



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.

PASTOR'S PEN

Dear Flock,

Sometimes our words define us. Ever think about that? People observe us and listen to what we say more than we think. I was recently stuck in traffic on South Mountain while heading home. It was interesting to observe the irate people who were out of their cars with flailing arms and shouting. It got me to thinking about how we are defined and portrayed as a church. How are we seen and defined by others?

All denominations have their symbols to help express who they are. They are easily recognized and portray a basic message for each denomination. An interesting fact is that each denomination has a set of "graphic standards" used with their brandmarks. The guidelines aim to ensure "branding consistency" when using the symbols in printed form, and there are examples of what not to do on each of the denominational websites.

As you know, the symbol for the United Church of Christ is the Comma. I wear it whenever possible and love talking about it to inquisitive people. I need the reminder that, yes, "God is still speaking" in the world that seems chaotic and scary. The great comedienne Gracie Allen wrote her final love letter to husband George Burns and wrote, "Never place a period where God has placed a comma." The stole I've been wearing has a comma embroidered right at the top. I wear the Rainbow Comma on my lapel all the time. It has sparked more conversations than I ever imagined. Indeed, God IS still speaking.

When I was writing my thesis, my review committee spent more time debating my use of commas in my writing than they did discussing the content of the paper. The Oxford comma (also known as the serial comma) has both proponents and opponents. Proponents argue that it provides clarity, while opponents find it excessive and argue that it clutters writing. What is certain is that the comma is necessary. For instance, the comma with the words let's eat, grandma provides a whole other scenario than if the comma was omitted. The comma is necessary, just as each of us is in the life of the church.

Back to the angry crowd on South Mountain. Our words and actions define us. It doesn't matter where; we are observed and defined by our speech and actions. As the hymn states, "they'll know we are Christians by our love." Well, "they" will also know us by how we act, speak, and treat one another. Basically, we are all good people with great intentions. However, it doesn't take much to give the wrong impression.

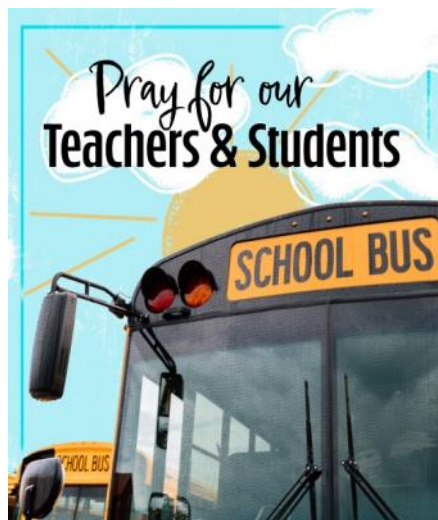
I find inspiration in cooking my family and my dog. Really? How about I find inspiration in cooking, my family, and my dog. Remember the importance of the comma. Also remember that its significance defines us and God certainly isn't finished with us. After all, it's God's comma, too! Say "Goodnight, Gracie."

Soli Deo Gloria, Pastor Greg

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Number VIII
August 2025



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Volunteers Needed!

Do you know what happens on the last Saturday in September in Middletown? It's Heritage Day! It's a great opportunity to tell the community about our church. For Heritage Day 2024, the church had a bake sale, a bounce house, historical displays, kids craft, a scavenger hunt, and a table on Main St. We are looking for some new ideas to attract people to our church. We are also looking for people to plan and help on Heritage Day. How about YOU? Contact Nancy vom Lehn and add your name to the list.

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!

CRUCC Notes

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

Blessing of the Backpacks

If you or your child is a student, teacher or other school employee we invite you to join us for this special part of worship on **August 17th**. Bring a backpack, briefcase or other symbol of your work or study and we'll join in praying God's blessings for the coming year.

Make-Your-Own "Sunday"

Parish Life is hosting a Make-Your-Own Sunday after the 9:30 service on August 10th. Join us in the Coffee Hour space. There will be sprinkles, chocolate chips, M&M's, nuts, caramel syrup, chocolate syrup, and Redi-Whip. NOTE: We will have ONE service.

Post-Covid Relief Funds Update

Since the spring of 2020, Missy, our CCCC Director, and Debbie have spent countless hours researching, applying for, and managing various grants from the Town, County, State and Federal Governments. Following COVID, these funds were, and continue to be, vital to the financial health of the Church and the Daycare. To date, we have received a total of:

CRUCC	\$85,735.14
CCCC	\$647,101.64

The latest refund that was received in June was from the Employee Retention Credit Program (ERC) in the amount of \$248,863.78. This refund was based on employee headcount for both the Church and CCCC during a portion of both 2020 and 2021. Therefore expenses and income are split as follows: 82.4% for CCCC and 17.6% for the Church. There was a processing fee of \$15,000, which the Church paid \$2,641.51 (17.6%) and CCCC paid \$12,358.49 (82.4%). Of the remaining balance, CCCC received \$192,705.26 (82.4%) and the church received the balance of \$41,158.52 (17.6%).

A Practical Guide to Discipleship

As Christians we claim and celebrate that we are followers (disciples) of Jesus Christ, walking faithfully along the path of the Holy Way of God's will. WOW! That's a tall order! How do we know we're actually on the path and doing it right? When others asked Jesus that question, he boiled it down simply enough: 'Love God with everything you've got and love your neighbor as yourself. Do that.' Right, OK...wait, what? That still seems rather broad. What does it mean practically? *How* are we to walk through our lives as disciples loving God, neighbor, and ourselves? What does that look like? Join us this September for **A Practical Guide to Discipleship**, a 3-part series in which we will explore what Jesus meant by *love* and how that translates into the four essential features of discipleship: Acts of devotion, worship, compassion, and justice. Rev. Michelle Beadle will lead these discussions in the Chapel from 9:15-10:00am on the following Sundays:





SUMMER FUN AT CCCC!





We gather together

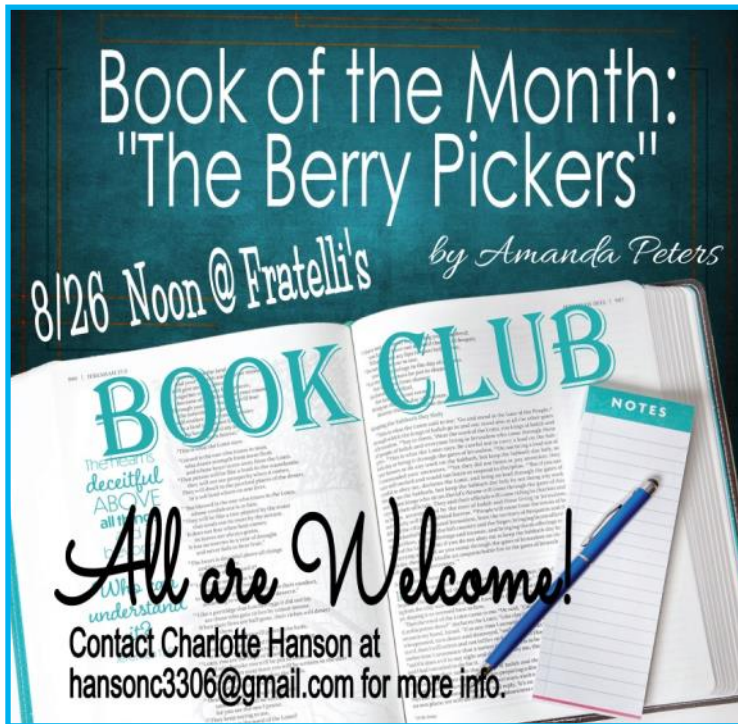
God on Tap

Wednesday 8/13 @ 6:30pm
Showroom
882 N East St. Frederick, MD
Please RSVP to
Christine at 97cfontaine@gmail.com.



Backpacks
are packed,
Hearts
are Ready -
LET'S COVER
our
STUDENTS & TEACHERS
in prayer!

Blessing of the
Backpacks
August 17th
Both Services



Book of the Month: "The Berry Pickers"

8/26 Noon @ Fratelli's by Amanda Peters

BOOK CLUB

NOTES

All are Welcome!

Contact Charlotte Hanson at
hansonc3306@gmail.com for more info.



LADIES chill NIGHT

8/22 @ 5:30pm
Oscar's AleHouse

Please add your name to the sign up
sheet in the Narthex by 8/17.



August 14th
12pm-2pm
Coffee Hour Space

No Need to Sign Up
Just Show Up!

BINGO

BUDS

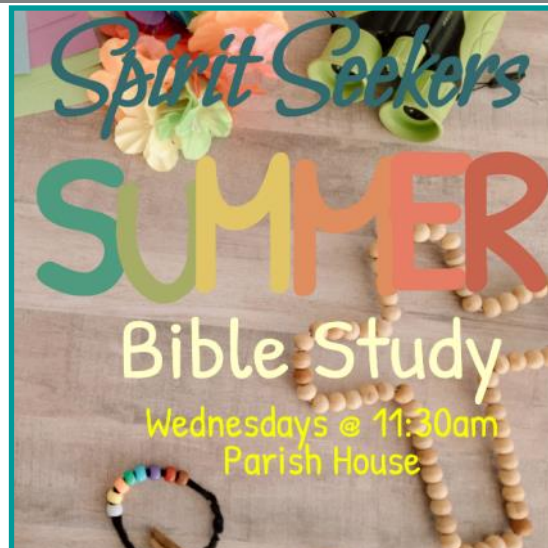


GUYS NIGHT OUT

Join us for food & fellowship.

8/25 @ 6pm
Oscar's Ale House
906 N. East Street Frederick

Please RSVP to Bob at
robertgaley@hotmail.com
or text/call 301-712-8022.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

WEEKEND FOOD PROGRAM

Many children in the Middletown valley area are provided a free or reduced priced lunch on school days, but they face the prospect of hunger on the weekend. In partnership with area churches, the weekend food program helps to fill this gap by providing weekend bags full of food for children in these schools: *Middletown Elementary, Primary, Middle and High School, Myersville, Valley and Wolfsville Elementary.*

How Can YOU Help These Children?

- ◆ SPONSOR a child for a year at a cost of \$300.00, in whole or in part – simply make out your check to CRUCC and indicate on the memo line that it is for the Weekend Food Program.
- ◆ PURCHASE the specific foods needed and put the items in the designated box located in the Narthex
- ◆ VOLUNTEER your time to pack the food.
- ◆ DELIVER the food to a school.



SCHOOL SUPPLY Drive

- ◆ PENCILS
- ◆ COLORED PENCILS
- ◆ PENS
- ◆ CRAYONS
- ◆ GLUE STICKS
- ◆ POCKET FOLDERS
- ◆ HIGHLIGHTERS
- ◆ NOTEBOOKS
- ◆ SCISSORS
- ◆ LOOSE LEAF PAPER
- ◆ 3-RING BINDERS
- ◆ PENCIL CASE



Please place school supplies in the yellow bin provided in the Narthex. You can also go on-line to <https://tinyurl.com/Stuff-Bus> and ship to a consolidation site or click on the QR code.

DEADLINE: AUGUST 4TH

Sponsored by Middletown Valley People
Helping People in partnership with United
Way's Stuff the Bus.

METAL RECYCLING

Every Sunday from approximately 6:30am until 12:30pm in the Zion Lutheran Church (107 W. Main Street) lower 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 2023, they donated over \$24K to these charities. All are encouraged to bring their scrap metal for a good cause. Small items can be left on the back porch of the Parish House. Arrangements can be made for picking up large items by contacting Bill Traube at 240-457-3953.

MIDDLETOWN FOOD BANK



FOOD ITEMS

- Pasta Sauce
- Canned Meat
- Canned Beans
- Cake/Cookie Mix
- BBQ Sauce

PERSONAL CARE ITEMS

- Toilet Paper
- Shampoo
- Hand Soap

Collection boxes are found in the hallway between the sanctuary and the chapel.



RAISERIGHT GIFT CARD FUNDRAISER

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, a portion of the value of the gift card is donated right back to Christ Reformed. For a partial list of the participating merchants, look for order forms in the Narthex or visit the Raise Right website (<http://www.raiseright.com>). We have a small inventory of gift cards that you can purchase from Gail Johnson on Sundays, submit the completed form (w/payment) to the church office or order directly online. Questions? Call the church office or see Gail Johnson.



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

AROUND THE CONGREGATION

Sound Techs

August 3	Nick Fink
August 10	Paul Fink
August 17	Pat Joy
August 24	Tony Verdi

Layreaders

August 3	Gail Johnson
August 10	Emily Magda-Mathis
August 17	Susan Thornton
August 24	Andrew Corl

Ushers

August 3	Pat Joy, Nancy vom Lehn
August 10	Isaac Cummings, Laura Verdi
August 17	Linda DeLauder, Bill Falconer
August 24	Be' Hill, Karen Koogler

Coffee Hour Hosts

August 3	Book Club
August 10	Parish Life
August 17	TBD
August 24	Guys Night Out Group

Greeters

August 3	Laura & Tony Verdi
August 10	Vickie & Dale Biggs
	and/or Beth & Mike Mummert
August 17	Members of Consistory
August 24	Edward Fontaine, Judy Zeck

Altar Flowers

August 3	TBD
August 10	TBD
August 17	TBD
August 24	Linda DeLauder



CHURCH ATTENDANCE

June 2025

	8:15 am	10:30 am
June 1	35	51
June 8 Picnic		79
June 15	25	52
June 22	20	53
June 29 Outdoor		42



OPERATING FINANCES YEAR TO DATE ENDING JUNE 30, 2025



CRUCC	Actual Jun 01, 2025 - Jun 30, 2025	Actual Year to Date	Annual Budget Remaining This Year
REVENUE			
Operating Income	\$ 22,269.00	\$ 164,777.76	\$ 199,379.24
Investment Income			
Unrestricted Investment Income	\$ 484.75	\$ 11,744.95	\$ (11,744.95)
Total Investment Income	\$ 484.75	\$ 11,744.95	\$ (11,744.95)
Other Income*	\$ 252,897.98	\$ 273,386.33	\$ (226,811.33)
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 275,651.73	\$ 449,909.04	\$ (39,177.04)
EXPENSES			
Compensation Expenses	\$ 14,642.16	\$ 85,279.93	\$ 165,152.07
Operating Expenses			
Program Expenses	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,200.00	\$ (15,200.00)
Worship-Related Expenses	\$ 261.98	\$ 3,161.96	\$ 2,538.04
Education-SS/CCCC	\$ -	\$ 517.35	\$ 482.65
Office & Supplies	\$ 1,268.39	\$ 8,698.95	\$ 13,151.05
Utilities	\$ 1,415.89	\$ 19,495.88	\$ 13,304.12
Building & Property	\$ 500.00	\$ 13,094.96	\$ 16,555.04
Equipment Maintenance	\$ -	\$ 525.00	\$ 1,475.00
Insurance Expenses	\$ -	\$ 28,724.00	\$ 22,176.00
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 18,446.26	\$ 89,418.10	\$ 54,481.90
Ministry Expenses			
Ministry - Outreach	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 11,953.00	\$ 347.00
Ministry - Boards & Committees	\$ 41.91	\$ 2,555.26	\$ 1,544.74
Total Ministry Expenses	\$ 5,041.91	\$ 14,508.26	\$ 1,891.74
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 38,130.33	\$ 189,206.29	\$ 221,525.71
NET TOTAL	\$ 237,521.40	\$ 260,702.75	\$ (260,702.75)

*Included in "Other Income" is an Employee Retention Credit Program Refund for 2020 and 2021 in the amount of \$248,863.78. This refund was based on employee headcount, therefore all expenses and income are split as follows: 82.4% for CCCC and 17.6% for the Church. There was a processing fee of \$15,000, which the Church paid \$2,641.51 and CCCC paid \$12,358.49. CCCC will receive \$192,705.26 and the church will receive the remaining balance of \$41,158.52.

CCCC	Actual Jun 01, 2025 - Jun 30, 2025	Actual Year to Date	Annual Budget Remaining This Year
REVENUE			
Operating Income	\$ 100,276.00	\$ 544,123.00	\$ 591,594.76
Total Investment Income	\$ 2,846.07	\$ 2,868.53	\$ (2,868.53)
Other Income	\$ 125.00	\$ 9,769.96	\$ (697.63)
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 103,247.07	\$ 556,761.49	\$ 588,028.60
EXPENSES			
Compensation Expenses	\$ 70,028.71	\$ 437,223.43	\$ 504,602.96
Operating Expenses			
Program Expenses	\$ 7,723.39	\$ 29,962.43	\$ 53,037.57
Education-SS/CCCC	\$ 479.79	\$ 479.79	\$ 3,020.21
Office & Supplies	\$ 2,784.38	\$ 17,724.99	\$ 28,575.01
Utilities	\$ 239.94	\$ 1,169.70	\$ 2,494.00
Building & Property	\$ 3,775.00	\$ 28,184.81	\$ 34,315.19
Equipment Maintenance	\$ 130.00	\$ 1,721.83	\$ 2,278.17
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 15,132.50	\$ 79,243.55	\$ 123,720.15
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 85,161.21	\$ 516,466.98	\$ 628,323.11
NET TOTAL	\$ 18,085.86	\$ 40,294.51	\$ (40,294.51)

**Christ Reformed
United Church of Christ**

Rev. Greg Shook

In-Person Worship
8:15am Contemporary Worship

In Person & On-Line Worship
Traditional Worship 10:30am
Coffee Hour 11:30am

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

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.



August 10th
9:30am
**Blended
Worship**
&
Ice Cream Sunday