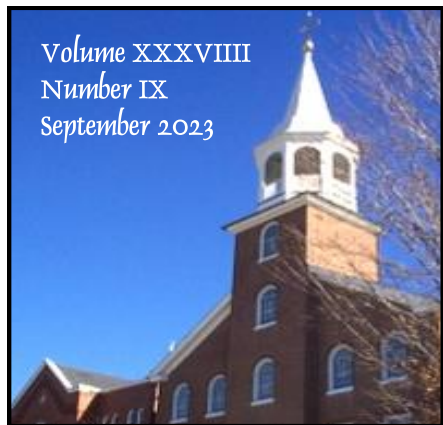


VISIONS

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

In worship the last Sunday of August, I shared with the students during our Blessing of the Backpacks that one of the greatest gifts of God is the question, "Why?" The question is a mark of the *imago dei*, what it means to say we are created in the image of God. We are able to see the world and ask why things are the way they are, to imagine a different world and to aspire to that world. We are able to imagine the realm of God.

"Why?" is also a prayer, as seen throughout the psalms. In Psalm 42, the psalmist cries, "Why are you downcast, O my soul?"; in Lamentations chapter five the writer pleads with God, "Why have you forgotten us completely?"

"Why?" can also sometimes be our prayer: "why did I get cancer?", "why does racism persist in our society?", "why should I hope that _____ will ever change?" It's tempting to say it's only a prayer when we don't challenge God, but that's not being honest in our faith. The psalms of lament (of which 42 is a great example) challenge God, asking why in an expression of pain. The psalmist is blunt with God, not only expressing their "why?" but also asking something very specific from God in response. At the end, though, the psalmist affirms they trust God, remembering all the times God was faithful to them, and expressing praise to God.

A great example of this is found in the most well-known of the psalms. Though Psalm 23 is not one of the psalms of lament, the psalmist does express pain, and what lies beyond pain:

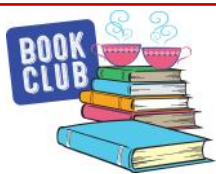
*Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I fear no evil;
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff—
they comfort me.*

Jesus himself cried the opening of Psalm 22 from the cross, "My God, my God—why have you forsaken me?" Here is a truth worth holding onto: The cry of God Become Human is our cry, the heart of God beats within our pain and suffering. *Emmanuel*, God With Us, has been truly with us...and if we dare to hold onto that, morning comes, and we see that God has been with us, protecting and comforting, and leading us onto new pathways of life.

Kyle

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BOOK OF THE MONTH

Lucy by the Sea

by Elizabeth Strout.

Sept. 26 @ Noon
Fratelli's

"This is Strout's fourth novel since 2016 about writer Lucy Barton. We find the sensitive and sympathetic heroine at sea, awash in confusion as her world - and the world changes drastically, seemingly overnight".



Please contact Charlotte Hanson at hansonc3306@gmail.com for more info.

2023 Neighbors In Need

On the first Sunday in October we'll join with other UCC churches around the country to support the Neighbors in Need (NIN) offering. This is a special offering of our denomination that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. One-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM). Two-thirds of the offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects through grants. To contribute you can write a check to the church and note it "NIN" or pay online using Realm, our online giving platform.

School Food Donations



With school starting last month, we have resumed collecting items for the Middletown Backpack Program (a list of requested items is on the table in the Narthex). As you shop this month, please pick up a few items and bring them with you to worship. Collection boxes are found in the hallway between the sanctuary and the chapel.

Heritage Day Baked Sale

Baked donations are needed for Parish Life's bake table for Heritage Day on September 23. All should be individually bagged and labeled. Cakes, pies, etc. should be wrapped securely with Saran Wrap. No refrigerated foods are permitted, including Zucchini,

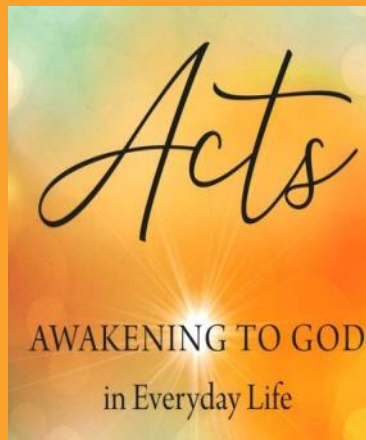
pumpkin, banana bread, or carrot cake. Please note if any nuts are in the baked goods. Baked goods can be delivered to the church Friday evening between 6 & 7 or Saturday morning between 8:30 and 10:30. Please leave your name with your donation. Please add your name to the sign up sheet if you plan to donate. Call Connie Bell with questions--240-215-5622.

Disaster Relief for Hawaii



Through our Wider Church Ministries, UCC has issued a special appeal to provide essential items and long-term support to those impacted by wildfires across Hawaii, including the deadly wildfires on the island of Maui. With more than 2,200 buildings significantly damaged and destroyed, 86% of them residential homes, FEMA estimates it will cost \$5.5 billion to rebuild Lahaina. If you would like to make a donation, you can do so using Realm (our online giving platform) or simply write a check and note "Hawaii Fires" in the memo line. More information can be found at <https://www.ucc.org/amid-wildfires-devastation-ucc-makes-appeal-for-hawaii/>.

Women's Study Group



*A Bible Study by
Melissa Spoelstra*

**Wednesdays
@ 7pm
via Zoom**

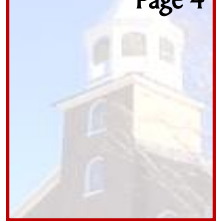
**Books are available in the Narthex.
Please contact the church office
for the zoom link.**



Back to School



Operating Finances Year to Date (Ending July 31, 2023)



CRUCC	Actual July 1 2023 - July 31, 2023	Actual This Year to Date	Budget Remaining This Year to Date
REVENUE			
Operating Income	\$ 19,911.00	\$ 165,208.56	\$ 231,136.01
Grant/Loan Revenues	\$ (7,500.00)	\$ -	\$ -
Investment Income	\$ 4,805.86	\$ 15,303.47	\$ (15,303.47)
Other Income	\$ 4,252.21	\$ 28,202.98	\$ 32,792.02
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 21,469.07	\$ 208,715.01	\$ 248,624.56
EXPENSES			
Compensation Expenses	\$ 18,573.41	\$ 134,592.79	\$ 134,845.78
Operating Expenses			
Program Expenses	\$ -	\$ 107.20	\$ (107.20)
Worship-Related Expenses	\$ 202.25	\$ 3,919.69	\$ 5,580.31
Education-SS/CCCC	\$ -	\$ 510.54	\$ 3,989.46
Office & Supplies	\$ 1,133.09	\$ 12,570.62	\$ 12,380.38
Utilities	\$ 2,436.14	\$ 21,775.81	\$ 11,424.19
Building & Property	\$ 14,040.74	\$ 52,365.02	\$ 25,634.98
Equipment Maintenance	\$ -	\$ 957.00	\$ 1,543.00
<i>Total Operating Expenses</i>	\$ 17,812.22	\$ 92,205.88	\$ 60,445.12
Ministry Expenses	\$ 193.46	\$ 14,132.64	\$ 17,717.36
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 36,579.09	\$ 240,931.31	\$ 213,008.26
Net Total	\$ (15,110.02)	\$ (32,216.30)	\$ 35,616.30

CCCC	Actual July 1 2023 - July 31, 2023	Actual This Year to Date	Budget Remaining This Year to Date
REVENUE			
Operating Income	\$ 73,510.50	\$ 527,417.50	\$ 435,537.26
Unrestricted Investment Income	\$ 6.73	\$ 994.87	\$ (994.87)
Designated Income		\$ 24.98	\$ (24.98)
Other Income	\$ -	\$ 6,055.56	\$ 3,144.44
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 73,517.23	\$ 534,492.91	\$ 437,661.85
EXPENSES			
Compensation Expenses	\$ 57,808.92	\$ 407,299.04	\$ 377,455.72
Operating Expenses			
Program Expenses	\$ 5,371.53	\$ 35,546.88	\$ 36,453.12
Education-SS/CCCC	\$ -	\$ 1,007.79	\$ 1,992.21
Office & Supplies	\$ 2,313.62	\$ 16,083.50	\$ 17,116.50
Utilities	\$ 652.30	\$ 2,339.14	\$ 660.86
Building & Property	\$ 10,337.32	\$ 34,997.95	\$ 37,702.05
Equipment Maintenance	\$ 276.85	\$ 1,385.86	\$ 2,114.14
<i>Total Operating Expenses</i>	\$ 18,951.62	\$ 91,361.12	\$ 96,038.88
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 76,760.54	\$ 498,660.16	\$ 473,494.60
Net Total	\$ (3,243.31)	\$ 35,832.75	\$ (35,832.75)



Ladies Chill Night

Sept 29 @ 5:30pm
Tapia's on Main

Come and enjoy fellowship and food. Add your name to the signup sheet in the Narthex by 9/26. Contact the church office for more details.

Online Lectionary Based Bible Study

8am Wednesdays w/Pastor Kyle



Contact Kyle at kyle.crucc@gmail.com for the Zoom link.

Guys Night Out



9/25 @ 6pm
Location TBD

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

A stylized illustration of a water tap with the word "GOD" written vertically on its handle.

Monday
9/18 @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.

BINGO! Buds

LUNCH, BINGO & FELLOWSHIP

September 14
Noon to 2pm
Coffee Hour Area

No need to sign up—Just show up!



Downstairs Discussion Group

Sundays @ 9:15 am
Coffee Hour Space

Contact Bill Steigelmann @ 240.490.5880 for more info.



2023 Walk to End Alzheimer's

Sunday, October 15, 2023

11:00am Registration

Nymeo Field at Harry Grove Stadium

To make a donation or to sign-up to walk with Beth Scott's Team, go to: http://act.alz.org/site/TR?team_id=833309&pg=team&fr_id=16611&et=eEI7lLusGeTgAZya5F6_NpyU70yf2kWWlvXSITOLrjluSnC6s-YCHw
Check donations should be made out to the Alzheimer's Association and can be mailed to Beth or left in the Church Office. Please contact Beth at 301-788-3524 or BethOScott@aol.com.



MIDDLETOWN HERITAGE FESTIVAL

Saturday, Sept. 23

We hope to have a few activities around the church for a few hours on Saturday afternoon. This is a great opportunity to remind the community about all the great things here at CRUCC. We really need everyone to step up and help. How, you ask, can you help? Here are some ideas:

1. **Parade** - We will have a truck in the parade this year. We will need help decorating the truck on Saturday morning. We will need volunteers to ride in the truck and toss candy to the crowd. We will need volunteers to walk beside the truck and hand out flyers to the crowd.
Donate individually wrapped candy to toss to the crowd. Please leave your bags of candy in the box in the Narthex.
2. **The Bounce House** - We need 4 or 5 volunteers to set up and monitor the bounce house.
3. **Bake Table** - We know that CRUCC has the best bakers around. Please donate your famous baked goods for sale by Friday Sept. 22. Contact Gail Johnson, Connie Bell or Marty Estell for more information.
4. **Button Makers** - We need a group of folks to run a craft project - making buttons - for the kids. We can also use help preparing the materials for the buttons.
5. **Church Activities Displays** - Debbie Locke and Nancy vom Lehn will be creating displays of all of the various activities here at church. Want to help and be creative? PS - Does anyone have any spare tri fold displays (like used in science fairs) they would like to donate?
6. **Children's Scavenger Hunt** - Pat Joy has offered to help with this. We will create a scavenger hunt for children around the church and give a goodie bag to children who correctly answer all of the questions. We will need help filling goodie bags.

We will need help with set up on Saturday morning and clean up Saturday afternoon.

There are so very many ways to get involved. Which project would you like to participate in? Contact the church office or Nancy vom Lehn to sign up. Thanks in advance!

MIDDLETOWN FOOD

FOOD ITEMS

- Fresh Produce
- Canned Tuna
- Canned Fruit
- Canned Tomato Products
- Soup
- Cereal
- Canned Veggies
- Condiments
- Pasta
- Oatmeal



PERSONAL CARE ITEMS

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



The mission of Heartly House is to end domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, and child abuse, and to provide victims with safety, shelter, and supportive services.

- ♦ Toiletry Items
- ♦ Gift cards: Walmart, Giant, Weis, Safeway, Food Lion, Target, Sheetz, Shell, Giant Eagle, CVS, Walgreens, TJ Maxx, Marshalls, Wawa, Exxon, etc

Collection boxes are found in the hallway between the sanctuary and the chapel.
Gift cards for Heartly House can be dropped off to the church office.

Around the Congregation

ALTAR FLOWERS

September 3	Elaine Harp
September 10	Dick Burd
September 17	B. Steigelmann/L. DeLauder
September 24	Laura & Tony Verdi

COFFEE HOUR HOSTS

September 3	Wendy Campbell
September 10	Bunny Cramer & Dick Burd
September 17	Cemetery Board
September 24	Bob & Jean Galey

SOUND TECHS

September 3	Nick Fink
September 10	Pat Joy
September 17	Tony Verdi
September 24	Pat Joy

CHILDREN'S STORY

September 24	Kyle Powderly
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PSALMIST

September 24	Nate Miller
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LAYREADERS

September 3	Paul Fink
September 10	Kathy Powderly
September 17	Laura Fontaine
September 24	Gail Johnson

USHERS

September 3	Pat Joy, Nancy vom Lehn
September 10	Wendy Campbell, Isaac Cummings
September 17	Linda DeLauder, Bill Falconer
September 24	Be' Hill, Karen Koogle



Church Attendance

JULY 2023

	8:15 am	10:30 am
July 2	19	49
July 9	19	48
July 16	18	41
July 23	16	46
July 30	24	45

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

In-Person Worship
8:15am Contemporary Worship

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

Coffee Hour 11:30am

Church Office Hours
Mon-Fri 10am-2pm
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

*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.*

COMMUNITY DAY OF SERVICE

A partnership with

Holy Family, Middletown United Methodist (MUMC), and Zion Lutheran



Saturday Sept. 9

If you are able to help out, please sign up via the link <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30EoC4EAAAA2EAAF49-middletown3> or contact Renee Brandenburg-Huffer at aquatictraining@aol.com for more details.

8am Send off Prayer
CRUCC Parking Lot