



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,

I saw some friends last week and they asked if we “did Lent” here at CRUCC. I laughed. I said that we were indeed “doing Lent” in Middletown.

They then went into a rant about how we can trust in nothing anymore. Life is all for naught, uncertain, unpredictable, and we just end up being disappointed. I turned things around and asked how their faith was doing. How is your faith doing?

One of my new favorite authors is Diana Butler Bass. Her most recent writing is “A Beautiful Year”^{*} where she offers spiritual inspiration for each week of the year. In her entry about Ash Wednesday she focuses on the scripture she reflects on the Matthew scripture that says “do not pray like the hypocrites. . . whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret” (Matthew 6:5-6). What does that mean?

Diana writes (and I agree) that it does not mean for us to be secretive about our prayer or, for sure, our faith. Jesus is not telling us that our faith is private. Jesus, demonstrated that through the event of his life, passion, death, and resurrection. It is about the prep time. We prepare and practice to make our faith viable.

Think about life. Everything we do requires preparation. We learn job skills and musical skills through preparation and practice. The old question about “how do you get to Carnegie Hall? You practice, practice, practice.” Yep, everything in life takes preparation and practice to do it well. So how do we practice our faith? Diana restates Jesus’ words in a little more positive way by saying we “practice our faith by attending to our inner life.”^{*}

Jesus is not telling us that faith is a private thing to keep locked up behind closed doors or tucked away in a box on the closet shelf. Nope. Our faith, like precious metals, is fired and tested over and over and the only way to do that is to live it right out in front.

Like the musician, the actor, and countless others who practice and refine skills by hard work, study, prayer, and more, our faith is fired, refined, tested and put to use after the prep work is done. Our ultimate goal is not so much the seat in the symphony orchestra or winning the Oscar (although that’s not a bad thing, either!). The reward comes at improving at something, gaining confidence, walking onstage, and hopefully doing well when the time comes.

Lent is more than a solemn version of New Year’s. Ash Wednesday begins our Lenten journey with more than spiritual resolutions. Lent bids us to practice our faith, take notice where we can improve, and live it fully in the world. And remember, we are on view. We are representing the teachings and life practices of Jesus.

So, yes, please “do Lent” for heaven’s sake (and yours!) and do it whole-heartedly.

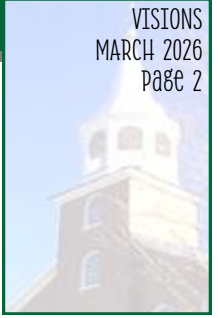
Soli Deo Gloria! Pastor Greg

^{*}A Beautiful Year, Diana Butler Bass, 2025, Published by St. Martin’s Publishing Group, NYC. Available on Amazon.



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One Great Hour of Sharing



One Great Hour of Sharing is an offering that makes the love of Christ real for individuals and communities around the world who suffer the effects of disaster, conflict, or severe economic hardship. This offering is taken by all Christian denominations and supports more than 100 relief projects around the world. This year's OGHS offering is on Sunday, March 15th. You can place your offering in the offering plate or simply send a check to the church and note it "OGHS."

Ladies Luncheon

Our annual Ladies Luncheon will be held at Tapias on Main on March 15 at Noon. Please plan to come. Add your name to the sign-up sheet in the Narthex. Invite a friend.

Want to Join Us?

Want to become a member of Christ Reformed? Talk to Pastor Greg. He is compiling a list of interested folks who want to be part of our ministry journey. If you've been thinking about making the connection, please reach out to Pastor Greg.

Share Your Palm Plant

Palm plants are needed to decorate the sanctuary for Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday. If you are able to share your palm plant(s), please bring them to the church sanctuary the week before Palm Sunday.

Easter Morning Continental Breakfast

Parish Life annual Easter Sunrise Continental Breakfast will be held in the Coffee Hour Space immediately following the Sunrise Service. We will be serving bagels, muffins, fruit, juice and coffee. Please add your name to the sign-up sheet in the Narthex if you are planning on joining us. Everyone is welcome!

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 local charities. 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.

Meditation & Labyrinth

On Good Friday, April 3, the labyrinth will be set up in the chapel from 1:00-6:00pm. The labyrinth is an ancient aid to spiritual development. Walking its path mirrors the journey pilgrims made to Jerusalem and other holy sites and provides a means of deepening one's own spiritual journey. Hosts will be there to answer questions and help you experience the labyrinth. From 6:00 to 7:30pm the church will be open for quiet prayer & reflection. Pastor Greg will have a guided meditation for people to follow and he will be available for private prayer, communion, and/or anointing.

Pizza with the Pastor?

We had such a great time on candidate weekend at the Friday night pizza gathering. A lot of great conversation, stories, and laughs. People said, "We should make this a regular thing." So.....what do you say? Let's figure it out and make it a regular event. . .monthly? Quarterly? You decide. Speak with Pastor Greg.

Drawing to God's Word



- ◇ Psalm 32
- ◇ Psalm 51
- ◇ Matthew 18:21-35
- ◇ Ephesians 4:17-32

PROMPT: Draw or write about God wiping away and forgetting all your sins—and how that affects your everyday life.

Our creator excels at design and artistic expression. As God's image-bearers, we can use our creative gifts to learn about and worship him. You can draw, doodle, color and journal as you reflect on God's Word. After reading the weekly Bible passages, grab some markers, colored pencils or pens to respond. Close each devotional time with prayer, thanking the Master Artist for making, sustaining, and blessing you!

EASTER FLOWERS

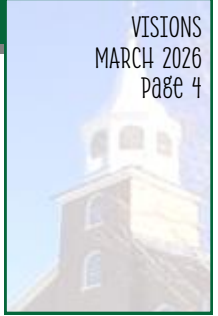
Use the enclosed order form to honor or remember special family members, friends or an event with potted plants which will decorate our sanctuary on Easter morning.

Orders are due by March 11th.



VALENTINE'S DAY AT CCCC!





Book of the Month:
"Life and Death and Giants"
by Ron Rindo

3/24 Noon @ Tapia's

BOOK CLUB

All are Welcome!

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

**LADIES
chill
NIGHT**

3/20 @ 5:30pm
Bob Evans

Please add your name to the sign up
sheet in the Narthex by 3/15.

We gather
together

God on Tap

Wednesday 3/11 @ 6:30pm
Parish House

Please bring a side dish or dessert to share.

Please RSVP to
Paul at madfink30@msn.com

Knitters

Knitting & Crochet Group

March 18th
1:00-3:00pm
Parish House

Winter Wandering
Spirit Seekers

Wednesdays @ 11:30am
Parish House

GUYS NIGHT OUT

Join us for food & fellowship.

3/23 @ 6pm
Brewer's Alley
124 N Market St Frederick

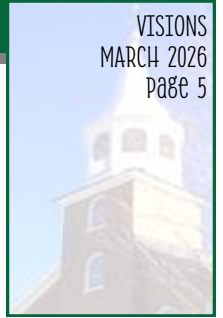
Please RSVP to Bob at
robertgaley@hotmail.com
or text/call 301-712-8022.

March 12th
12pm-2pm
Coffee Hour Space

No Need to Sign Up
Just Show Up!

B I N G O

BUDS



March 15 @ 12pm
Tapia's on Main

Ladies

Luncheon

Please add your name to the sign-up sheet in the Narthex

Join Us!

EASTER
Sunrise
SERVICE

6:30am @ CRUCC
Gazebo located in Cemetery

Easter
BREAKFAST **April 5**
7-10am

Join us!

Immediately following the Sunrise Service



Middletown High Schools Spring Musical
3/20 and 3/21 @ 7pm and 3/22 @ 2pm.



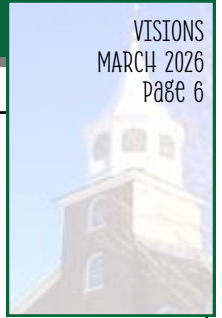
Directed by Susan Thornton
To reserve tickets go to cur8.com

Walk the

LABYRINTH

Good Friday, April 3rd
1-6pm Chapel





**MIDDLETOWN
FOOD BANK**



FOOD ITEMS

- Pasta
- Canned Tuna
- Canned Fruit
- Canned Beans
- Sugar
- Oatmeal
- Soup
- Instant Potatoes

PERSONAL CARE ITEMS

- Bars of Soap
- Shampoo
- Body Wash
- Toilet Paper

Collection boxes for non-perishables are in the hallway between the sanctuary and the chapel. Homegrown fruits/veggies can be dropped off directly (301 W. Main St) on Wednesdays 1-3pm or Saturdays 9-11am.

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, Myersville, Valley, Jefferson 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.



14 Continuous Years of Serving Our Children

AROUND THE CONGREGATION

Sound Techs

- | | |
|----------|------------|
| March 1 | Nick Fink |
| March 8 | Pat Joy |
| March 15 | Tony Verdi |
| March 22 | Pat Joy |
| March 29 | Tony Verdi |

Coffee Hour Hosts

- | | |
|----------|----------------------------------|
| March 1 | Linda DeLauder, Bill Steigelmann |
| March 8 | TBD |
| March 15 | TBD |
| March 22 | CCCC Board |
| March 29 | Confirmation Mentors |

Greeters

- | | |
|----------|---|
| March 1 | Laura & Tony Verdi |
| March 8 | Vickie & Dale Biggs
and/or Beth & Mike Mummert |
| March 15 | Members of Consistory |
| March 22 | Mary & Griff Garwood |
| March 29 | Barbara Okler, Paul Fink |



Layreaders

- | | |
|----------|---------------------|
| March 1 | Andrew Conl |
| March 8 | Taylor Magda-Mathis |
| March 15 | Sue Wickless |
| March 22 | Paul Fink |
| March 29 | Laura Fontaine |

Ushers

- | | |
|----------|-----------------------------------|
| March 1 | Pat Joy, Nancy vom Lehn |
| March 8 | Janet Stock, Nancy vom Lehn |
| March 15 | Laura Verdi, Judy Zeck |
| March 22 | Linda DeLauder, Trish Parr-Brandt |
| March 29 | Be' Hill, Karen Koogle |

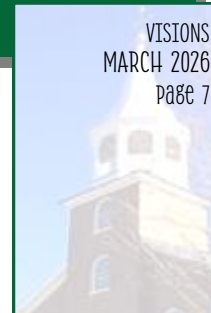
CHURCH ATTENDANCE

January 2026

	8:15 am	10:30 am
January 4 Blended	58	
January 11	18	44
January 18	22	43
January 25	CANCELLED	



OPERATING FINANCES YEAR TO DATE ENDING JANUARY 31, 2026



CRUCC	Actual Jan 01, 2026 - Jan 31, 2026	Actual Year to Date
REVENUE		
Operating Income	\$ 50,628.00	\$ 50,628.00
Investment Income	\$ 5,607.15	\$ 5,607.15
Other Income	\$ 4,402.63	\$ 4,402.63
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 60,637.78	\$ 60,637.78
EXPENSES		
Compensation Expenses	\$ 15,887.81	\$ 15,887.81
Operating Expenses		
Program Expenses	\$ 350.00	\$ 350.00
Worship-Related Expenses	\$ 1,427.56	\$ 1,427.56
Office & Supplies	\$ 1,342.64	\$ 1,342.64
Utilities	\$ 6,269.02	\$ 6,269.02
Building & Property	\$ 548.55	\$ 548.55
Equipment Maintenance	\$ 571.95	\$ 571.95
Insurance Expenses	\$ 18,565.50	\$ 18,565.50
<i>Total Operating Expenses</i>	<i>\$ 29,075.22</i>	<i>\$ 29,075.22</i>
Ministry Expenses		
Ministry - Outreach	\$ 1,911.00	\$ 1,911.00
Ministry - Boards & Committees	\$ 1,142.77	\$ 1,142.77
<i>Total Ministry Expenses</i>	<i>\$ 3,053.77</i>	<i>\$ 3,053.77</i>
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 48,016.80	\$ 48,016.80
NET TOTAL	\$ 12,620.98	\$ 12,620.98
CCCC	Actual Jan 01, 2026 - Jan 31, 2026	Actual Year to Date
REVENUE		
Operating Income	\$ 85,396.75	\$ 85,396.75
Investment Income	\$ 242.96	\$ 242.96
Other Income	\$ 222.00	\$ 222.00
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 85,861.71	\$ 85,861.71
EXPENSES		
Compensation Expenses	\$ 68,827.89	\$ 68,827.89
Operating Expenses		
Program Expenses	\$ 5,200.74	\$ 5,200.74
Office & Supplies	\$ 3,489.44	\$ 3,489.44
Utilities	\$ 242.94	\$ 242.94
Building & Property	\$ 4,927.00	\$ 4,927.00
Equipment Maintenance	\$ 40.58	\$ 40.58
<i>Total Operating Expenses</i>	<i>\$ 13,900.70</i>	<i>\$ 13,900.70</i>
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 82,728.59	\$ 82,728.59
NET TOTAL	\$ 3,133.12	\$ 3,133.12

**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-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

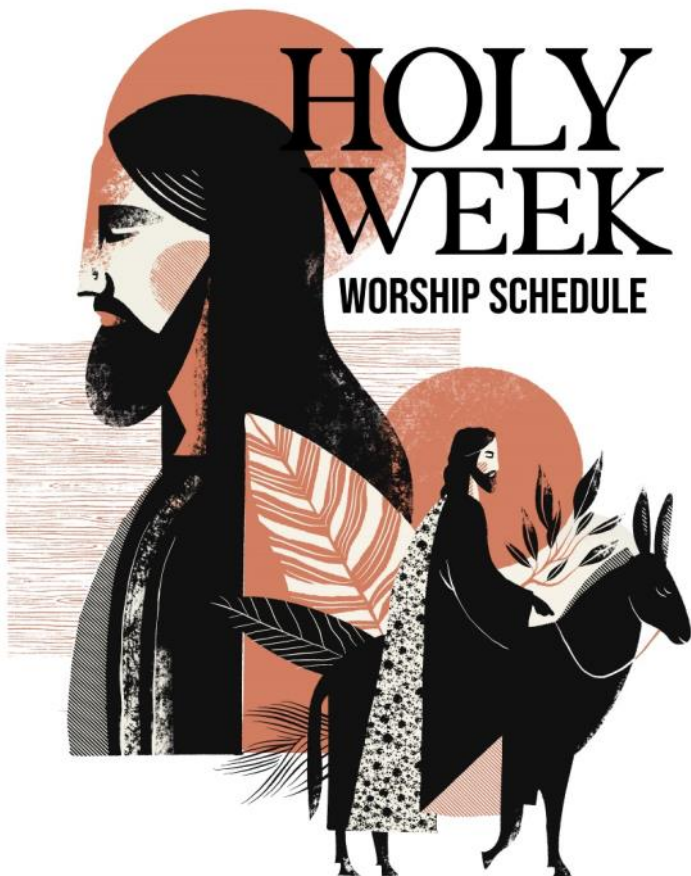
6 Weeks—5th Grade

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.



Join Us!

Sunday, March 29th ♦ Palm Sunday ♦ 8:15am & 10:30am

On this day we recall Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem and we'll welcome our confirmation class into membership in the church at the 10:30am service.

Thursday, April 2nd ♦ Maundy Thursday ♦ 7:00pm

"Is it I, Lord?" was the question asked by each of the disciples at the last supper when Jesus said that one of them would betray him. It is a question that still resonates today and serves as the backdrop for our Maundy Thursday gathering. We'll share communion as part of the service.

Friday, April 3rd ♦ Good Friday ♦ 1:00pm to 7:30pm

The story of Christ's crucifixion is humbling and has very personal meaning for each of us. On Good Friday the church's labyrinth will be set up in the chapel between 1:00 and 6:00pm. You are invited to use it as an aid in journeying into the mystery of Christ's death. From 6:00 to 7:30pm the church will be open for quiet prayer, communion, and private prayer. No service. Just come and stay as long as you like.

Sunday, April 5th Easter Sunday 6:30am & 10:00am

We'll celebrate Christ's resurrection at two services of worship. We'll gather at 6:30am for sunrise from the gazebo located in the cemetery. Following the service the Parish Life Board will host a continental breakfast in the Coffee Hour Space. We'll then celebrate with communion at our combined worship in the Sanctuary at 10:00am.