



# The Belltower

February 2024

The Newsletter of the Clover Hill Reformed Church



Sunday, February 4, at 10:00 am

## **Fifth Sunday after Epiphany**

Communion

Psalm 147

Sunday, February 11, 10:00 am

## **Transfiguration Sunday**

Psalm 50:1-6 and Isaiah 40:21-31

Wednesday, February 14, at 7:00 pm

## **Ash Wednesday**

Hosted by Neshanic Reformed Church

715 Amwell Rd, Hillsborough Township, NJ 08844  
with Clover Hill and Three Bridges

Sunday, February 18, at 10:00 am

## **First Sunday of Lent**

Mark 1:9-15

Sunday, February 25, at 10:00 am

## **Second Sunday of Lent**

Mark 9:2-9

### **Communication and Contact Information**

Clover Hill Reformed Church, 890 Amwell Road, Hillsborough, NJ 08844  
908-369-8451 / [chrc1834@gmail.com](mailto:chrc1834@gmail.com) / Website: [www.cloverhillchurch.org](http://www.cloverhillchurch.org) / Like Us On Facebook

The office of CHRC is open on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 9:00 am to 2:30 pm.

The office administrator will be working remotely each Wednesday and available by phone (908-369-8451 by leaving a message) and email ([chrc1834@gmail.com](mailto:chrc1834@gmail.com))



# Worship With Us Online

Sundays at 10:00 am

Our live-streamed services will be accessible in real-time through:

**YouTube** [Click Here to check out our YouTube Channel!](#)

\*\*\*\*\*

## Zoom Login for meetings only

**By computer:**

<https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/3847369806>

Meeting ID: 384 736 9806

Passcode: 5hhNCv

**By phone:**

+1 646 558 8656

Meeting ID: 384 736 9806

Passcode: 544042

**If you are not feeling well (COVID, flu, or other potentially contagious illness)  
please stay home and join us via Zoom.**

**INCLEMENT  
WEATHER  
INFORMATION**



## Clover Hill Reformed Church Inclement Weather Policy

Should severe weather threaten our area, please check your email for a Mail-Chimp announcement from Clover Hill Reformed Church or contact the coordinator of the meeting/event/activity you were planning to attend.

Sunday Mornings: In the event of inclement weather, the church will remain open for 10:00 am worship services and live stream YouTube - however, the programming may look different.

**NOTE:** In all cases, please use your personal discretion to determine if it is safe for you to leave your home and travel to church. Do not place yourself or your family in danger by driving outside your comfort zone.

We're now on Instagram!



*click, follow & like*

Our Instagram name is 'Clover\_Hill\_Reformed\_Church\_' (that's right, there is a 'dangling' underscore at the end).

Are you following us on Facebook?



*click, follow, like & share*

Even if you are not a Facebook user, you can still see our church's Facebook page. If you have any content that you would like to see up on Facebook or Instagram send to the Office Administration [CHRC1834@gmail.com](mailto:CHRC1834@gmail.com).

### 2024 Consistory members

Transitional Pastor: Rev. Beth Scibienski

[pastorbeth.chrc@gmail.com](mailto:pastorbeth.chrc@gmail.com)

#### Elders:

Amy Frank

[frankfmy@yahoo.com](mailto:frankfmy@yahoo.com)

Nancy Lane

[nlane54@gmail.com](mailto:nlane54@gmail.com)

Kirsten Posselt

[kirstenposselt3@gmail.com](mailto:kirstenposselt3@gmail.com)

Lori Voorhees

[l.voorhees@comcast.net](mailto:l.voorhees@comcast.net)

#### Deacons:

Carolyn Keck

[carolynkeck64@gmail.com](mailto:carolynkeck64@gmail.com)

Gene Reinhardt

[greinhardt9@gmail.com](mailto:greinhardt9@gmail.com)

Barbara Sarzillo

[barbarasuesarzillo@gmail.com](mailto:barbarasuesarzillo@gmail.com)

#### Staff:

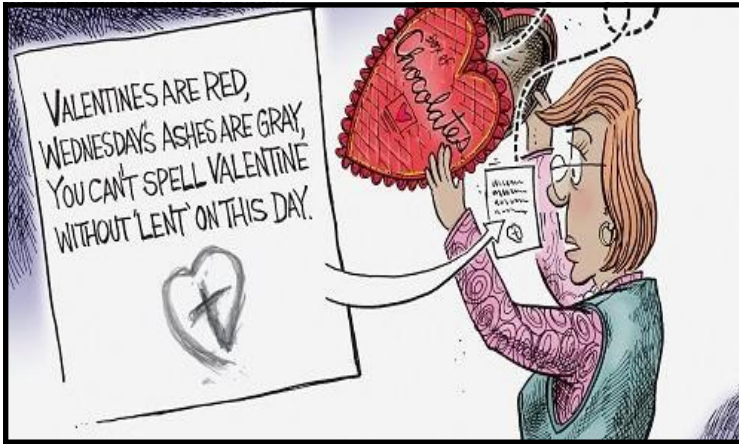
George Farrell—music director

[deuscaritasest@aol.com](mailto:deuscaritasest@aol.com)

Lynn– Totten—office administrator

[CHRC1834@gmail.com](mailto:CHRC1834@gmail.com)

Dear Clover Hill,



If you can believe it, we are two weeks away from Ash Wednesday - oh, and also Valentine's Day.

Our sister churches, Three Bridges and Neshanic Reformed are collaborating with us again for our special services. Ash Wednesday (2/14) will be at Neshanic Reformed. We will be hosting Maundy Thursday (3/28). Three Bridges will be hosting Good Friday (3/29). Go ahead and put them on your calendars now!

There are three things I want to highlight about the Lenten season. (But keep reading this Belltower - there is more from the Spiritual Growth team.)

**Hymns of the Faith sermon series** - Each week of Lent, I will be highlighting a hymn in my sermon. I'll talk about the meaning of the lyrics, the theology that it draws from and delve into its origin story (why did the author/ musician write the hymn?)

**Conversation about the Creeds** - After worship each week of Lent, we'll gather in the Nevius Fellowship Hall to discuss one of the creeds held by the RCA, our denomination. Each of these creeds carry important historical context as well as specific questions or issues that the church was trying to iron out. You know how they say "all politics is local" well, "all theology is local" too. I hope you'll join us for these discussions.

**Daily Devotional for Lent** - Each year we provide at least one resource for daily meditation during the season of Lent. This year, the devotional material will come from the newest statement of faith of the RCA called the Song of Hope. It will be coming to your inbox soon!

For me, Lent is about carving out a particular period of time to engage my spiritual life. I tried to teach my kids to tend to their spiritual life. I reminded them that they have a physical life that needs tending, an emotional life that needs tending - and their spiritual life is no different. I would say, "please don't ignore your spiritual life." I'd like to say the same to you. Please don't ignore your spiritual life. We can tend to ours together this Lent.

Peace,

Pastor Beth

[www.bethscib.com](http://www.bethscib.com) / Cell: 732-735-2112 / Use this [calendar link](#) to schedule time with me

## Souper Bowl Sunday, February 4th!

The Souper Bowl is back! On Sunday February 5th at 5pm this event returns to Fellowship Hall at the Three Bridges Reformed Church (470 Main St, Three Bridges, NJ 08887). The Golden Ladle and Spatula will be on the line come and participate in any of 3 cook-offs (soup, chili, or mac & cheese) or just join in the fun and judge. All monies raised will go to support those in need in the greater community.

The participant Sign Up Genius can be found at

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E044AA5A82DA4FE3-47008063-souper>

# News from the Stewardship Team

Consistory Facilitator: Gene Reinhardt ([greinhardt9@gmail.com](mailto:greinhardt9@gmail.com))

## Budget Presentation

At the January Consistory meeting, the 2024 budget was approved and **the Stewardship Team will present the budget and the results of the pledge drive to the congregation at coffee hour on February 4.** Please join us for some food and fellowship after worship that day!

On the next page is a copy of the pledge summary and our year-end cash position. On the following page is a copy of the simplified budget. If you would like to see the longer, more detailed copy of the budget, please contact the church office and we can email that to you.

## 2024 Denominational Assessment

Each year we have to pay an assessment to the Reformed Church Classis of Delaware-Raritan. **The cost for us in 2024 is \$100 per church member** (that is \$7100 for the entire year for all of our members). What is this money used for? It covers the small overhead of the Classis, and helps with things like the loans to Classis churches, minister support, and some mission work. Some church members choose to make a special offering to cover the cost of their assessment. Over the last three years, Clover Hill has received both pastoral and administrative support from the Classis.

Classis has been subsidizing the cost from member churches for a number of years and they now would like to move toward having churches cover the true cost of their expenses. The per member cost to Classis is currently \$149 per member! Consequently, we can expect that there will be increases over the next few years as they gradually bring up the amounts paid by the member churches to fully cover their budget.

The cost of the denominational assessment is a large expense for our church (the largest expense after salaries and building maintenance). **In the past, many church members chose to make an annual gift to cover the cost of their denominational assessment. If you would like to do so, just note "assessment" on the memo line of your check and Thank You!** If you cannot afford the full \$100 per member, you might consider making a smaller donation to help defray the cost, or even make quarterly assessment gifts of \$25.

## The CHRC Stewardship Team

### welcomes you to attend the annual Congregational Budget Fellowship Time

This gathering is to share our 2024 budget and the results from our pledges which were submitted at the end of 2023. Our goal is to give you clarity in where your pledges will assist in the workings of the church life, buildings, properties, and our mission work it will support.



We will be providing childcare during this fellowship gathering in hopes that this will assist in all our Clover Hill family members staying for a time of enjoying a bite to eat, some coffee and/or juice, conversation, play time for the children, and for the Team to share this important part of the workings of and growth of our church.

Please join us on Sunday, February 4, 2024, following worship in the Nevius Fellowship Hall.

The Stewardship Team members are in gratitude for your continued support and participation and love for our Clover Hill Reformed Church.

We look forward to seeing you all on February 4!



# News from the Stewardship Team, continued...

Thank you to the 27 households that made pledges for this year! While we have had 27 households make pledges in each of the last three years, those are not the same 27 households each year - it is normal for some households to drop off and new ones to appear on the pledge list. Even though the pledges are greatly reduced in 2024, having that information is very helpful for managing our expectations. These pledges are a key component in the budget-building process.

## PLEDGE SUMMARY

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>
# households who pledged	36	27	27	27
\$ pledged	\$118,560	\$105,745	\$111,972	<b>\$91,192</b>
\$ received	\$121,482	\$108,879	\$108,330	
difference	\$2,922	\$3,134	<b>(\$3,642)</b>	

*\$20,780 less pledged than in 2023*

↓  
 9 households gave less than pledged  
 12 gave within a few \$ of pledge  
 6 gave more than pledged

## Account Balances as of 12/31/2023

TD Checking Balance (Operating Cash):	\$18,055.08
TD Money Market Account (Savings):	\$39,266.12
TD Money Mkt Account (Restricted Funds):	\$14,304.60
<i>Accessibility Fund</i>	\$5,089.63
<i>Benevolence Fund</i>	\$1,139.00
<i>Building Fund</i>	\$160.40
<i>Castellano Scholarships Fund</i>	\$700.99
<i>Kris Kanach Library Fund</i>	\$556.50
<i>Mary Nevius Music Fund</i>	\$4,938.08
<i>Paving Seal Fund</i>	\$1,720.00
Vanguard CD Savings Total:	\$221,781.67
Total of all Operating, Funds, & Savings:	\$293,407.47

# News from the Stewardship Team, continued...

## 2024 Operating Budget

Income	Actual	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
Updated 1/1/2024	2021	2022	2023	2023	2024
Attributable	\$140,484	\$144,412	\$145,500	\$138,556	\$120,300
Non-attributable	\$557	\$987	\$1,000	\$2,664	\$2,600
Investments	\$275	\$91	\$300	\$6,794	\$10,300
Misc Administration	\$268	\$274	\$270	\$754	\$300
Misc Church Life	\$266	\$617	\$600	\$917	\$800
Misc Mission	\$1,289	\$445	\$600	\$3,476	\$2,800
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$143,139</b>	<b>\$146,826</b>	<b>\$148,270</b>	<b>\$153,161</b>	<b>\$137,100</b>
<b>Expenses</b>					
Administration Expense	\$70,422	\$74,962	\$72,508	\$71,944	\$72,602
Church Life Expense	\$1,527	\$1,263	\$2,000	\$2,359	\$2,700
Pastoral Ministry Expense	\$8,000	\$46,700	\$48,568	\$47,814	\$53,000
Worship Expense	\$42,476	\$13,957	\$16,650	\$14,813	\$18,250
Church Mission Expense	\$8,798	\$8,976	\$14,744	\$14,744	\$14,017
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$131,223</b>	<b>\$145,858</b>	<b>\$154,470</b>	<b>\$151,674</b>	<b>\$160,569</b>
<b>Balance</b>	<b>\$11,916</b>	<b>\$968</b>	<b>(\$6,200)</b>	<b>\$1,487</b>	<b>(\$23,469)</b>

### 2023 Notes:

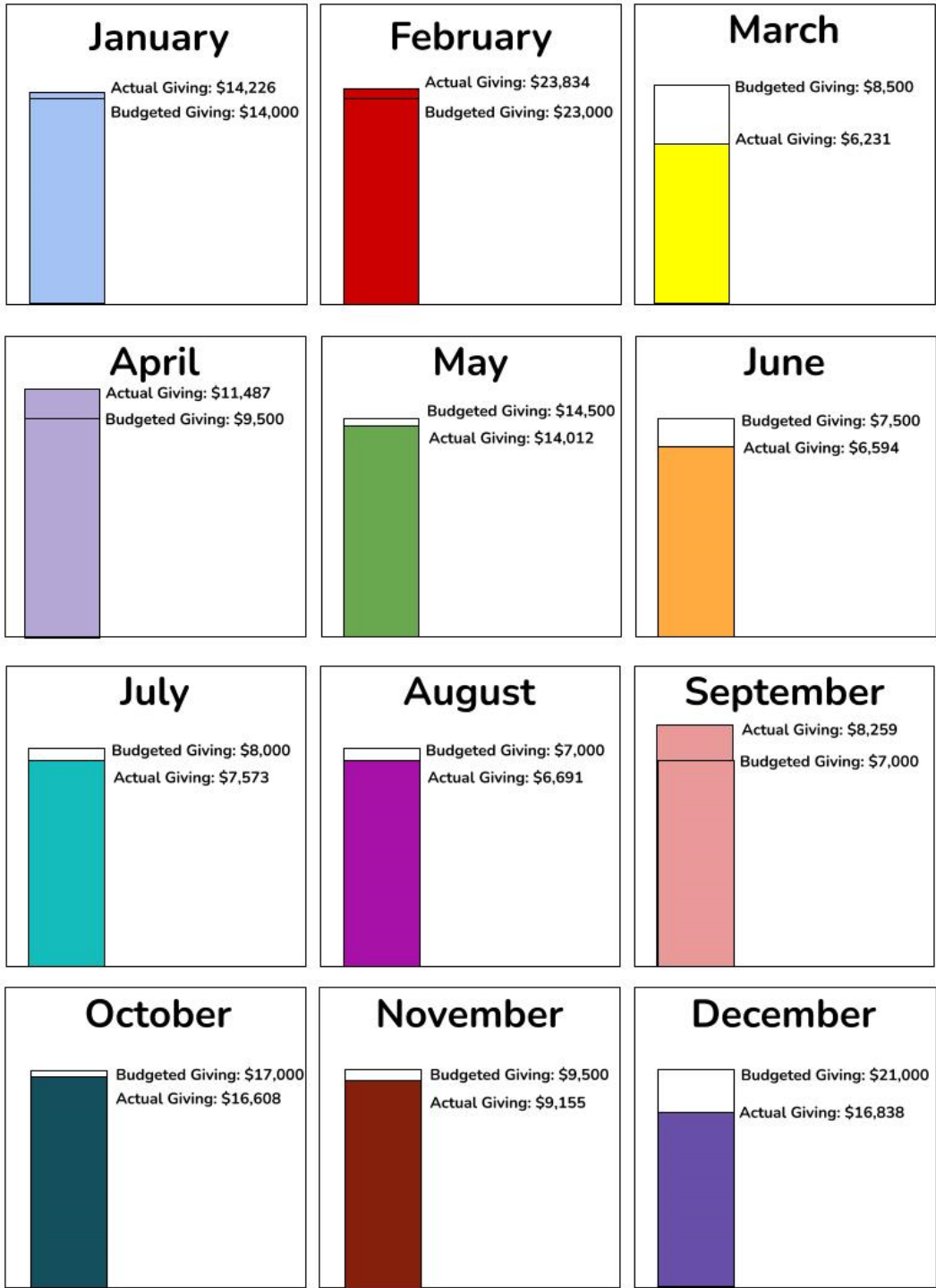
- Attributable and Non-Attributable giving were down by over \$5000 in 2023.
- In 2023, we received \$117,023 of Memorial Gifts! This money does not go into the budget since these are all one time gifts. However, this money does go into our savings. Our savings will help sustain us as we work through this transitional period.
- In 2023, we earned \$6794 on our savings with the help of higher interest rates and the CD ladder that was created.

### 2024 Notes:

- Giving is forecasted to be much lower, based on the pledges that were received at the end of last year.
- Our interest income will be higher, based on having a full year of CD income.
- We are expecting a very large deficit.

# News from the Stewardship Team, continued...

## 2023 MONTHLY GIVING RECAP



**Year to Date (thru December)**  
*attributable & non-attributable gifts - excludes Memorial Gifts*

Actual Giving:	\$141,220
Budgeted Giving:	\$146,500
<b>Difference</b>	<b>-\$5,280</b>



# News from the Stewardship Team, continued...



## **New Cleaners Always Welcome!**

**Next Clean Team Meeting:  
February 14, 8 am**

**Contact Nancy Lane  
908-399-4791**

## **Looking for a volunteer opportunity or some exercise?**

***The Property Team could use a few extra  
hands from time to time!***

**We have regular opportunities to shovel  
snow off of sidewalks and pick up tree  
branches at the parsonage. There are many  
building tasks that come up around the  
church and parsonage so please let us know  
if you have an area of expertise or a willing-  
ness to help out!**

**Contact Gene Reinhardt  
(greinhardt9@gmail.com)  
or Karen Babecki  
(kbabecki@comcast.net)**

## **Disbursements/ Reimbursements**

Did you ever buy something for the church and then fill out a disbursement form in the church office to be reimbursed for it? While your intentions are good, due to the financial limitations of the church, all reimbursements for purchases made for the church must be approved by the Stewardship Team.

**Teams need to be aware of what their individual budget limitations are. Anything beyond what has already been budgeted will need to be approved.**

Please hold onto your receipts in case returns need to be made. Please contact any member of the Stewardship Team if you have questions before you make a purchase that you might seek reimbursement for.

We are grateful for your thoughtfulness, but as we are trying to stay within our budget, we need to pay attention to each purchase made. The Consistory member on the Stewardship Team is Gene Reinhardt.

***Next Stewardship Team Meeting:  
February 22, 2023  
7 pm on Zoom***



# Message from the Pastoral Search Team

## Search Team Update:

As the search team moves into February, we will continue the process of reading resumes, developing questions for candidates and the interviews. Each month, in the Belltower, we reference for you something from the book, 'The Calling of a Part-Time Pastor'. This month we reference 'Cooperation'. We know as a team we must work together by combining our efforts toward our goal.

We ask for your continued prayers and support for our team, our church, and our leaders as we navigate this time together.

"Cooperation" (Pg.86-87, 'The Calling of a Part- Time Pastor,' by Warren Seibert)

*Every church has a full-time ministry, and then some. This means that your pastor and every member of your church must each do their part. For a church that has a part-time pastor, this is even more urgent and essential. Leaders especially, meaning elders and deacons, have to step up to the plate and assume their biblical roles and responsibilities.*

*Collaboration will be the key to being a strong church. You will serve together well to the extent that ministry will be shared according to every person's calling when everyone in leadership acknowledges the God-given position of everyone else as an atmosphere of mutual respect and humility governs all leadership meetings, as a culture of honest and open communication is expected between your pastor and other leaders, and when service in the name of the Lord is encouraged for every member of your church. In other words, we as leaders, and as Christians, should conduct ourselves in manner worthy of the gospel of Jesus Christ (Phil 1:27). In this way, "the priesthood of all believers" will be built up in your church.*

*In addition, even before a new pastor arrives, the other leaders of the church need to decide to what extent they will honor the person they call as the "pastor" of the church. And they will need to decide to what extent they will allow the person they call as their pastor to "lead" with them. Do they want a true shepherd of God, or do they merely want someone to perform the duties they assign to them without input or question? Will the pastor be given a voice in deliberations? A say in decision-making? A place at the table? I would also advise that, when interviewing pastoral candidates, the church discovers that potential pastor's leadership style and their acceptance of the leadership of others. Do they accept the "priesthood of all believers" as a biblical characteristic of Christ's church?*

## Your Search Team:

Patty Agnew [paw61961@gmail.com](mailto:paw61961@gmail.com)

Janet Durborow [jdurbor@gmail.com](mailto:jdurbor@gmail.com)

Marilyn Fineman (Search Team Chair) [marilyn@fineman.me](mailto:marilyn@fineman.me)

Matt Furmato [tmfurmato@embarqmail.com](mailto:tmfurmato@embarqmail.com)

Gary Keck [gkeck6@gmail.com](mailto:gkeck6@gmail.com)

Laurel Suk [sukart24@gmail.com](mailto:sukart24@gmail.com)

Gary Tully [crusingg@aol.com](mailto:crusingg@aol.com)

Pastor, Rev. Beth Scibienski [pastorbeth.chrc@gmail.com](mailto:pastorbeth.chrc@gmail.com)

Linda Santa-Lucia (Classis Supervisor)

# Message from the Pastoral Care Team

Coordinator: Nancy Lane ([nlane54@gmail.com](mailto:nlane54@gmail.com))



## Loving Your Enemies ? ?

The month of February contains a specific day when many express love to those we hold close in our hearts . It's a time for cards and gifts and open expressions of appreciation and love. Some may feel comfortable opening up to others and some may be timid or refrain altogether. It's a very individual thing, that expression of love.

1 Peter 4:8 Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins.

1 John 4 4:19 We love because He first loved us.

Many have someone in their lives who is difficult to love. God commands us to “love your neighbor as yourself”. It's not easy to love someone who has hurt us. It isn't easy to let go of resentment. When we look to the Bible, however, there are verses that talk about loving your enemies.

Matthew 5:44 “But I say to you, Love your enemies, do good to those who persecute you.

If you would like to understand more about loving your enemies please read Why Should You Love Your Enemies? How Can We Do That ?

<https://walkinginstepwithgod.org/category/walking-in-love/>

The article will remind you over and over that the way to all things is through prayer. A recent reading that was shared in Early Bird Devotions states “ I'd always thought of Jesus' command to pray for our enemies as a godly to-do, an act of obedience, surrender and trust in God- but what if there is more to Jesus' command than just saying the right words ? What if prayer is also intended to help our hearts? Would praying for a friend who hurt me actually help me overcome bitterness?”

I hope you will take a few minutes to read this devotion yourself to hear how prayer may “shield our hearts from bitterness, humble us ,helps us resist temptation and give us peace while we wait for resolution.”

<https://proverbs31.org/read/devotions/full-post/2023/10/19/the-powerful-practice-that-protects-your-heart-from-bitterness>

Ephesians 5 :1-2 “Be imitators of God , therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God”

**Pray for strength, guidance, and wisdom.**

# Message from the Pastoral Care Team, continued...

For your consideration . . .



Hunterdon Hospice  
is pleased to announce



## YOUTH ART BEREAVEMENT PROGRAM

**Open to all Children & Teens**  
(K through 12th grade)  
**who have experienced the loss of a loved one.**

This 8-week program, led by clinicians and volunteers, will use the medium of art to explore and express grief. Parents/Guardians are invited to attend a companion group to learn about their child's perception of loss, while processing their own grief.

**WEDNESDAY EVENINGS**  
**JANUARY 31<sup>ST</sup> - MARCH 20<sup>TH</sup>**  
(March 27th - make-up snow date, if needed)

**6:30 PM TO 8:00 PM**  
[REGISTER HERE!](#)

The Senior Center, 4 Gauntt Place, Building 1  
Route 31 S, Flemington, NJ

For more information contact:  
Laura Suozzo, LCSW - [lsuozzo@hhsnj.org](mailto:lsuozzo@hhsnj.org)  
or 908-574-9918



Hunterdon Health



Click on this link to register for Youth Art Bereavement Program:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf1mOPQZIQXXBvtGYWisKHYBE8viTbIREth-cS3sBO9yctHQ/viewform>

## Bereavement Support Group (Hospice Program of Princeton HomeCare) Virtual

Virtual Support Groups

**Location:** Online Event

**When:** February 26, 2024 / 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM

### **REGISTER NOW**

Click here to sign up <https://cmaprinceton.org/services-for-older-adults/>

You will be redirected to Princeton Senior Resource Center's website. Please call 609.819.1226 with any questions.

**USUALLY MEETS THE 3RD MONDAY OF THE MONTH, UNLESS THE DATE FALLS ON A HOLIDAY\*.**

\*FEB 26 (11am - 12:30pm)

MAR 18 (11am - 12:30pm)

Led by Sherri Goldstein, LCSW, Bereavement Coordinator with Penn Medicine Princeton Hospice Program, this group welcomes community members who need support and assistance in coping with grief and loss.

Event Type: Virtual | Support Groups

Keyword: hospice

Service Line: PHCH (Penn Homecare and Hospice)

# Message from the Pastoral Care Team, continued...

For your consideration . . .



## Caregiving for a Partner

*A virtual four-part support & education series  
January through April, 2024*

When a couple is impacted by health issues, the dynamics of the partnership shift and present new challenges. For the partner who takes on the caregiver role there may be a host of new tasks, decisions and emotions to face, along with the changing interpersonal relationship with their partner and the impact on family and friends.

If you are a caregiver, living in Hunterdon County, who provides care for a partner and are looking for support, please join us for this four-part series that combines education, support, coping and connection. The group will be held virtually through an online platform beginning January 2024.

There is no cost for participation, this program is supported by the Caregivers Initiative in Hunterdon County and facilitated by Hunterdon Behavioral Health clinicians.

**Mondays at 10am on  
January 29th, February 26th, March 25th &  
April 22nd**

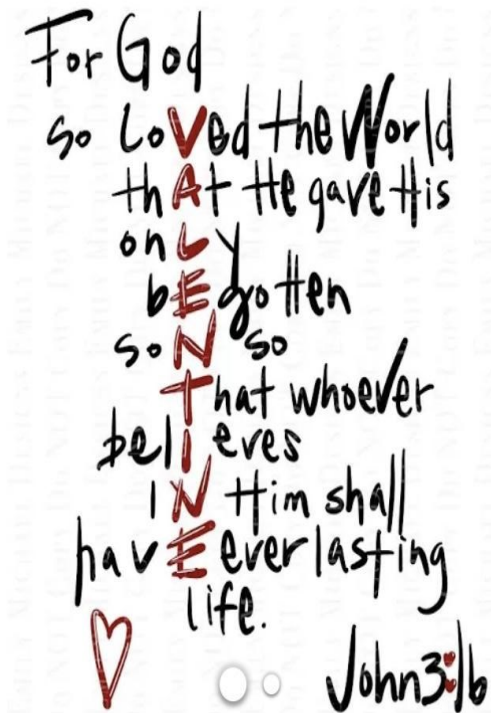
For more questions, or to register for the virtual group please contact Jenifer Kucsan

[jkucsan@hhsnj.org](mailto:jkucsan@hhsnj.org)

# News from the Spiritual Growth Team

Coordinator: Carolyn Keck ([carolynkeck64@gmail.com](mailto:carolynkeck64@gmail.com))

## Lent 2024: Rooted in God's Love



Lent starts this year on Valentine's Day, February 14th. Though Valentine's Day isn't a religious holiday, the convergence is significant. Lent is a time of dedication to the Lord. What does it mean to anchor yourself in love and in God this Lent? As we think of lenten discipline we might naturally associate it with shadows, emptiness, and suffering. Yes, these are elements of the lenten journey, to be sure, but so is love. How will you take on a lenten practice that is rooted in love this year? Here are three ideas for you.

**Lovingkindness Meditation** - You can do a simple search to find many scripts for this, but the basic idea is to think warmly first toward yourself, then toward someone you love, and finally toward an enemy. A few minutes per day makes a significant difference.

**Practicing Self-Compassion** - Every morning say to yourself "I am God's beloved child. God loves me unconditionally." — Sounds simple, but how often do we neglect to extend love and hospitality to ourselves? Children seem to be better at this, though they too can struggle. If we are to remind them of their worth, we must see it in ourselves first.

**Scripture Memorization** - Many of us know the beautiful and familiar words of 1 Corinthians 13 that begins "Love is patient. Love is kind." This love is not referring, specifically, to romantic love, but rather God's perfect love. Perhaps you'll want to memorize the whole chapter this Lent? How would that change your spiritual practice?

(Source: [www.tracismith.com](http://www.tracismith.com))

Looking forward to sharing a **Digital Lenten Devotional** for our worship community via MailChimp before we begin the Season of Lent on Ash Wednesday, February 14, 2024.

Consider forwarding this resource to a friend and spreading His Word.  
Watch for access to the devotional in your email.

### Follow the Lenten Journey with Bible Readings



Ash Wednesday-  
February 14th

[Joel 2:12-19](#)  
[2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10](#)  
[Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21](#)



A God Who Prays

[Hebrews 7:20-28](#)  
[John 17:1-26](#)



A God Beaten

[Isaiah 52:13—53:12](#)  
[John 18:19-24](#)



A God Exposed

[Genesis 3:7-21](#)  
[John 19:1-5, 23-24](#)

# News from the Spiritual Growth Team, continued...

## FAMILY RESOURCES



Strengthen your family's Christian faith with this fun and engaging **Lenten Journey Calendar Bundle** distributed during CHRC worship service in February to **Sunday School families**. This calendar is a good way to count down the days of Lent with even your youngest children. (Please contact the church office for a packet).

This resource helps your children understand the true meaning of Lent and why the daily practices of prayer and sacrifice are important for us as Christians. As part of a Bible-believing congregation, we embrace the traditions of Lent because we recognize that we are all in need of seasons of deeper repentance and reflection. Lent helps our family to understand not only our sins but also Jesus' deep love for us and His sacrifice for our sins on the cross. It leads us to have greater joy in the Resurrection. One caution: Lent is not about "walking with Jesus" in the sense that we are capable of being like Him. The Christian life is more about "following Jesus" because though we are always striving to have more of Him and less of ourselves on display, we are never capable of being perfect as He is.

The calendar begins on Ash Wednesday and goes through Holy Week. It ends with Resurrection Sunday denoted on the bottom of the calendar. It is undated, so you can use it for any year. But if you're looking for specifics, this season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 14, 2024. There are 40 days of Lent, but 46 days to color in on the calendar (including coloring in the letters for Resurrection Sunday at the bottom). Why? Because traditionally, Sundays do not count toward the number of days of Lent. For each day, there are simple activities to help us focus our hearts and minds on God's world, on Jesus and on others around us.

**The calendar involves daily activities that deepen our faith and our appreciation for Jesus our Savior. Below are links for resources and instructions for some calendar activities:**

1. <https://youtu.be/fNsoXsyeUEo?si=SLM8ilqecGOPpQ2R> "Don't Forget to Remember" by Ellie Holcomb

2. <https://blogbydonna.com/paid-in-full-coin-cross-craft/amp/> Paid in Full Coin Cross

3. A pretzel to remind us of arms crossed in prayer is a Lenten treat for us to share.

- 1 package yeast (.25 oz)
- 1 1/2 cups warm water
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 4 cups flour
- 1 egg
- Large pretzel salt for the topping

Directions: Mix your yeast, water, sugar, and salt in a large bowl. Stir in the flour, and knead until the dough is smooth. Shape into the form of arms crossed in prayer and place it on a baking sheet. Brush the dough with a beaten egg to give it a shiny finish. Sprinkle the top with large pretzel salt. Bake in an oven preheated to 425 degrees for 15 minutes.

5. Template for Lamb of God cotton ball activity (enclosed in packet).

6. [How to Make an EASY \(and cheap!\) Crown of Thorns for Lent](#)

7. [Printable Easter cards](#) mentioned in the calendar.

In addition to the Lenten Journey Calendar, included in your packet please find a Bible Reading Plan and a Lenten Prayer Chain. (Resource created by Jennifer Thornton)

# News from the Spiritual Growth Team, continued...

“Coming soon . . .”

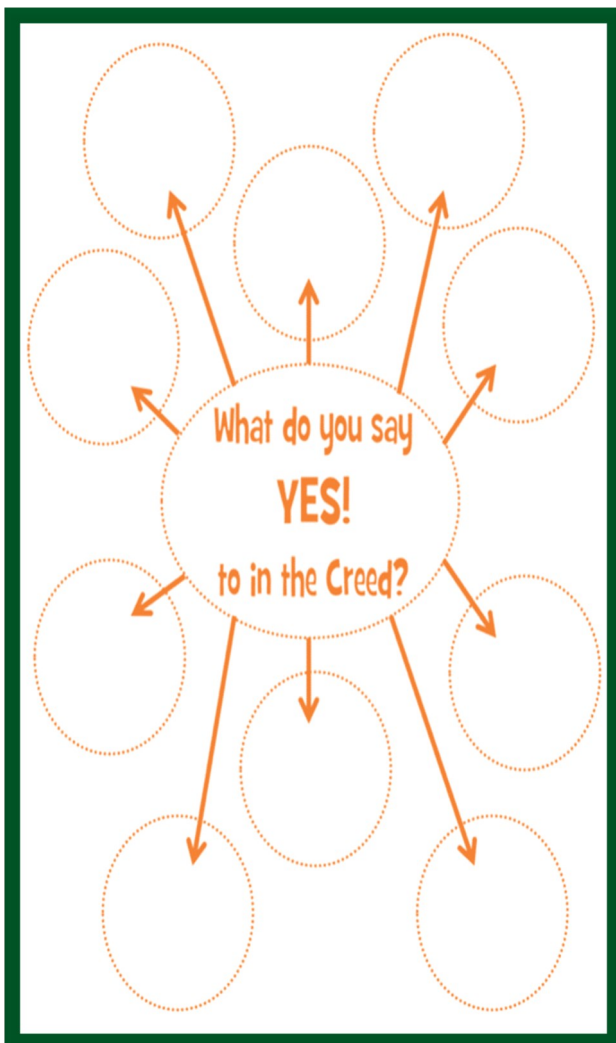


## Creeds and Confessions: CHRC Adult Education Series during Lent 2024

Sundays during Lent following worship; led by Pastor Beth

Dates: February 18, 25, March 3, 10, 17, 24

Explore the multiple creeds and their meanings



The Reformed Church in America (RCA) is a confessional church.

This means that, as a denomination, we affirm specific statements of belief called creeds and confessions. These statements are biblically based and were written to respond to issues by explaining in detail what the church believes about those topics.

**During Lent, we'll explore the theologies and histories of the:**

**Nicene Creed** - the nature of Jesus

**Athanasian Creeds** - our understanding of the Trinity

**Heidelberg Confession** - how we teach our beliefs

**Belgic Confession** - a thorough expression of the Protestant faith

**Canons of Dort** - have you ever heard of T.U.L.I.P.?

**Belhar Confession** - our response to South African Apartheid

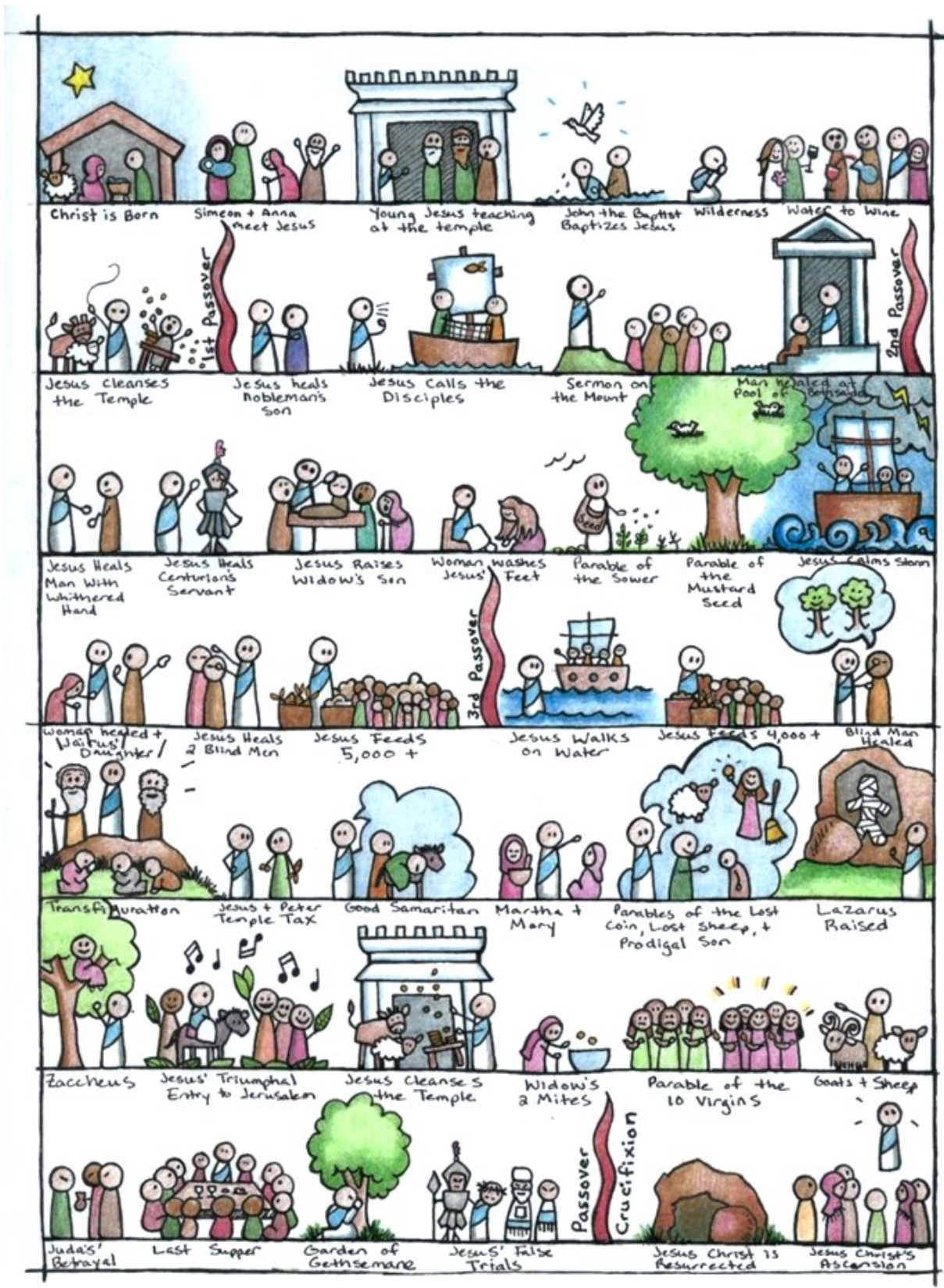
**Song of Hope** - a contemporary confession of faith

Explore the multiple creeds and their meanings

<https://www.rca.org/about/theology/creeds-and-confessions/>

# News from the Spiritual Growth Team, continued...

## Life of Christ Chronology





# News from the Spiritual Growth Team, continued...

Give this playlist and podcast a listen:



Consistory Members for 2024 were installed during the January 21st worship service.



The installation was facilitated by VP of Consistory and Elder, Amy Frank, and guest preacher, Pastor Courtney Cromie.

Pictured left to right: Barbara Sarzillo and Gene Reinhardt, (Deacons 1 year terms each), Lori Voorhees, (Elder 3 year term) and Pastor Courtney.

1 Peter 4:10-11 - "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord."

# News from the Spiritual Growth Team, continued...



## Come - Be - Reflect - Share an hour of enjoying a meal, touching base with God and each other

**Date:** Tuesday February 13, 2024

**Time:** noon- about 1:00 pm

**Location:** we will meet in the CHRC  
Nevius Fellowship Hall  
or if inclement weather on Zoom

**Bring:** something to drink,  
your lunch or snack,  
and yourself

*“And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship,  
to the breaking of bread and the prayers.” Acts 2:42*

An opening prayer, 15-minute discussion on Bible/religious topic, fellowship,  
closing prayer will be provided to deepen our experience together.

**No need to RSVP, you do not need to attend each one, just show up!**  
If you need further information, please contact the church office.  
(908-369-8451 or chrct1834@gmail.com)



We invite you to take a moment or so, as you can, between the hours of 8 and 11 Wednesday mornings, and pray for all of those who are called by God to be connected to Clover Hill. He will guide our Church, our country, and our world on a path of faith and benevolence to all.

Hear the supplications of your servant and of your people Israel when they pray toward this place. Hear from heaven, your dwelling place; and when you hear, forgive.

- 2 Chronicles 6:21 (NIV)



Same day of the week –  
**different time!**

Wednesdays at **7:00 am** on Zoom

*When we pray together, we experience God's presence.*

Matthew 18:20 (NLT)

*For where two or three gather together as my followers, I am there among them.”*

Ephesians 3:12 (NLT)

**Come and be in community** with others while we seek God's guidance and comfort for the new day.

**Come join in** each Wednesday at 7:00 am on Zoom for a 10-15 minute time of devotion, scripture, sharing of concerns and joys, prayer, and lifting those on the CHRC prayer list to God.

**Come as you are** – PJ's allowed!

Questions: email Lynn-Totten (chrct1834@gmail.com)

# News from the Spiritual Growth Team, continued...

## CHRC Choir

You are invited to participate in rehearsals at 9:00 am each Sunday morning. Choir then sings during the 10:00 am worship. George Farrell, organist/choir director / ([deuscaritasesest@aol.com](mailto:deuscaritasesest@aol.com)) or cell number (732) 599-4077

Do you remember the movie *Moonstruck*? It's the story about an Italian family in Brooklyn; a mother named Rose, a father named Cosmo, and their daughter, Loretta, played by Cher.

There's a part where, Rose, who suspects her husband of cheating, says, "Cosmo, I just want you to know that no matter what you do, you're gonna die, just like everyone else!" And so are we. We're going to die. And no matter how well you think you're doing, you're screwing up, and I don't need to tell you where you're screwing up because you already know where you're screwing up.

In the movie Cher meets an operatic, over-emotional baker, her fiancé's brother, and they yell and throw furniture, and then they cheat on her fiancé and spend the night together. In the morning, Cher regrets her behavior, declaring, "Bad luck! Is that all I'm ever going to have? I should have taken a rock and killed myself years ago!" But her sense of desolation, and what she calls "bad luck," are both directly related to the choices she's made in her life.

Still, Cher is a little better off than the emoting baker. At least she has a sense that she's getting things wrong. The baker, on the other hand, is completely enthralled to his sentiments, and in what he believes they entitle him. He lives in a haze of feelings, and objects to Cher's remorse, because, get this, she's making him "feel guilty" about sleeping with his brother's intended wife.

Then one of my favorite parts of the movie happens: he says, "I'm in love with you" and Cher gives him a good rap across the face, twice, and says, "Snap out of it!"

How about you? What feelings, what enthrallments are you all wrapped up in to the point where you feel entitled to something? To the point where you can't even see what the people around you are going through or might need from you? Maybe someone is anxious and needs a good word from you, and you're not hearing it. Maybe someone just needs to hear a "Thank you" from you, or a word of praise, a little tenderness in a hard, stressful world. Maybe they need to see you seeing them. And maybe you need to see them loving you in return. Maybe they need you to pray for them, or better yet, to pray with them.

So, snap out of it. Feelings are good things, but if you over-entertain them, they become like quicksand, and you end up drowning in your own self. And that's a very lonely thing, because it means you've lost sight of God!

Ashes on the forehead. Getting smudged. It's a primitive, tribal thing; it marks us as belonging to the Tribe of Christ Jesus. It harkens back to ancient penitential practices and is also an outward sign of all we will become, whether we're monarchs or eccentrics: ashes.

There's another scene in *Moonstruck* where Cher goes to Confession and the priest says, "Reflect on your life." That's good advice. Think about this: What are you going to do between the time you get these ashes smudged on your forehead and you actually become them?

Reflect on your life. Get moving on the things you need to fix. You feed your family, you feed yourself, don't forget to feed your spirit.

If we're doing this Christian thing right, these ashes should also say that we are dead to the world but alive in Christ Jesus.

You can't sing? You don't like to commit to something each week? Snap out of it! God has given us each a voice. Whatever God gives us is what we give back. If God gave you a bad singing voice, then I guess God deserves to hear that gift returned! We meet each Sunday at 9:00 to rehearse and then sing at Sunday worship. Join us even if you are unable to make it a weekly commitment. We'd love your encouragement to keep giving God the glory in song.

Sincerely in Christ,  
George Farrell

# News from the Service Team

Coordinator: Barbara Sarzillo ([barbarasuesarzillo@gmail.com](mailto:barbarasuesarzillo@gmail.com))

## Have a Heart



Now that the holidays are over the area food pantries start to run short of essential items.

Soup, Canned Meat, Vegetables, Coffee, and other essentials to create warm meals are needed.

Please have a heart!

The service team will be collecting cans for the area food pantries for the month of February

Please help us share the love!



*The food pantry bin is located in the narthex*

**THANK YOU!**

The service team would like to express our gratitude  
To all who were able to donate to the  
Rescue Mission of Trenton



## News from the Service Team, continued . . .

### Cookies for the Troops! A huge thank you!



Chaplin Dave Kahler and some of the troops enjoying cookies baked by Clover Hill, Three Bridges and Neshanic Reformed Churches.

## News from the Fellowship Team

Coordinator: Barbara Sarzillo ([barbarasuesarzillo@gmail.com](mailto:barbarasuesarzillo@gmail.com))



Please join us  
Sunday February 11  
After worship in the NFH



### **Skeins of Hope**

Zoom meetings will be on  
Thursday, February 29, 2024,  
at 8:00 pm.  
Diana Reinhardt (908-369-4362 or  
[greinhardt9@gmail.com](mailto:greinhardt9@gmail.com))

# News from the Communication & A/V Teams

Consistory Facilitator: Communication – Church office (chrc1834@gmail.com)

## Motivational Message Coming to You from our Church Parking Lot Sign

A group of very dedicated people faithfully change the sign in the parking lot every two (or more) weeks. Sometimes the sign gives information (e.g. about Vacation Bible School), but mostly it provides words of inspiration to those at our church and those who pass by the sign.

We pull the inspiration from various places on the internet, but if you have a message you would like to see displayed, or would like be part of this group that changes the sign, just email to the office administrator [CHRC1834@gmail.com](mailto:CHRC1834@gmail.com), and she will pass it on. Just keep in mind, we are limited to seven lines and a maximum of 11 letters (spaces included) per line.



Whether we are social distancing or gathering at church, you can always stay on top of what is going on through:

- Belltower and bulletin announcements/inserts
- Facebook
- Instagram
- church website:  
[www.cloverhillchurch.org](http://www.cloverhillchurch.org)
- emails from MailChimp
- Zoom worship/meetings/ activities



If you would like to join our ‘team’ and help us spread the word about what is going on at our church, contact the church office ([chrc1834@gmail.com](mailto:chrc1834@gmail.com)).

### Communications Team Members:

Bob DiMilia, Janet Durborow, Marilyn Fineman, Ken Skillman, Lynn– Totten

**All social media items must go through the church office before they can be posted. Please send all write ups to Lynn– Totten at [CHRC1834@gmail.com](mailto:CHRC1834@gmail.com) Thank you!**



If you take pictures at any church event please share with the church office ([chrc1834@gmail.com](mailto:chrc1834@gmail.com)) so we may include them in our social media and Belltower. Not all pictures will be used but it is good to have them on file.

Please be aware we have a Family Photo Release form on file in the church office that limits the publication of the minors in our church family. Please check with the office admin before posting any photos on social media platforms.

## Belltower Deadline

Please submit all write ups to be included in the March issue, to the church office ([chrc1834@gmail.com](mailto:chrc1834@gmail.com)), by Thursday, February 15, 2024.

# FEBRUARY 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<div style="border: 2px solid purple; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p><b>Consistory</b>                      The Consistory will meet                      Tuesday, February 13, at 7:00 pm Zoom</p> </div>				1 11:30am– 2pm sanctuary use by organist	2	3
				4 9:00 am Vocal Choir 10:00 am Worship & School / Communion 11:00 am Congregational Budge Fellowship Time in the NFHall	5	6 11am-2pm NFHall in Use 2:30 pm Fellowship & Service Team meeting Zoom 7:00 pm Search Team meeting Zoom or NFHall
11 9:00 am Vocal Choir 10:00 am Worship & School 11:00 am Coffee Fellowship in NFHall	12	13 11am-2pm NFHall in Use 12noon Lunch Bunch NFHall (inclement weather on Zoom) 7:00 pm Consistory meeting Zoom	14 7:00 am Early Bird Devotion & Prayer Time Zoom 8:00-11:00 am Prayers 8:00 am Clean Team will meet 11am-2pm NFHall in use	15 11:30am—2pm sanctuary use by organist Belltower Deadline	16	17
18 9:00 am Vocal Choir 10:00 am Worship & School 11:00 am Cree Study in the NFHall	19	20 11am-2pm NFHall in Use	21 7:00 am Early Bird Devotion & Prayer Time Zoom 8:00-11:00 am Prayers 11am-2pm NFHall in use	22 11:30am—2pm sanctuary use by organist 7:00 pm Stewardship Team meeting Zoom	23	24
25 9:00 am Vocal Choir 10:00 am Worship & School 11:00 am Cree Study in the NFHall	26	27 Prayer “Refresh” 11am-2pm NFHall in use	28 7:00 am Early Bird Devotion & Prayer Time Zoom 7:20 am Pastoral Care Team meeting Zoom 8:00-11:00 am Prayers 11am-2pm NFHall in use	29 11:30am—2pm sanctuary use by Organist 8:00 pm Skeins of Hope meeting Zoom		