstairs Discussion Group

**Sundays @ 9:15 am**  
**Coffee Hour Space**

Contact Bill Steigelmann @ 240.490.5880 for more info.

**Monday**  
**7/17 @ 6:30pm**  
**Main Cup**

God on Tap is an opportunity for members and friends of CRUCC to gather to come to know each other and to wrestle with some of life's great (and small) questions.

**.....on Tap!**

For more information, please contact Christine at [97cfontaine@gmail.com](mailto:97cfontaine@gmail.com).

## Women's Study Group

### UNTANGLING FAITH

Reclaiming Hope in the  
Questions Jesus Asked

AMBERLY NEESE

**Wednesdays @ 7pm**  
**via Zoom**

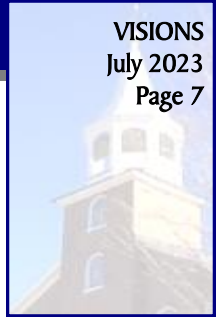
Contact Sue Wickless at  
[saw114@comcast.net](mailto:saw114@comcast.net) for more info.

## Thank You Notes

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Dear CRUCC friends,  
Thank you for your prayers, cards and calls after my hip replacement surgery. Two weeks into recovery and I am doing well. I am on a cane and feeling better every day. I am grateful for your loving support. You all are the best.  
~Love, Mary

Thank you for all the communication and visits during my last stay at Lorien Nursing Home in Mt. Airy.  
~Judy B.



## Around the Congregation

### LAYREADERS

July 2	Paul Fink
July 9	Sue Wickless
July 16	Gail Johnson
July 23	Andrew Corl
July 30	Laura Fontaine

### USHERS

July 2	Pat Joy, Nancy vom Lehn
July 9	Ed Higginbottom, Be' Hill
July 16	Pat Joy, Judy Zeck
July 23	Debbie Locke, Mike Locke
July 30	Laura Verdi, Nancy vom Lehn

### CHILDREN'S STORY

July 30	Kyle Powderly
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### PSALMIST

July 30	Scott Fogle
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### ALTAR FLOWERS

July 2	TBD
July 9	Nancy vom Lehn
July 16	TBD
July 23	TBD
July 30	TBD

### COFFEE HOUR HOSTS

July 2	TBD
July 9	Parish Life
July 16	Linda DeLauder, Bill Steigelmann
July 23	Jesi & JJ Bell-Godfrey
July 30	Christian Ed Board

### SOUND TECHS

July 2	Nick Fink
July 9	Pat Joy
July 16	Paul Fink
July 23	Tony Verdi
July 30	Pat Joy

## Church Attendance

### MAY 2023

	8:15 am	10:30 am
May 7	20	48
May 14	15	75
May 21	18	53
May 28 Outdoor Worship—58		



*Christ Reformed*  
*United Church of Christ*  
Rev. Kyle Powderly, Pastor

In-Person  
8:15am Contemporary Worship  
In Person & On-Line Worship  
Traditional Worship 10:30am

1st & 2nd Sunday  
Coffee Hour 9:30am

3rd, 4th & 5th Sundays  
Coffee Hour 11:30am

Church Summer Office Hours  
Mon-Thurs 10am-2pm/Fri 9am-12pm  
301-371-6610  
Fax: 301-371-6912

12 South Church Street  
P.O. Box 333  
Middletown, Maryland 21769  
*christreformeducc@comcast.net*  
*www.crucc.org*

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

*Christ Church Children's Center*

Mrs. Missy Payne, Director  
6 Weeks—5th Grade  
Mon-Fri 6:30am – 6:00pm  
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.*

# School Supplies Needed

DEADLINE FOR DONATIONS: July 29th

Middletown Valley People Helping People is  
partnering with United Way to *Stuff the Bus*

Items most needed are whiteboard markers, pencil boxes, crayons, earbuds with microphones, composition notebooks, and wide-ruled notebooks.

Please place backpacks, school supplies, gift cards in the yellow bin provided in the Narthex.

